



Parshas Chukas 5784

Most derashos on Parshas Chukas focus either on Parah Adumah or some of the other parts of the parshah which contain more pesukim. However, there is a short and quite unknown piece in the parshah, *אז ישיר ישראל וגו' (כא, יז-כ)*, which is actually one of the shiros in the Torah, so let us focus on these pesukim, first al derech hapshat, and then we can delve into the deeper ideas contained within this shirah.

What is this shirah about? What exactly is Klal Yisrael praising? It appears from Rashi that they were praising the be'er, the water they had in the midbar. As we all know, it was the Be'ero Shel Miriam, because in Miriam's zechus water flowed the entire time they were in the midbar. When Miriam passed away the be'er ceased to operate, and it later continued in the zechus of Moshe. (This was the event in which Moshe struck the stone, rather than speaking to it, for the water to begin to flow again.)

The previous pasuk before the shirah (*כא, טז*) states: *ומשם בארה* and there was a wellspring of water, *היא הבאר אשר אמר ה' למשה אסף את העם ואתנה להם מים*, the pasuk refers to Moshe providing water for the people through this be'er. The pesukim then continue with the shirah, *אז ישיר ישראל את השירה*, *הזאת עלי באר ענו לה*. So clearly, the simple understanding is that they were singing shirah for the be'er.

There is an obvious question here. If the be'er had already provided them with water for forty years, why is it that only now were they saying shirah? Rashi asks the question but does not really provide an answer, only referring to dersashos. But really there was a basic concept that led to this shirah. Let's explain.

Years ago, in the mid 90's, I had surgery on my leg. I had a rod put into my leg and for a while I couldn't walk, using crutches for six months. But slowly Baruch Hashem I healed and as you know I dance around wherever I go. Once I was back on my feet, I spoke in shul about appreciating the ability to walk. One of our mispallelim mentioned to me afterward that you can't really tell people to appreciate walking. One who is accustomed to walking since he is a small child, and continues walking his whole life, takes it for granted. I was in danger of losing the ability to walk altogether so of course I appreciated it. But everyone else, as they say in Yiddish, "Men vert tzugevoint," you get used to it. We don't appreciate things when we have them all the time.

So too here in our parshah. The generation that grew up in the midbar with flowing water from the be'er didn't appreciate it as something miraculous. We too, when it rains and we have free water flowing all around, we don't appreciate it, it's part of nature. Therefore, only when the be'er had ceased to operate and they were without water, and then it resumed to flow again, did they truly appreciate the miracle of the be'er and they sang shirah.

The pasuk (שמות טז, טו) says Klal Yisrael referred to the bread that fell from heaven as mann. What kind of name is mann? The pasuk explains because they didn't know what it was, כי לא ידעו מה הוא. Asks Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zatzal, why would they call its name for such a reason? He explains because when the mann first fell they were in amazement of the miracle. Therefore, they kept the name to serve as a reminder that this is something miraculous, to retain the appreciation for what they had.

Chazal tell us that just as the be'er ceased to operate when Miriam passed away but eventually resumed in the zechus of Moshe, so too the mann stopped falling when Aharon passed away but resumed in the zechus of Moshe. Why then did Klal Yisrael only say shirah for the be'er but not for the mann? The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh explains that since there was no break in the falling of the mann they didn't appreciate it as much. Only the be'er which stopped flowing causing them to lack water, did they appreciate when it resumed flowing.

Of course, the lesson we need to learn from this is to appreciate all Hakadosh Baruch Hu's gifts to us, and not to take them for granted because we get used to having them. There is nothing people get accustomed to more than marriage. Marriage is a gift from Hakadosh Baruch Hu. In the beginning, when two people come together, there is an excitement, a uniqueness, the feeling of something special. But people take it for granted; spouses take each other for granted; it no longer has the proper appreciation. A person should always continue to appreciate his marriage. He should always feel as if it is new. When I forgot my first anniversary, I told my wife "Shanah rishonah never ends," and that has been my excuse ever since. A person should take the time to appreciate all the good that he has and that he takes for granted.

Let's move on now to a deeper understanding of the shirah from the Netziv in He'emek Davar. The Netziv explains that for forty years in the midbar Moshe Rabbeinu had taught Klal Yisrael the basic knowledge and ideas of Torah. A well of standing water may be the mashal for the basic knowledge of Torah. But a be'er is a wellspring, with new energy and water coming forth from the ground. At this time, at the end of the forty years, Moshe opened before them the world of pilpul, of chiddushei Torah, a fountain of new knowledge, of chiddush. With the return of the well's operation, the Be'er of Miriam had now become the Be'er of Moshe. Moshe was telling Klal Yisrael that all the Torah shel ba'al peh that he had taught them for the past thirty-nine years can all be found in the Torah through the derashos and the power of pilpul. The Gemara says that Hashem gave Moshe the power of piplul as a gift, and he in turn gave it over to Klal Yisrael. This is the deeper meaning of the be'er, a fountain of chiddush in Torah that was opened before Klal Yisrael, a gift upon which they said shirah.

In Ohr Gedalyahu (p. 144) Rav Schorr zatzal brings that the words be'er is mentioned forty-eight times in the Torah, corresponding to the מ"ח דברים שהתורה נקנית בהם, the forty-eight ways to acquire Torah. We see the be'er is connected to the kinyan of Torah. There were also forty-eight Nevi'im, a nevuah is the ultimate revelation of new Torah to Klal Yisrael. There were also forty-eight cities of the Levi'im who were the teachers of Torah, (דברים לג, י).

The be'er, the מ"ח kinyanim of Torah, the Torah itself, is something to be appreciated. A person shouldn't just sit and learn Torah. You can sit back and hear a speech, or you can focus and listen to what is being said, sometimes ask a kasha on it, sometimes be mechadesh or add something to

it. Don't just listen to me speak, find somewhere else in the Torah where this idea of not taking things for granted applies.

For forty years Moshe Rabbeinu was itching to reveal to Klal Yisrael that they have a power of chiddush. But Hashem said to wait, because the basics of Torah has to be the Halachah L'Moshe M'Sinai. But now Moshe Rabbeinu told them the power of the be'er, that you can have an original thought in Torah shel ba'al peh.

Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were all involved with be'eros. Avraham dug be'eros, and when the Pillishtim filled them, Yitzchak dug them again. Yaakov rolled the large stone off the be'er. That's the be'er of Torah, from which Yaakov rolled off the blockage stuffing the heart that prevents a person from being able to learn properly.

There are those who sit back and hear the Torah and there are those who sit forward and are focused, thinking, challenging. It's incredible, when I give a shiur in yeshivah and the bachurim catch me on something I said wrong, which happens about once a year, it's exciting. Imagine a law professor arguing points of logic in a class with the students; it would be a challenge. But Torah is that way, others have the ability to be mechadesh as well. That is the Be'er Shel Moshe in this week's parshah.

So, if you're as fortunate as I am to have a bar mitzvah parshah as parshas chukas, you would notice that there is a shirah in this parshah. A shirah which represents the great be'er, אין מים אלא תורה, the be'er that Hashem told Moshe ואסף את העם ואתנה להם מים תורה, gather the people to give them the power of chiddush, of growth and renewal, in Torah. What a beautiful thing for Klal Yisrael to say shirah about. And so, for a change, this Parshas Chukas when by Krias haTorah you hear אז ישיר ישראל, not אז ישיר משה, realize that it's your song. עלי באר, go up to the wellspring, ענו לה, say your piece, say your part in the learning of Torah, in the chiddush of Torah. If you do that, when you have an hour to learn the hour will become an hour and a half. You'll be into it. You won't be able to let go. That's part of the mesikus of Torah.

With that I would like to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, a meaningful Shabbos, a Shabbos od זאת חוקת התורה, of being koneh Torah. Good Shabbos to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas - Balak 5783

1 – Topic – Preparing to go to Eretz Yisrael and leaving behind Chutz L'aretz

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas – Balak catching up so to speak to Eretz Yisrael. Speaking of Eretz Yisrael, I was in Eretz Yisrael at the beginning of the week and I would like to share with you a brief thought. In the Aderes Eliyahu, the GR"A in Parshas Eikev 8:1, the Gaon writes (ולביאת הארץ צריך ג' דברים) that to come to Eretz Yisrael you need three things. 1) The first thing you need is that you have to prepare yourself to leave Chutz L'aretz. (א' הכנה לצאת מח"ל). 2) You have to know the road which you are traveling. (ב' הדרך אשר ילך). 3) You have to come to Eretz Yisrael. (ג' הביאה לא"י). So you have leaving, traveling and coming.

It is not really so. All you need is 2 and 3. You need a road to go and you need to arrive in Eretz Yisrael. If you have a road to go Mimeila you are leaving Chutz L'aretz. What does it mean # 1 that you need a Hachana La'tzeis L'chutz L'aretz?

The GR"A here is Megaleh to us a Sod. He is telling us the secret of being Matzlaich in a trip to Eretz Yisrael. There are some who come to Eretz Yisrael and they never left Chutz L'aretz, they are taking Chutz L'aretz along with them. Do me a favor, leave it behind. You want to be able to come and be Nichnas L'erezt Yisrael, then you need # 1 Hachana Latzeis Chutz L'aretz. You got to understand that you are leaving Chutz L'aretz and you are going out of Chutz L'aretz.

I came to Ohr Sameach this week and I met somebody who I met for the first time last summer. Yoel from Norway. He had just come and I met him with his father and they had a Shabbos Seuda together with us. I asked his father to please tell us what brought him and his son here. He said essentially that he wants his son to know something about Judaism. Therefore, he came with him there. A wonderful young man.

Yoel was in the Mechina, the beginners program and made his first Siyum this week on Maseches Megillah and he is moving up to the Beis Medrash program. A one year jumping up to the regular Beis Medrash program. It is just absolutely incredible. Incredible what the Ruach of Eretz Yisrael could do. Why did he go to Eretz Yisrael? To know something about Judaism. We think we know all that there is to know about Yiddishkeit. We have much to learn. If we left Chutz L'aretz to go to Eretz Yisrael to know more about Yiddishkeit then we would do very well.

It is said that Rav Hutner once observed a Beis Medrash of Bochurim learning on Shavuos. He admired them. He commented to somebody, their faces are towards Har Sinai just like by Mattan Torah. I am just not sure if their backs are to the rest of the world. You need two things. You have to face Har Sinai and you have to have your back towards the rest of the world.

Yaakov when he left Lavan's house he said, as is found in Rashi to Beraishis 32:5 (עם לְכוּן גֵּרְתִּי) (ולא למדתי ממעשיו הרעים), that he kept (or at least learned about) all 613 Mitzvos. (ולא למדתי ממעשיו הרעים) (ולא למדתי ממעשיו הרעים)? You see from here that for some people it is not a contradiction. You can do everything good and still have yourself totally in Chutz L'aretz, totally in Beis Lavan. Get involved in the pleasures and the overindulgences of Chutz L'aretz.

When we go into a Sukkah we say a beautiful Tefillah. It says (ובכוחות צאתי מהבית והוצפה ודרך מצותיך) (אָרִיזָה). We ask for a Zechus for the fact that we go out of the house. Really the Ikkur is the Zechus that we go into the Sukkah and not so much that we go out of the house. No! Some people go into the Sukkah without leaving their normal homes. They don't leave it at all. They are sitting in their homes just now there is Schach on top of them.

It is the same thing with going to Eretz Yisrael. What a waste. People go to Eretz Yisrael and they bring Chutz L'aretz with them. They bring everything with them. They were once Bnei Torah and now they are working people. They go to Eretz Yisrael, you would think they would come to Eretz Yisrael that you should dress like Bnei Torah, you should talk and walk like Bnei Torah. Your

interests should be in jeeping? That is why you go to Eretz Yisrael to go jeeping? Imagine, someone comes into a Beis Medrash and he is sitting in the Beis Medrash and what is he doing in the Beis Medrash? He has the ingredients and he is making himself some fancy desert sitting in middle of the Beis Medrash. Nothing Treif, it is a Kosher desert. In middle of the Beis Medrash? That is what you do, you go jeeping in middle of the Ribbono Shel Olam's Eretz Yisrael? Rachmana Litzlon! It is not what Eretz Yisrael is for.

2 – Topic – The Chida's message about Tumah

In Parshas Chukas we learn of course about the Parah Aduma. There is an incredible Chida in Nachal Kiddumim on Koheles Perek Zayin. The Chida says Si'ba, the reason, She'ainenu B'madreigas Hatorah, that we are not on the same Madreiga of Torah is because Ain Lanu Parah Adumah, it is because we are Tamei. Tamei is not just a ritual Tumah, something that is a side Halacha. It affects the person. A person who is Tamei is not the same as a person who is Tahor. His heart is not opened the same way for Limud Hatorah. He says that that is why the Posuk in Tehillim 12:7 says (אֲמָרוֹת יְרֹרָה, אֲמָרוֹת טְהוֹרוֹת). (אֲמָרוֹת יְרֹרָה, אֲמָרוֹת טְהוֹרוֹת) when are the Imros Hashem fully Imros Hashem? It is when they are Tehoros. When people are saying it in a Tahor'dika Oifen. That is what it says in the Chida. We have to realize, that Inyanei Tumah are not just a side Halacha of Tumah, they are B'etzem Devarim that are Tamei because they are Tamei.

The Rambam writes in the end of Hilchos Mikvaos 11:12 that (הטבילה תלוי בכוונת הלב). Tovelung to become Tahor is Talui in the Kavana of the heart. (ולפיכך אמרו חכמים טבל ולא הוחזק כאילו לא) (טבל). You have to be thinking when you are Tovelung. That means becoming Tahor is more than just a ritual thing. It is something which has to do with the person himself. Which has to do with the person who is Tovelung and he is doing it for a reason to be an Ish Tahor.

Now we understand why Ezra was Misakein that even though today we are not Tahor and we can't eat Terumah and we can't Challah even if we are Kohanim, we can't go in the Beis Hamikdash. So if you are a Baal Keri and you have a certain type of Tumah, why go to the Mikvah, you are Tamei Meis anyway so it is not going to help you for other things?

The answer is because Tumah is something that affects the person. Tumah is something that is B'etzem. It is a Shod that people are not careful in Tevillas Ezra. Many people are careful, more people should be. To be careful to Tovel Tevillas Ezra. When someone is a Baal Keri to go to the Mikvah.

Rav Pam did not go to the Mikvah necessarily on Erev Shabbos. He didn't have a Minhag to go. He was a Litvishe. But Tevillas Ezra he told me he was always Zahir in.

It is very similar, there was a Chashuve Yid who had the Zechus of driving Rav Moshe to Shul every morning. His son was learning in Torah Vodaath and somebody asked his son does Rav Moshe go to the Mikvah before Shacharis? It is a funny thing, he goes Sundays and he doesn't go Fridays. He couldn't understand why. This is because Onah of a Talmid Chochom is Erev Shabbos to Erev Shabbos so Tevillas Ezra came up to him on Sunday. That is the important idea that we need to understand.

3 – Topic – A beautiful Maharal at the end of Parshas Chukas

I want to mention to you the last Rashi in Chukas. He brings there the Medrash about Sichon Melech Og who picked up a mountain to throw it on Klal Yisrael and a worm made a hole in the mountain and it fell over his head and became like a necklace and he wanted to pull it off and his teeth grew long and it got stuck in the mountain and he couldn't pull it off. An incredible Medrash. It is a Gemara in Berachos Nun Daled and Rashi alludes to it and tells you to look it up in the last Rashi in the Parsha 21:35 (ויכני אתו).

I mention it because of the Maharal. There is a long Maharal on that last Rashi. That one Maharal is probably as long as all of the Maharals on the whole Parshas Chukas or nearly as long. I told you many times that there is a Machlokes Maharsha and Maharal. The Maharal Teitches Aggadata Gemaras B'derech Mashul and not literally. Maharsha says Ain Medrash Yotzei Midei Peshuto generally. There are some exceptions but generally. But the Maharal he Teitches it B'derech Remez.

There is a beautiful Maharal at the end of the Parsha and if you want to see it in the Gur Aryeh which just shows you the She'efes HaMaharal that I have mentioned on other occasions.

And so, three thoughts. 1) Preparing to go to Eretz Yisrael and leaving behind Chutz L'aretz. When you go into a Shul you have to leave behind Chutz L'aretz. I wish people would use the lockers and leave their phones and especially their smartphones behind. 2) The Chida's message about Tumah. Tumah Biz'man Haze is also M'akeiv a person's understanding of Torah. 3) This last Nekudah of the beautiful Maharal at the end of the Parsha. With that I want to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Chukas 5782

1 – Topic – A Thought on Parah Adumah

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas. I would like today to suggest a possible explanation in Rashi back in Parshas Beshalach 15:25 on the Posuk (שָׁם שָׁם לוֹ חֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט) that (במרה נתן להם) (מקצת פרשיות של תורה שיתעסקו בהם, שבת ופרה אדומה ודינין) and the question is what Parah Adumah is doing in Parshas Beshalach at Marah and there are numerous questions.

Let's turn to Parshas Chukas which of course begins with the Parah Adumah. When was the very first Parah Adumah brought and who were the very first people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah? As a Levi I am proud to say that Leviim were the first and let me explain.

The Gemara says in Gittin on 60a (second to bottom line) (שמנה פרשיות נאמרו ביום שהוקם בו המשכן). There are eight Parshios told to the Jewish people on the day that the Mishkan was put up, meaning Rosh Chodesh Nissan, and one of them is the Parsha of Parah Adumah. Rashi there (Daf Samech Amud Beis) says (לפי שביום המחרת נשרפה הפרה). Rashi says that these eight Parshios were on Rosh Chodesh Nissan and on Beis Nissan the first Parah Adumah was burned (וקודם לכן לא יכלו לעשותה). Rashi says that the Parah could not have been earlier (דבעינן והזה אל נכח פני אהל מועד), because you

have to be able to Shpritz and face towards the Ohel Moed and there was no Ohel Moed until the Mishkan was put up.

As an aside, I don't know why they could not do it in the previous days, in the days when Moshe Rabbeinu set up the Ohel Moed, but there must be a reason. Coming back to our discussion.

Here we are talking about what Rashi said and there is a similar Rashi in Parshas Naso 7:1 (וראש (חדש ניסן היה, בשני נשרפה הפרה). On the second day of Nissan the Parah was burned. When were the first people made Tahor with it? (בשלישי) On the third day of Nissan. Rashi says (הזו הזיה ראשונה) was the first time that there were people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah and that is in being Metaheir Sheivet Levi. So that is the timeline of the Parah Adumah. Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught, Beis Nissan they actually went through the process of burning the Parah Adumah, and on Gimmel Nissan the first people were made Tahor in preparation for the Avodah in the Mishkan.

The question is if on Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught the Parah Adumah what in the world happened in Marah which occurred in Nissan a year earlier. What is going on? So I would imagine the following might be the answer. The Parah Adumah is a Parah, a calf. A Parah Adumah you will find because you will find a red cow. HKB"Y will make it there. However, why would the owner of the cow not work with the Parah? As it says in 19:2 (אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עֲלָה עָלֶיהָ, עַל). Why would he never put a yoke on it, it is an animal? It may well be that it is true that the Parsha of Parah Adumah and all the details were said on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. It is not a contradiction that at Marah they had to be told that there are coming attractions. You are going to get a Mitzvah of Parah Adumah, to whoever in Klal Yisrael has the Zechus that he has a cow and its hairs are all red, he should make sure to treat it with the proper Kedusha that when the time comes you will have a Parah Adumah.

2 – Topic - A Thought about Mai Miriva

The second major event in the Parsha is the Mei Miriva and Meforshim discuss the idea of what Moshe Rabbeinu's Aveira was exactly, as it is very difficult to put your finger on it and different Meforshim have different explanations. I am not going into what the Aveira was but the whole Musag, the whole idea that there is a major difference if a stone gives water whether you talk to it or whether you hit it, Mai Nafka Mina? Is one really a bigger miracle than the other? You hit a rock, you talk to a rock, same miracle. It is just as miraculous. Therefore, it needs some sort of explanation what is the difference.

In the Pachad Yitzchok on Pesach, Maimar Mem (page Kuf Yud Ches), he has an explanation with a Biur Klali, with a general rule. He says the following. There are two types of Nissim, two types of miracles. Sometimes a miracle takes place because at that moment the result of the miracle is needed. For example, Rav Chanina Ben Dosa miraculously said (Taanis 25a) (מי שאמר לשמן וידלוק) (הוא יאמר לחומץ וידלוק). He said, that G-d can make that vinegar could burn just like oil could burn. It was a miracle for what was needed at that moment.

There are other types of miracles. There are some miracles that are in an Ofen Klali, that they are statements for the Briya Kula. For example, Makkas Bechoros which was not just the death of

members of the enemy nation, no. It was a Havchana, it was a time that B'ni Bechori Yisrael, G-d calls the Jewish people His Bechor, and there was a clear separation forever, a clarity that Klal Yisrael and the nations of the world are different. That clarity came out with Makkas Bechoros. It was a Davar Klali, it was a miracle in a way of Hivdalti Eschem Li. It created the idea of a Havdala, of a separating of Klal Yisrael from the nations of the world.

Krias Yam Suf was also a miracle B'ofen Klali, it was a statement. All the waters of the world split. It was a statement of the individual status of Klal Yisrael. So we find Pinchas Ben Yair that the Gemara in Chulin 7a brings that he split water, but it is not Krias Yam Suf. That is a Neis in the first type, Nissim L'tzorech Ha'rega, but on a much higher level are the miracles that HKB"H performed through Moshe Rabbeinu which were Nissim Ha'poalim B'briya Kula. The miracle of the water coming from the stone by speaking should have been a miracle B'ofen Ha'poalim B'briya Kula, should have been a Mussar that in the Briya there is a Koach Haddibur, there is a Koach of listening to the words of the Navi and having that influence and being Poel through that. There is a certain Koach, there is a certain influence that would have happened in the world. Moshe Rabbeinu hit the rock. There are things that happened because of Dibbur Hashem and things that happened because of Gevuras Hashem. This should have happened because of Dibbur Hashem. It would have been Poel in the Koach of G-d's word to influence the Jewish people. Instead it was Poel in a lesser way. In the power of the Gevura, in the hitting to influence. It is not the same. It was a major difference between the two and that major difference between the way HKB"H said it should be done and the way that it actually took place, that major difference is the failing of the Mai Miriva, whatever it is that happened there.

3 – Topic – A Thought on the Siyum of Masechta Yevamos of the Daf Yomi

I would like to pause and comment about the fact that Daf Yomi is finishing Masheches Yevamos. Jews all over, hundreds, thousands of Jews are finishing a very difficult study of Mascheta Yevamos to which Jews have been devoted with I guess different levels of success and Mesiras Nefesh. It is not easy to make a Siyum on Yevamos.

My birthday just passed and I am a bit philosophical. If you will allow me a thought as an outsider, I am not learning Daf Yomi, as someone observing that which is taking place. When I was born just a decade or so after the Holocaust, the Yiddishe Velt, the Am Yisroel was in tatters, was destroyed. Baranovich didn't exist. Rav Elchonon went to the gas chambers. Telz didn't exist. Mir didn't exist. Salbodka didn't exist. There was nothing. Krakow and Bobove Chassidus was gone. The Yidden in Vilna were no more. Yidden in every one of the Jewish cities in Warsaw, Alexander Chassidim, Gerrer Chassidim was gone. Everything was gone.

My father went back to his hometown and turned around and left, there was nothing there. There was nothing Jewish there. All the places that were Jewish places were gone. Klal Yisrael is here. It is incredible. Here we are from the day I was born until today, and Klal Yisrael has rebuilt itself. It is incredible. I walk past the Yeshiva schoolyard, I see Yiddishe Kinder, children with their Tzitzis flying, with their Yarmulkas and they are Shomer Torah U'mitzvos as a Pashtus. They go and sit and learn for hours every day. Here we have working people devoted to learning Yevamos. It is a miracle, it is an incredible thing. The whole Yiddishe Folk whatever existed 100 years ago no longer existed. There was nothing there. Nothing from before still existed afterwards. There

Let's turn to Parshas Chukas which of course begins with the Parah Adumah. When was the very first Parah Adumah brought and who were the very first people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah? As a Levi I am proud to say that Leviim were the first and let me explain.

The Gemara says in Gittin on 60a (second to bottom line) (שמנה פרשיות נאמרו ביום שהוקם בו המשכן). There are eight Parshios told to the Jewish people on the day that the Mishkan was put up, meaning Rosh Chodesh Nissan, and one of them is the Parsha of Parah Adumah. Rashi there (Daf Samech Amud Beis) says (לפי שביום המחרת נשרפה הפרה). Rashi says that these eight Parshios were on Rosh Chodesh Nissan and on Beis Nissan the first Parah Adumah was burned (וקודם לכן לא יכלו לעשותה). Rashi says that the Parah could not have been earlier (דבעינן והזה אל נכה פני אהל מועד), because you have to be able to Shpritz and face towards the Ohel Moed and there was no Ohel Moed until the Mishkan was put up.

As an aside, I don't know why they could not do it in the previous days, in the days when Moshe Rabbeinu set up the Ohel Moed, but there must be a reason. Coming back to our discussion.

Here we are talking about what Rashi said and there is a similar Rashi in Parshas Naso 7:1 (וראש (חדש ניסן היה, בשני נשרפה הפרה). On the second day of Nissan the Parah was burned. When were the first people made Tahor with it? (בשלישי) On the third day of Nissan. Rashi says (הזו הזיה ראשונה) was the first time that there were people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah and that is in being Metaheir Sheivet Levi. So that is the timeline of the Parah Adumah. Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught, Beis Nissan they actually went through the process of burning the Parah Adumah, and on Gimmel Nissan the first people were made Tahor in preparation for the Avodah in the Mishkan.

The question is if on Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught the Parah Adumah what in the world happened in Marah which occurred in Nissan a year earlier. What is going on? So I would imagine the following might be the answer. The Parah Adumah is a Parah, a calf. A Parah Adumah you will find because you will find a red cow. HKB"Y will make it there. However, why would the owner of the cow not work with the Parah? As it says in 19:2 (אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עֲלָה עָלֶיהָ, עַל). Why would he never put a yoke on it, it is an animal? It may well be that it is true that the Parsha of Parah Adumah and all the details were said on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. It is not a contradiction that at Marah they had to be told that there are coming attractions. You are going to get a Mitzvah of Parah Adumah, to whoever in Klal Yisrael has the Zechus that he has a cow and its hairs are all red, he should make sure to treat it with the proper Kedusha that when the time comes you will have a Parah Adumah.

2 – Topic - A Thought about Mai Miriva

The second major event in the Parsha is the Mei Miriva and Meforshim discuss the idea of what Moshe Rabbeinu's Aveira was exactly, as it is very difficult to put your finger on it and different Meforshim have different explanations. I am not going into what the Aveira was but the whole Musag, the whole idea that there is a major difference if a stone gives water whether you talk to it or whether you hit it, Mai Nafka Mina? Is one really a bigger miracle than the other? You hit a rock, you talk to a rock, same miracle. It is just as miraculous. Therefore, it needs some sort of explanation what is the difference.

In the Pachad Yitzchok on Pesach, Maimar Mem (page Kuf Yud Ches), he has an explanation with a Biur Klali, with a general rule. He says the following. There are two types of Nissim, two types of miracles. Sometimes a miracle takes place because at that moment the result of the miracle is needed. For example, Rav Chanina Ben Dosa miraculously said (Taanis 25a) (**מי שאמר לשמן וידלוק**) (**הוא יאמר לחומץ וידלוק**). He said, that G-d can make that vinegar could burn just like oil could burn. It was a miracle for what was needed at that moment.

There are other types of miracles. There are some miracles that are in an Ofen Klali, that they are statements for the Briya Kula. For example, Makkas Bechoros which was not just the death of members of the enemy nation, no. It was a Havchana, it was a time that B'ni Bechori Yisrael, G-d calls the Jewish people His Bechor, and there was a clear separation forever, a clarity that Klal Yisrael and the nations of the world are different. That clarity came out with Makkas Bechoros. It was a Davar Klali, it was a miracle in a way of Hivdalti Eschem Li. It created the idea of a Havdala, of a separating of Klal Yisrael from the nations of the world.

Krias Yam Suf was also a miracle B'ofen Klali, it was a statement. All the waters of the world split. It was a statement of the individual status of Klal Yisrael. So we find Pinchas Ben Yair that the Gemara in Chulin 7a brings that he split water, but it is not Krias Yam Suf. That is a Neis in the first type, Nissim L'tzorech Ha'rega, but on a much higher level are the miracles that HKB"H performed through Moshe Rabbeinu which were Nissim Ha'poalim B'briya Kula. The miracle of the water coming from the stone by speaking should have been a miracle B'ofen Ha'poalim B'briya Kula, should have been a Mussar that in the Briya there is a Koach Haddibur, there is a Koach of listening to the words of the Navi and having that influence and being Poel through that. There is a certain Koach, there is a certain influence that would have happened in the world. Moshe Rabbeinu hit the rock. There are things that happened because of Dibbur Hashem and things that happened because of Gevuras Hashem. This should have happened because of Dibbur Hashem. It would have been Poel in the Koach of G-d's word to influence the Jewish people. Instead it was Poel in a lesser way. In the power of the Gevura, in the hitting to influence. It is not the same. It was a major difference between the two and that major difference between the way HKB"H said it should be done and the way that it actually took place, that major difference is the failing of the Mai Miriva, whatever it is that happened there.

3 – Topic – A Thought on the Siyum of Masechta Yevamos of the Daf Yomi

I would like to pause and comment about the fact that Daf Yomi is finishing Masheches Yevamos. Jews all over, hundreds, thousands of Jews are finishing a very difficult study of Mascheta Yevamos to which Jews have been devoted with I guess different levels of success and Mesiras Nefesh. It is not easy to make a Siyum on Yevamos.

My birthday just passed and I am a bit philosophical. If you will allow me a thought as an outsider, I am not learning Daf Yomi, as someone observing that which is taking place. When I was born just a decade or so after the Holocaust, the Yiddishe Velt, the Am Yisroel was in tatters, was destroyed. Baranovich didn't exist. Rav Elchonon went to the gas chambers. Telz didn't exist. Mir didn't exist. Salbodka didn't exist. There was nothing. Krakow and Bobove Chassidus was gone.

The Yidden in Vilna were no more. Yidden in every one of the Jewish cities in Warsaw, Alexander Chassidim, Gerrer Chassidim was gone. Everything was gone.

My father went back to his hometown and turned around and left, there was nothing there. There was nothing Jewish there. All the places that were Jewish places were gone. Klal Yisrael is here. It is incredible. Here we are from the day I was born until today, and Klal Yisrael has rebuilt itself. It is incredible. I walk past the Yeshiva schoolyard, I see Yiddishe Kinder, children with their Tzitzis flying, with their Yarmulkas and they are Shomer Torah U'mitzvos as a Pashtus. They go and sit and learn for hours every day. Here we have working people devoted to learning Yevamos. It is a miracle, it is an incredible thing. The whole Yiddishe Folk whatever existed 100 years ago no longer existed. There was nothing there. Nothing from before still existed afterwards. There was nothing in America. Eretz Yisrael had just tens of thousands of Jews. Everything was destroyed and Klal Yisrael is celebrating a Siyum on Yevamos. The length and breadth of the Torah world, every Shul has people finishing Yevamos. It is an incredible accomplishment.

You have to stop and pause for a minute. Some learned Yevamos like someone who sees something without his glasses, without a good focus. Some learned Yevamos with a better focus. Some made it through every Blatt. Some struggled through many Blatt. But Yidden are Huruving on Yevamos.

Here in camp I sit and I look out the window and I see Yiddishe Kinder, Jewish children. 1,000 Nefashos here all running to Shacharis. Some come late, some come early, some come on time, some oversleep. But there are hundreds in the Beis Medrash. There are a number of Batei Medrashim. They are Davening to the Ribbono Shel Olam. After such a Churban, that Klal Yisrael is here, we are here in full force. We have suffered a lot, we lost many. We lost millions in the Holocaust and we lost many millions more to assimilation. Klal Yisrael is here. Devarim 31:21 (רעות רבות, וצרות). (וענתה השירה הזאת). That is the last century. (רעות רבות, וצרות). (כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו). The Posuk says at the end of Vayeilech. The Torah speaks up (לפניי לעד). The Posuk says at the end of Vayeilech. The Torah speaks up (כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו) it will not be forgotten. Just incredible that so many of you are finishing Masechtas Yevamos, getting ready to start Masechtas Kesubos with a devotion, with a dedication. People who work, people who are in businesses, people who spend many hours on Parnasa. Stop for a minute and think of where HKB"Y has brought us. It is an absolutely incredible moment.

May HKB"Y give us the strength we should be able to be Sovel. We have problems in America today, I don't know what is going to be. But one thing I know, Klal Yisrael will continue. The Nitzchios of Klal Yisrael, the Nitzchios of Lomdei Torah will continue. What will happen to those around us? They become lost, they are lost and they don't come back. The Habsburg empire who ever heard of it? The Ottoman empire who ever heard of it? Today's generation doesn't know that they ever existed. There were Czars and they are gone forever. Klal Yisrael pushes on. May we be Zoche to appreciate the wonderful opportunities that HKB"Y gives us and the Beracha that Klal Yisrael has. (כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו). We should be Zoche to have children, grandchildren and great grandchildren learning Torah B'simcha Rabba. Let's celebrate with the Tefillah (כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו). Mazal Tov to all the Mesayemim of Masechtas Yevamos. May you continue with your strength be part of this beautiful rebirth of Klal Yisrael. A Gutten Shabbos one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas - Balak 5780

1 - Topic - A Vort on Bil'am from the Ohr Gedalyahu

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas - Balak. I would like to talk a little bit about Parshas Balak. For us in Chutz L'aretz it is Parshas Chukas - Balak. I know that there are some who are listening from Eretz Yisrael where it is Parshas Balak. So if Balak is Shava La'kol let's talk about Parshas Balak.

In the Ohr Gedalyahu (page 147) there is an extraordinary piece based on the writings of Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin on the concept of Nevuah. How Nevuah works. Anybody who studies Navi should learn the piece. I would like to quote one segment of that extraordinary Shtickel Torah.

What is the Hava Amina that Bil'am had that he would somehow be able to curse Klal Yisrael. Bil'am knew the score, Bil'am knew that we are the Am Hashem, Bil'am knew that it was a time of Rachamei Shamayim. What in the world was Bil'am thinking?

The Klal that is used there to explain this is a Klal that is really a Klal in life. The Klal in life is that most things in life are not black or white. Most things in life depend. Depend on how they are received, depend on how they are used, depend on how they are taken advantage of. Most things in life depend on the recipient.

For example, we know that Chol Hachalomos Holchin Acher Ha'peh. We are told about the interpretation of dreams which are of course related to Nevuah. Chalom Echad Mei'Shishim B'nevuah depends on the interpretation. However you understand that exactly, but it means that there is no absolute value to Chalomos, it depends. Everything depends.

The example here would be the Beracha of Bil'am, Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov. How beautiful are your tents Yaakov (Klal Yisrael). It is a Beracha. But it depends as there will be Jews who will say Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov and say why am I going to the Beis Medrash at night. Jewish homes are an attraction, they are a place to serve HKB"H. So you see that the blessing of Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov depends on the recipient. It depends on what someone takes from that Beracha.

It could also be twisted, it could be turned. Since Bil'am was the Poser Chalomos, just like somebody who has dreams, we say dreams go according to the Pison, the one giving the words of Beracha could see it one way, another way and many places in between.

So this was Bil'am's idea. Bil'am's thought was that he was going to give Klal Yisrael a Beracha, but the Beracha through his prism, through his vision, through his eyeglasses. Therefore, it will depend on the recipient. It is not only true in that case, it is true until today. When we say Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov, we take pride in a Jewish home. There are many who will take that and use it improperly and stay home and not go out to the Beis Medrash at night. That is a mistake. That is, those are the two sides of every Beracha that anybody has in this world.

The Gemara in Megillah says on Daf Yud Daled (Amud Beis) that Yoshiyahu Hamelech went to Chuldah to ask for an interpretation of something that had happened. Chuldah Haneviah. Chuldah

was a Neviah. The Gemara asks why didn't he go to Yirmiya and the answer is that Nashim Rachmanios Heim. The question is what do you mean that Nashim Rachmanios Heim? A Nevuah is a Nevuah. Says Reb Yehoshua Leib Diskin, it is this idea. The same words can come in many different ways to people. What did HKB"H do? He gave Bil'am the ability to get Nevuah B'aspaklaria Hami'ira, like Moshe Rabbeinu, with absolute clarity. The Nevuah could not be interpreted in two ways.

But the message of Reb Yehoshua Leib is that in life there are moments that are opportunities. There are moments that are opportunities for growth, there are moments that could be a Beracha, that could be a person's biggest Beracha. Or they could be a Klala. Or they could be anything in between. It is all in what you make of it.

With this very unique summer upon us, it is very much that way. It is a summer for the Tinokos Shel Beis Rabbon, for the youngsters, for the elementary school children, Mesivta children, many who have been out of a schedule, out of sorts, out of a sense of security and continuity for so many months.

What are we doing this summer? What are we doing to make it work for them? A person could say Shalom Alai Nasfshi, things are better, they are easier. It could be a Klala. It could be a time where the regimen, the routine, does not resume. Where people are busy on vacation, after a March, April, May and June of no schedule. Chas V'shalom. We need to get back to the schedule.

The Beracha of the break in the seriousness of the Matzav of the situation here on the east coast, is that if used properly there could be a regular schedule for youngsters and for everybody in the morning. People who are learning the Daf get back to the Daf. People with Sedorim that never missed a Seder, a Minyan or learning, get back to that routine. There is a fact that things are lighter and easier in our area a Beracha or G-d forbid a Klala? It depends on how it is received.

This year, July and August are not months to let up, they are months to buckle down. They are months to buckle down not in a strictness, but in a sense of responsibility, of Achrayos. That is Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin's explanation of Bilam's idea.

2 - Topic - The unique person Bil'am Harasha from Rav Ahron Leib Shteinman.

Let's move on to another Machshava regarding this very unique person Bilam Harasha. Reb Ahron Leib Shteinman asks a Kasha. Rashi tells us that HKB"H didn't want the Umos Ha'olam, the nations of the world to have a complaint. That look at this, Nevuah comes to the Jewish people and the nations of the world do not have Nevuah. So therefore, HKB"H chose one of them to be a prophet as well and that was Bil'am.

The Kasha is the Umos Ha'olam can complain. Ribbono Shel Olam, you chose one of us to be a prophet, to be a Navi? To be a Navi with a clarity of Aspaklaria Hami'ira, a clear Nevua? Why did you choose Bil'am? Bil'am is a Rasha. Bil'am was a Rasha in so many different ways. Many aspects of his life where he was a pervert. He was a person who was not to be respected. He was a person who had Nevuah and was only interested in gold and silver. Ribbono Shel Olam, a Rasha like this is the one chosen to be a Navi?

The answer again is a Klal Gadol in the way HKB"H runs our world. Zeh L'umas Zeh Asa Elokim. HKB"H creates a world where the potential for positive, Tzidkus, the potential for greatness, is mirrored on the flipside with a potential for a person to pervert his job in this world. A person who is wealthier, who is brighter, who is more influential, has a greater potential to achieve, and he also has a greater potential to destroy. Just like in one direction there are great possibilities, so too in the direction of destruction there are unfortunate possibilities.

Zeh L'umas Zeh Asa Elokim. Therefore, it is inherent in creating an opportunity for someone to be great that he has a potential to fall also in an extraordinary way. Zeh L'umas Zeh, if someone has extraordinary Kochos, extraordinary potential for greatness, he also has extraordinary potential to fall, to do things that are improper.

The Tiferes Yisrael at the end of Kiddushin writes, how Moshe Rabbeinu achieved greatness and he personally had the Nisyonos, the challenges, to fall in an extraordinary way. We don't meet Moshe Rabbeinu until he is 80 years old. Who knows how many challenges he went through until he reached his great level of Kedusha. That is something that we have to see going forward as well. Every moment of Nisayon, every moment of opportunity, as great as the opportunity is in front of you, so great is also the opportunity for failure.

And the reverse. When a person feels that HKB"H is giving him a great Nisayon, a great challenge, he should know that success makes it a moment where he can achieve a greater and greater level, something that will stick with him for the rest of his life.

Once again, this message of Bil'am is a message for these times that are so uncertain. They are times which we all understand are of great Nisayon. They are times where people have become Rachmana Litzlan addicted to different things that take place when a person is locked up at home all alone and searches for pleasures that he shouldn't have. When someone touches on that type of a challenge, it is a moment for a potential of great failure. But it is also a moment of potential for great achievement. For turning it around and making it wonderful. And so, as we face what is in our lifetime the most uncertain period ahead of us, we take energy, we take strength from the belief, that wherever there is a potential for failure there is a potential for greatness. We are going to make it a time of greatness. These are two thoughts regarding Bil'am.

3 - Topic - My favorite Vertel on Parshas Balak.

My favorite Vertel regarding Parshas Balak comes from the great Ohev Yisrael. The Ohev Yisrael was a lover of the Jewish people, and he said every Parsha has a message of Ahavas Yisrael. Someone asked him, what about Parshas Balak? There is barely a mention of any Jew in the entire Parsha from the beginning to end. Where do you see Ahavas Yisrael?

He said easily. In Balak. It is an abbreviation for V'ahavta L'rei'acha Kamocha. It is a Remez in the name Balak. Someone said Rebbe, V'ahavta starts with a Vav. Balak is a Beis or Veis. Kamocha starts with a Caf and Balak is spelled with a Kuf.

The Rebbe replied, when it comes to Ahavas Yisrael we don't ask Kashas, we just move forward. Let us move forward in a meaningful way. Have a meaningful summer. A summer of greatness, a summer of achievement for you, for me, for all of us and certainly for those of us courageous enough to make this incredibly long trip out to New Hampshire. For what reason?

To be Mechaneich Yaldei Yisrael. To help young men be part of a system, be part of a schedule, be part of a place that is devoted to Ahavas Hashem to Ahavas Yisrael. Being Ovdei Hashem. IY"H we should be Zoche to come to a regular Yeshiva Zman with great Hatzlacha. A Gutten and meaningful Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5779

1 - Topic - A thought on the Parah Adumah.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas, a Parsha that has many episodes of Klal Yisrael in the Midbar. It jumps 38 years from the beginning of the Parsha by the Parah Aduma to the rest of the Parsha which is 38 years later, the rest of the Sippur of Klal Yisrael in the Midbar.

Let's start from the beginning of the Parsha and the Parah Aduma where it says as is found in 19:3 (וַיִּצְוֶה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר; וְהוֹצִיא אֶת־הַפָּרָה אֶל־מַחֲוֵץ לַמַּחֲנֶה, וְשַׁחַט אֶת־הָאֵדָמָה לְפָנָיו) (ויבדקינה בתמניסרי טריפן), that he had to do a Bedika for the different types of Treifos that might be found in an animal. It is a Pliya as the Gemara in Chullin 11a (9 lines from the bottom) says that we go Basar Rov and we don't check the Parah Aduma because we assume that most B'heimos are not Treifos.

Yonasan Ben Uziel is a Tanna and he can conceivably argue and say that we do check. However, the Gemara says that there is a Drasha of (וְשַׁחַט וְשָׂרַף מֵה שְׁחִיטָתָהּ כִּשְׁחִיטָתָהּ שְׁלֵמָה אִם שְׂרִיפָתָהּ כִּשְׁחִיטָהּ) (שלמה). That just like the Shechita of the Parah Aduma is when it is whole, the same thing that the S'reifa is when it is whole and it is not Muttar to cut it up. It needs something of an explanation.

The Har Tzvi in the Teshuvos of Yor'e Dai'a Teshuva Mem Hei says that this can be understood along the lines of the Darkei Moshe in Yor'e Dai'a Siman Lamed Hei which I mentioned in a previous Shiur. The Darkei Moshe there brings from Rav Yehuda Hachasid, a Siman to test an animal for Treifos is to put your hands on the head of the animal and press down on the animal. The Siman is that if when you push down on the animal it lowers its head and it succumbs to your pressure, that is a sign that the B'heima is Kosher. If the animal stiffens up and pushes back, that is a sign that the animal is Treif. The Siman the Rama brings is as is found in Tehillim 51:19 (לֹא־תִבְזֶה לִבִּי--אֶל־רֵיב, לֹא תִבְזֶה). That a broken heart Hashem is not Mevazeh. In other words, someone who lowers himself is a Kosher.

Therefore, it may well be that they Takeh did not cut up the animal and what Yonasan Ben Uziel says is that they did this type of a Bedika that they pressed down on the animal to see if it resisted the pressure or succumbed to the pressure to know if the animal was Treif or not. A beautiful idea, a beautiful Yesod.

But one minute, you are going to ask me if so let's get back to the Gemara that says that you know that you go Basar Rov because we have a right to assume that a Parah Aduma is Kosher. But according to the Darkei Moshe how can you learn Rov, maybe they did this Bedikah by pressing their hand down on the head of the animal?

The answer would be that it is not a Kasha. The world of Halacha works with Halacha and does not work with Inyanei Seguli, it does not work with these types of tricks. The world of Halacha is built on the physical world. It is not a Kasha because it could be that the Kohen Gadol did this type of a Bedika to ascertain, to know whether the animal was a Treifa, but it has nothing to do with Halacha.

I remember that I once asked Rav Pam a Kasha. It says in Shulchan Aruch that a person should not give more than a fifth of his income for Tzedaka because maybe he will become poor and he will have to rely on the Tzibbur.

I asked Rav Pam, but the Gemara says in Bava Basra 10a (23 lines from the top) that (דרש ר"י) (ברבי שלום כשם שמזונותיו של אדם קצובין לו מראש השנה כך חסרונותיו של אדם קצובין לו מראש השנה). Just like your income is set from Rosh Hashana to Rosh Hashana so too your expenses and when you spend money on Tzedaka you won't have to spend it on other financial losses. If so, how would a person become poor if he gave more than a Chomesh of his Nechasim to Tzedaka if it will come off of his expenses?

Rav Pam answered that Halacha doesn't work with Devarim Seguli. Halacha works with physical facts. Mimeila everything is good. In the Bais Hamikdash the Kohen Gadol who was a Kadosh V'tahor did a Davar Seguli, however, Halacha relies on Rov.

2 - Topic - The importance of having a connection with HKB"H and the end of your days.

Let us move now to the end of the Parsha. Towards the end of the Parsha in 20:3 Klal Yisrael complains and says (וְלוֹ יִגָּעוּ בְּגִיעַ אֶחָיו). Halevai we would have died together with our brothers Lifnei Hashem. A Davar Pele!

Rashi says (במיתת אחינו בדבר, למד שמיתת צמא מגונה ממנה). What do you mean that they should have died earlier, they lived all of these extra years. Rashi says no. They said dying from thirst is the worst. It would have been Kedai to die years earlier and not to die from this terrible thirst.

The Gemara says in Bava Basra 8b (14 lines from the top) (טובים היו הללי הרב מחללי רעב). That it is better to die normally than to die at the end of a sword. It is better to die at the end of a sword than from hunger.

The Gemara in Berachos 8a (28 lines from the top) goes through different types of deaths which are better and which are worse. All of these Gemaras disturb me. What is the message? A person doesn't choose how to die. What is the message in these ideas?

Rav Schwab in Parshas Beshalach 16:3 (page 173) says a wonderful and an important insight. Rav Schwab says that the ideal would be if a person when it is time for him to leave this world should

have the presence of mind, the calmness to connect to HKB"H. After all, this world is a Prozdor, it is a preparation room, the Traklin to prepare for the Yeshiva Shel Maila. How a person goes out of the world is extremely important.

Zagt Rav Schwab, (שמיתת צמא מגונה ממנה). When a person dies because he didn't have what to drink, it is a painful death. It is a death that doesn't allow a person the presence of mind to connect to HKB"H at the time that he dies. The point here being, that the idea of something being a better death or a worse death has to do with at the time of death being able to connect to HKB"H. It is an important message. The message is that you should know that everything depends on how well you connect to HKB"H.

The Gemara says in Berachos 8a (23 lines from the top) (על זאת יתפלל כל חסיד אליך לעת מצא) which is found in Tehillim 32:6. A Chossid should Daven for this (לעת מצא). (רב נחמן בר יצחק אמר לעת). (מצא זו מיתה). A person should Daven that when the Yom Hamisa comes that it should be as Rashi says (שימות במיתה יפה ונחה). How a person leaves the world is so important.

Rav Schwab says that this is the message of this. I was thinking, that we say in our Tefilla when we enter the Sukkah, we have a strange Bakasha. (ותתן לי זכות לשבת ולחסות בסתר צל כנפוך - בעת). (פטירתו מן העולם). Give me the Zechus to be sitting and resting under your protective wings when I leave the world.

The Kasha is that when you Daven, you should Daven that when you die you should be Zoche to this? You should Daven that when you live you should be Zoche to this! The answer is no, we Daven that at the time when we leave the world we should have the Zechus, the presence of mind to connect to HKB"H.

It is fascinating that right before that part of (ותתן לי זכות), it says (ולרעבים גם צמאים תן לחמם ומימם) (הנאמנים). We Daven that Hashem should give food and drink to people that are starving and are thirsty. According to Rav Schwab there is an important connection.

The importance of all this is that sometimes we are connected to people, people that we love that are dying, they are on the way out. It is very painful to watch. What we need to do as those who are well is to help them and be able to help them put on Tefillin those last days if they have presence of mind. (Putting Tefillin on someone in a coma is not a Mitzvah at all). But if someone has some presence of mind, to put on Tefillin on the person. Or to say Shema, to make a Beracha with the person or talk to the person about Emunah. So that when a person is Zoche to leave this world, he should leave the world in a way that (לשבת ולחסות בסתר צל כנפוך - בעת פטירתו מן העולם). A very important message.

3 - Topic - A question for the week.

I want to leave you with a Kasha that I have asked many people and certainly needs an explanation. We say as is found in the Gemara in Maseches Chullin 7b (18 lines from the bottom) (גדולים צדיקים במיתתו יותר מבהיותו). That Tzadikim when they die are greater than when they live. You hear sometimes at Levayas that people say a Tzaddik is greater when he dies, let him be Po'el Zechusim in heaven on our behalf. Yet when Miriam dies, the B'air ends. It seems to be the

influence of her Zechusim wanes, it doesn't increase. When Aharon dies the Ananei Hakavod leaves. When Moshe dies the Man comes to an end.

It seems on the contrary that when they are here in this world, the Zechusim carry. Like we know that when a Tzaddik leaves a city the Zechusim are less. So maybe a Tzaddik for himself has more Zechusim, but to say that he is Po'el Yeshuos more does not seem to be accurate. A question which certainly needs an explanation. Nu! It is good to have Kashas once in a while, it makes for an interesting Seuda.

Wishing one and all a wonderful, meaningful summer vacation. A vacation from many of the other Tir'dos, and working harder on your learning and a meaningful Shabbos Parshas Chukas. A Gutten Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5778

1 - Topic - A New Havana in the Cheit Mei Miriva from the Netziv.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas an extraordinary Parsha with many Mitzvos and the Petira of both Aharon Hakohen and Miriam. I would like to share with you today a new Havana in the Cheit Mei Miriva. As you know, Rishonim bring many Peshatim in what Moshe Rabbeinu did wrong in the Maiseh Mei Miriva and the basic Pshat that the Velt knows is the Pshat of Rashi. Rashi says that Moshe Rabbeinu struck the stone instead of speaking to the stone. It seems at face value to be a very elementary mistake and the Onesh of the Cheit is not very understood.

The Netziv says a Gevaldige Pshat here in the Hameik Davar (on page Reish Lamed). He ties it in to what he calls a Hakdama in an Ikkur Gadol B'tefilla, of a big rule when it comes to Davening and he says the following Klal Gadol. We will get back to Mei Miriva after we understand this Klal.

Zagt the Netziv (אפילו בזמן שרוצה הקב"ה תפילה גורמת). Even when HKB"H plans to give you something, Tefilla expedites that it will take place. Kach Nitveh B'briya. This is what HKB"H put into the world. He put into the Teva of the Briya that even if you are supposed to get something and Hashem wants to give it to you, there are times that it will only come your way if you Daven. The Raya is a beautiful Raya from Eliyahu Hanavi.

When Eliyahu Hanavi declared a drought on the ten Shevatim, the drought continued for a while and then the Ribbono Shel Olam came and said to him (הראה אל אחאב ואתנה מטר). Genukt, the drought is over. I am going to make it rain. You go to Achav and do whatever you can to help give Mussar to Klal Yisrael because the Ribbono Shel Olam said I had enough, no more drought. Eliyahu goes to Har Hacarmel and does what he does at Har Hacarmel to show that the Aish came from Shamayim and then at the end he Davens and rain comes. The question is why does he have to Daven as HKB"H said that it is time to give rain?

Zagt the Netziv, there are two types of Davening. Bish'as Tzara, when in Shamayim we have no Zechusim, that is one type of Davening. Davening can turn it around. There is a second type of

Davening and that is when the Ribbono Shel Olam is ready to give to you, but HKB"H says come pick it up, come here and ask for it, I am ready. Tefilla then makes it happen.

Zagt the Netziv, in a case when the Ribbono Shel Olam is ready to give, there is no difference between the Tefilla of the Gadol Hador and the Tefilla of an ordinary person. When Hashem is ready to give it, all you have to do is come pick it up. Bish'as Tzarah, then you need the Tefilla of an Adam Gadol to be Mehapeich.

The Yesod is that Hashem put into the Briya that Davening makes things happen. Zagt the Netziv, look what I wrote in Beraishis in 2:5. So I looked. (וְכָל שֵׂיִת הַשָּׂדֶה) the things that grow in the field are referred to as (שֵׂיִת הַשָּׂדֶה). Literally, it means the things that grow in the field. But (שֵׂיִת) also means Davening. (אֵיךְ שִׂיחָה אֵלֶּה תְּפִלָּה) it says in Maseches Avoda Zorah 7b (9 lines from the bottom). A field is Parnasa. What grows in a field is called (שֵׂיִת הַשָּׂדֶה). It comes because of Tefilla. It comes because of Davening. Kach Nitveh HKB"H. Hashem put it that way into the Briya.

He says more. Davening is called Avodah. Korbanos are called Avodah. Working in a field is called Avodah. Making Parnasa happen comes through Avodah. B'derech Hateva working in a field, but Min Hashamayim if you put in your Davening and your Kavanos you can make it come, you can make it happen. That is why it is called Avodah. The same exact thing.

Elsewhere I remember the Netziv says that even when Klal Yisrael behaved in Eretz Yisrael there were Bamos. How can it be that a king like Chizkiya can make everybody do Teshuva but he couldn't get rid of the Bamos? Zagt the Netziv, because that is Avodah. A Segula for Parnasa he couldn't get the people to stop.

At any rate, this is the Yesod Gadol. The Yesod Gadol is that Tefilla is Po'el Parnasa, it brings Beracha. When you deserve it, you will find out someday that all you have to do is ask for it. You have Tzar that you don't have a Shidduch, you have Tzar that you don't have Parnasa, you have Tzar that you don't have something else that you want, why didn't you ask? Just ask. That is Tefilla. Ad Kan the Yesod of the Netziv.

Zagt the Netziv, what was the Aveira of the Mei Miriva, you hit the stone, you talk to the stone, ok. No! The Ribbono Shel Olam said Klal Yisrael lived B'derech Neis. The first time that water had to come from the stone, Moshe hit the stone and the water came. No more. Klal Yisrael is going into Eretz Yisrael the Ananei Hakavod are no more. Klal Yisrael has to learn that they are going into a world of Teva. In this world Davening is Po'el. They may think that Davening is only Po'el B'derech Neis. No! Davening is Po'el B'derech Teva.

Moshe Rabbeinu, it is a new Tekufa in Klal Yisrael. Talk to the stone. What do you mean talk to the stone? Daven that the water should come from the stone and then it will come. Moshe Rabbeinu made a mistake. He didn't teach Klal Yisrael. There was a P'gam in his Avodah as the Rebbi of Klal Yisrael and for that reason he lost his Shtella so to speak as the Rebbi of Klal Yisrael. What a beautiful Pshat in the Cheit Mei Miriva. Not a new Cheit, not a new explanation, but a Pshat in Rashi about the difference between talking to the stone and hitting the stone.

will become a wider heart. R'uin Hadevarim Mimi'she'amram, Rav Mattisyahu who understands a Ben Torah, who understands Yungelicht. Understand that sometimes you have to stop and broaden your heart, open your horizons and put the Ribbono Shel Olam into the equation. Gevaldig! With this I want to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5777

1 - Topic - The benefit of toiling in Torah as opposed to being given clear Piskei Halacha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas. And boy have I got an absolutely wonderful set of Machshavos for you today. The first one comes from the Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel in Parshas Vayeishev. There, he is dealing with a question that many people ask. Nothing to do with Parshas Chukas. He asks a Kasha, why is it that the Dinei Hatorah, the Shulchan Aruch and certainly the Gemara are written like a rule book. It is written in a way that you have to figure out what the Halacha is and it is written in a way that we should argue what the Gemara means. Why is it written this way?

He brings a Yerushalmi in Sanhedrin, Amar Rabbi Yochanan, Ilu Haya Nitna Hatorah Chaticha Lo Haya B'regel Amida. If the Torah had been given as a piece, we couldn't stand. What does that mean?

Zagt the Pnei Moshe, in Sanhedrin Perek Daled Halacha Beis, that if the Torah had been given Piskei Halacha, a clear Psak Halacha without Machshavos in two directions, Lo Kiyum Hatorah Mai'olam, the Torah would not last. The Torah needs to be Darshuned Mem Tes Panim in one direction and Mem Tes Panim in the other direction. The idea of Eilu V'eilu Divrei Elokim Chaim is so that the Torah should have a Kiyum. It is a mystery.

Today everyone writes Likut Seforim and they try to be very clear in what the Halacha is. As a matter of fact, one young man asked me that he saw a Likut Sefer on the Halachos of Muktzeh and it is clearer to him than the Shulchan Aruch is. What is going on?

The answer is that there is a reason for the fact that the Torah was given in a way that everyone could try to understand it and to be Yorek L'yonka. The question is why is it that way? This is a common question. The Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel uses the Klei Yakar in the beginning of Chukas to explain.

The Klei Yakar is dealing with the idea that the Parah Adumah is Metamei Tehorim and Metaheir Temaim. That is the nature. Everything in the world is stronger when it is contrasted by something that is the opposite. Everything in the world is strengthened by things that are the reverse. Let me explain what that means.

Colors; Black is more visible when it is on a white background. The contrast makes the black visible. Black ink on black is nothing you don't see anything. The contrast makes it strong. The same thing is true when someone wants to build up his muscles. You build up muscles by lifting something that is too heavy, the opposite. The fact that it is something that you can't lift is what creates in the person the muscles, the strength to be able to do it.

If you want to strike with a hammer very hard, you lift up in order to bang down. The nature of the world is such that opposites, contrast, make things appreciated, makes them visible, make them noticeable, make them stronger. Opposites make things noticeable. He explains that this is true in many Dinai Hatorah. A fruit, a food, is not Mekabeil Tumah unless it is Muchshar Mekabeil Tumah which means that it becomes wet. Water is Metaheir, a Mikvah is Metaheir things. Here when it comes into contact with water it first is able to become Tamei. The contrast, the opposite, is what makes it happen.

The Gemara says in Maseches Gittin 43a (11 lines from the bottom) (אין אדם עומד על דברי תורה) (אלא אם כן נכשל בהן) a person understands Torah when he makes mistakes. It is that way. When you ponder something, when you make an error in understanding it, when you do a mistake in Halacha and you see you made a mistake, then you remember the Halacha, you understand the Halacha, then everything goes in a smooth and straight way. Why does it go that way? The contrast, that is the nature of Olam Hazeh. When you make a mistake in something then you understand it better. When something confuses you and you understand it then you remember it. When you understand it right away then you don't remember it as well. That is the nature of the Briya.

The Gemara says regarding another Posuk in this week's Parsha. 21:14 (אֶת-וְהָבָה בְּסוּפָהּ). The Gemara in Maseches Kiddushin 30b (8 lines from the top) Darshuns that even a father and a son or a Rabbi and a Talmid who are learning Torah together (אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אפי' האב ובנו הרב ותלמידו) (שעוסקין בתורה בשער אחד נעשים אויבים זה את זה ואינם זזים משם עד שנעשים) (אוהבים זה את זה) they become enemies. The Biur Hadavar is that in learning it is the argument, it is the fact that you say to someone what are you talking about, you don't know what you are saying, your Sevara is wrong. That is what makes the Emes of Torah come through. Amito Shel Torah is not when it is served on a platter, when it is given to you in a Kitzur Hilchos Muktzeh booklet, it is when you are Zoche to be Yored L'omko Shel Davar. When you understand it with depth, you get into arguments about it, you see two ways of looking at something, that is when you have a Kinyan in Divrei Torah. That is the way Divrei Torah are.

The Divrei Yoel in Vayeishev page 210 and 211 says that that gives understanding to the Mishna in Avos 5:17 (כל מחלוקת שהיא לשם שמיים, סופה להתקיים; ושאינה לשם שמיים, אין סופה להתקיים). Anytime you have an argument L'sheim Shamayim then the truth has a Kiyum, then Emes has a Kiyum. What a beautiful thought. Some other day I will tell you that that is the secret of marriage, how opposites make each side grow. One beautiful Machshava from a Chassidische Sefer, the Divrei Yoel.

2 - Topic - The Metzios of spiritual things are based on when the Torah is Kovei'a it

The second Machshava is from Rav Schwab in Sefer Mayan Beis Hashoeva (page # 240 and 241 on 19:2 (the second piece)). I had asked many times how the Mishkan was built if the Parah Adumah was not ready yet. Everyone was Tamei, all of the Keilim of the Bais Hamikdash were Tamei. A Temi'ya, an imponderable. In this week's Parsha Rav Schwab says an incredible answer. He says just the opposite. B'davka the Parah Adumah was made on the second day of Nissan and the Mishkan was finished on the first day of Nissan. To teach a lesson. It is not the Tumah that is Metamei, it is the Gezairas Hakasuv that it is Metamei. When the Torah says that it is Metamei that is when it is Metamei, not before. Everything comes because the Torah says so.

He points out that in Behaloscha when Aharon and Miriam un-expectantly got Nevuah, they were screaming Mayim Mayim that they were Tamei and that they had to go to the Mikvah. Yet Moshe Rabbeinu killed a Mitzri, he buried him, he was Tamei because a Goy is Metamei B'maga and he went up to Har Sinai before there was a Parah Adumah. He was Tamei Meis, how did he go up to Har Sinai?

The answer is says Rav Schwab, the Torah wants to teach us that until the Torah is Koveia that something is Tamei it is not Tamei. Until the Torah is Koveia that something is Metamteim Es Haleiv it is not Metamteim Es Haleiv. All of the Metzios of the spiritual things are based on Divrei Torah.

Zagt Rav Schwab, that is why in Marah they were commanded in Parah Adumah. Why in Marah were they commanded in Parah Adumah? Rachmana Litzlon! Before Har Sinai? The Parah Adumah was not going to take place until a year later. The answer is that the Torah wanted to teach us this. Learn Hilchos Parah Adumah beforehand, learn Hilchos Tumah beforehand. Understand that there is a concept of Tumah. When? When the Torah is Kovei'a it. The Metzios of Tumah begins when the Torah is Kovei'a Parah Adumah. Before that there is no Tumah. Kach Heim Hadevarim.

If you are Medayeik in Rav Schwab's words you will notice that he says that the people from before did not need Zerikah from the Parah Adumah with the exception of us Leviim. Look in Rav Schwab and you will understand what he is saying.

Until next time I wish everybody a wonderful meaningful summer, a Gevaldige relaxation being able to learn Torah up in the country is great. In your bungalow colony start a Mishmar and make it be Matzliach. Kol Tuv.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5776

1. Let me begin first with the first words of the Parsha. In the beginning of the Parsha we have an expression which we find in only one other place in the Chamisha Chumshei Torah. That is the expression that can be found in 19:2 (זאת תקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְרֵךְ). The words (זאת תקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-) we will find soon in Parshas Mattos 31:21 as well. So it is found twice, once here and once there. There it is talking about Kashering Keilim. Taking Keilim that were from a Treife kitchen, from Midyon and Kashering it. Here we are talking about Taharah, going into a Mikvah and becoming Tahor.

What is the similarity? Rav Shamshon Refael Hirsch says in his Pirush here on the Chumash, that they are very similar. Just like you know that when you have Treifos in your Keilim you would never want to have from that Keili, a Yid would certainly not want to have any connection to it, of Treifos in his food, never. So a person wants to get rid of it. The same thing is true about Ruchniyos as well. When there is Tumah, when there is something Tamei involved, a person has got to try to get rid of it. (זאת תקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְרֵךְ) in this week's Parsha it refers to getting rid of Tumah. We have to think of it just like something that is physically dangerous. Well Treifos is dangerous spiritually but it is a physical thing, the same thing is the way you should think about Tumah, something which is actually very dangerous and a person has to go to the Mikvah even though he doesn't taste it and he doesn't see it.

We have a similar idea in Parshas Ki Seitzei. In Parshas Ki Seitzei 22:8 we are told to build a (מַעֲקֵה) Ma'keh. To build a wall against a high roof (כִּי-יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ). Because of the danger of (כִּי-יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ) somebody will fall if you don't have a (מַעֲקֵה). Immediately thereafter we have the Mitzvah of (כִּלְאִים). That a person should not plant seeds in the same place that he plants a vineyard. 22:9 (כִּי-תִקְדַּשׁ, הַמְּלֵאָה הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע). It says the word (כִּי) because maybe a danger will happen and the seeds that grow will become Treif. The same exact Lashon one after the other. Why? Because just like you know that if you have a roof it is very dangerous to leave a roof where G-d forbid a person could fall, the same thing with Kilayim that you have to think about it as something very dangerous even though it is not something that you can see.

If you look at Parshas Ki Seitzei it says many Mitzvos, there is a separate Parsha separation between every Mitzvah. Except right after Shlishi where it has the Mitzvah of (מַעֲקֵה) and then the Mitzvah Kilayim of the Kerem (כִּי-תִקְדַּשׁ, הַמְּלֵאָה הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע). One follows the other to tell you compare them. That is the lesson that Rav Shamshon Refael Hirsch is making here in the Parsha, compare them and be afraid of Tumah.

Now why did I start by saying that there is some L'mayseh in it as today we don't have Parah Adumah? Still the right thing is that when a person is Tamei, when a man has a Tumah of Baal Keri, he should be careful to go to the Mikvah preferably before Davening the next day, certainly before putting on Tefillin the next day. In our world it has become something that Chassidim do, they go to the Mikvah. In the Yeshiva world it is not adequately something that we are careful about. We should be afraid of Tumah. We should be afraid of it. It is something that inhibits our growth in Ruchniyos and a person should be Zahir in it. Gedolei Yisroel even in the Litvishe world, Rav Moshe, Rav Pam they were very careful being Tovel Tevilas Ezra and it is something which a person should try to do. Be Mekabeil it with a Bli Neder, but be Mekabeil it.

2. I said that my first Vort will be on the beginning of the Parsha but it really wasn't. The Vort that I told you now was on (זאת הקת התורה) which is the second Posuk in the Parsha. Let me tell you a Vort on the first Posuk in the Parsha. That is 19:1 (וַיִּדְבֹר יְרֵנָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר). We find in the Toras Kohanim that there are 13 places in the Torah where it says (וַיִּדְבֹר) or (וַיִּאמֶר) - (אֶל-מֹשֶׁה) (וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן). Three are in this week's Parsha. The first Posuk, which is 19:1, 20:12, 20:23. Says the Toras Kohanim there are also 13 Mi'utim to tell you that Aharon did not actually receive these Nevuos from the Ribbono Shel Olam. Aharon heard it from Moshe Rabbeinu. But Meshum Kevodo, the Mitzvos were given to Moshe and Aharon in these 13 places as if to say Moshe tell it directly to Aharon, he should receive it directly. So 13 Nevuos but in the 13 they weren't really said to Aharon from Hashem.

I had a Kasha on this. When Rashi counts the 48 Neviim that said Nevuah Shehutzricha L'doros, Aharon is one of the Neviim. So if Aharon is one of the Neviim then what is going on because he didn't actually receive the Nevuah as the Toras Kohanim says that he only heard it from Moshe. This is a Kasha.

In the Haksav V'hakabala (Harav Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg 1785 - 1865) at the beginning of this week's Parsha he has another Kasha. He says 13 places, there are 18 places where it says that Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon. Three are in this week's Parsha 19:1, 20:12, 20:23. The

others are Shemos 6:13, 7:8, 9:8, 12:1, 12:43. Vayikra 11:1, 13:1, 13:33 (Ed. Note - I couldn't find this reference), 15:1. Bamidbar 2:1, 4:1, 4:17, 12:4, 14:26, 16:20. So there are 18. What in the world is going on, the Medrash says that there are 13?

Says the Haksav V'hakabala that if you look at the 18 places you see that 13 of them are Mitzvos. Mitzvos were really said to Moshe. (זאת תקת התורה) it is a Mitzvah and it was really said to Moshe. Aharon is mentioned because of his Kavod. The 5 other places are places that Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon was not that they should go turn around and tell it to Klal Yisrael, it was a message to them. For example, by the Makkah of Shechin it says that Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon in Shemos 9:8 (קחו לכם מלא תפגיתם, פיה כבשון; ויזרקו משה השמימה, לעיני פרעה) Throw ashes to the sky and it will become Shechin. Or, in the end of Parshas Behaloscha 12:4 (ויאמר ירן פתאם,) (אל-משה ואל-אהרן). Hashem came to Moshe and Aharon and said a Nevuah. Or in Parshas Va'era, 6:13 (וידבר ירן, אל-משה ואל-אהרן, ויצום אל-בני ישראל, ואל-פרעה מלך מצרים) When they were told to go to King Pharaoh etc. Five of the places it was not said to say over to Klal Yisrael. So it comes out beautiful says the Ksav V'hakabalah, 13 Miutim are for the Mitzvos which were only to Moshe Rabbeinu, but there were five times that the Nevuah did go to Aharon and they were not Mitzvos that were told over to Klal Yisrael. So Aharon was a Navi because those Pesukim are in the Torah, there is something from which to learn. A beautiful Teretz on what would otherwise be a difficult Kasha. This was all Bichvodo Shel Aharon because after all Aharon Hakohen passes away in this week's Parsha so we speak Bichvodo.

3. As you know, we have the Mei Meriva, there is no water for the people as it says in 20:2 (ולא- וקמה הבאתם) (היה מים, לעדה). They come and they complain to Moshe and Aharon as it says in 20:4 (את-קהל ירן, אל-המדבר הזה, למות שם, אנחנו ובצירנו). Why did you bring us here that we should die, us and our animals.

The Kasha is, us and our animals? When people are dying from thirst they are worried that their animals will die? It doesn't make sense. Why are they mentioning that their animals will die of thirst. When a person is dying from thirst it is silly to care about whether the animals are dying from thirst.

In the Sefer Kehillas Yitzchok he brings from Rav Yisrael Salanter, beautiful. He brings a Maiseh from the Medrash Rabbah which is also in Maseches Tamid but it is a little longer in the Medrash. A beautiful story.

Alexander the great conquered a city which was a city of honest people and a place of great integrity. He watched as the king was judging when two people came to him for a court case. Alexander is watching. One person said I bought a house from him and when I was renovating I found a treasure in the wall, it is his because I bought a house and I didn't buy a treasure. The other man said it is his. I sold him the house with everything in it. Do you hear this court case? Each person is saying that the treasure should go to the other person. You probably know that the king ruled that this one had a son and this one had a daughter and they should get married and share the treasure. Wonderful!

Alexander the great was astounded by what was taking place. He said to this king, do you know what would happen in Greece if these two people would come in front of the king, the king would

have them both killed and take the treasure for himself. That is what he said. That part is in the Gemara.

The Medrash goes on. This king said to Alexander, in your country does the sun rise in the morning? He said yes. He said how can it be that when there is no honesty the sun rises? He said in your country does rain come down? Alexander said of course. The king was astounded, how can it be that you are dishonest and rain comes down? The king thought for a minute and said do you have animals in your country? He said certainly. He said it must be that the sun comes up and the rain comes down because of the animals because you don't deserve it. The Medrash goes on to say this is the meaning of the Posuk in Tehillim 36:7 (אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְרֵנָה). Sometimes Hashem helps people because of the Zechus of the animals.

Rav Yisrael Salanter brings this Medrash. He says now we understand the Posuk here. They were coming to complain to Moshe. They say Moshe Rabbeinu there is no water. Maybe you will say it is because of our Aveiros there is no water and we have no right to complain. They said there is no water (אֲנִי וּבְעִירֵנוּ) our animals are going to die too. Obviously the reason there is no water is because (הַבְּאֵרִים אֶת-קֶהֱלֵ יְרֵנָה, אֶל-הַמְדַבֵּר הַזֶּה). We are in a place where B'etzem there is no water and it is not because of our sins. Therefore, they had a Taina and they had a Tevia. What a beautiful UpTeitch of the Posuk. But more importantly, the lesson of how to be honest and integrity how important it is. The king said the sun comes up in your country? Rain comes down in your country? How could it be if you are not honest? It must be in the Zechus of the animals. What a Mussar. A Gevaldige Mussar. I wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, a meaningful Shabbos, a Shabbos of Kedusha V'tahara.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas (Shabbos Rosh Chodesh) 5774

1. Let me start with the beginning of the Parsha. The beginning of the Parsha of course is the Aifer of the Parah Adumah. I bet you didn't know how long the ashes of the Parah Aduma lasted? Most people assume that the ashes of the Parah Adumah lasted until the Churban Bais Hamikdash. That I think is the assumption of most people. In fact it is not so. The Mishna L'melech in Hilchos Aveil 1:3 brings from what he calls a Mekor Kadmon that the Aifer Parah actually lasted until the time of Rava and Abaya, until the time of the Amoraim. There was still Aifer Parah, there were people who despite there not being a Bais Hamikdash continued to be careful to remain Tahor.

This Mishna L'melech is often quoted. I was in a Bais Medrash in Williamsburg last night and between the Chupa and the Seuda of a wedding I went to learn. There I pulled out a Sefer on the Parsha that quoted the Mishna L'melech and someone had written in by hand that this Mishna L'melech is actually a Rosh in Chullin Perek Kol Habasar Siman 4 and in fact it is there that the Rosh says that until the time of the Amoraim there was Eifer Parah Adumah. It is a historical fact.

With this the Maharitz Chiyus in Maseches Chagigah Daf 25 answers the Kasha of the Bach. The Bach asks a Gevaldige Kasha on a totally different topic. We all have heard of the idea of Mitzvah L'taheir B'regel (Ed. Note: Maseches Rosh Hashono 16b (הֲיֵיב אָדָם לְטָהֵר אֶת עַצְמוֹ בְּרֵגֶל)). It is a Mitzvah to go to the Mikva and become Tahor before a Yom Tov. The question is does that apply only in the time that we had Aifer Parah Adumah and therefore, we can truly become Tahor in

time for the Yom Tov. What about Biz'man Hazeh when we don't have Aifer Parah, even if we go the Mikva on Erev Yom Tov we are still not Tahor. What is the Din?

There is a contradiction in the Tur as the Bach asks. First the Tur in Hilchos Yom Hakkipurim Siman Taf Reish Vav brings from Rav Sadya Gaon that when one goes to the Mikva on Erev Yom Kippur he should make a Beracha on the Tevila. Even though today no man has ever made a Beracha on Tevila unless he is a Ger. Nevertheless, Rav Sadya Gaon holds that on Erev Yom Kippur you should make a Beracha. The Tur himself after bringing Rav Sadya Gaon rejects it. He says that Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel is only when Aifer Parah exists and not Bizman Hazeh. Here we have a Machlokes between Rav Sadya Gaon and the Tur. The Tur says nowadays there is no Mitzvah of L'taheir Atzmo B'regel. Freikt the Bach, just a few Simanim earlier in Hilchos Rosh Hashono Siman Taf Reish Gimmel, the Tur himself brought a Yerushalmi that says (Amar Rav Chiya L'rav At Yachol Kula Shaita B'tihara, V'i Lo Achol Shiva Yamim B'shato) to be careful to eat things B'tahara at least for 7 days. The Tur says which 7 days are these? The 7 days of Aseres Y'mai Teshuvah. The Aseres Y'mai Teshuvah are 10 days, 2 days are Rosh Hashono, 1 is Yom Kippur, and 7 days in between. The Tur says that on those 7 days in between be careful to eat B'tahaira. The Tur asks on himself why 7 days. It is true that on Yom Kippur we don't eat but what about Rosh Hashono? The Tur answers that on Rosh Hashono Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel, that on Rosh Hashono you have to eat B'tahaira anyway. Therefore, there are only 7 days which we add 7 days as a Chumra to eat food B'tahaira.

Freikt the Bach what is the Tur saying. The Tur is saying we have days that we eat B'tahaira anyway? What do you mean that we eat B'tahaira anyway, Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel doesn't apply when we don't have a Parah Adumah? The answer says the Maharitz Chiyus is that Bizman Hazeh indeed there is no Mitzvah of Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel because we don't have Parah Adumah according to the Tur. However, the Yerushalmi is talking about the time of Rav which indeed was after the Churban but even though it was after the Churban it was before Rava and Abaya, it was Rav Chiya and Rav. At that time the Eifer Parah still existed. This is my first thought on the Parsha, a Yedia, something that people are totally not aware of that the Aifer Parah Adumah lasted until that time. As a matter of fact if you take a look at the Mishna L'melech he says that with this we can explain many Gemaras where Tannaim and Amoraim were careful in Tahara.

2. Let us move on to the middle of the Parsha and a thought regarding the Mai Miriva. As you know, Moshe Rabbeinu strikes the rock and causes water to flow. That takes place because Klal Yisrael came and complained that they had nothing to drink. The language that is used there is very strange. The Yidden come to Moshe Rabbeinu and say as it says in 20:5 (וְלָמָּה הִעֲלִיתֶנּוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם, (להביא אתנו, אל-הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה: לֹא מְקוֹם זֶרַע, וְהַתְּאֵנָה וְגִבְעַן וְרִמּוֹן, וּמֵיִם אֵין, לִשְׁתוֹת (ולמה הִעֲלִיתֶנּוּ, מִמִּצְרָיִם)). Why did you take us out of Egypt and bring us to this place it is not a place where the fruits grow and there is no water to drink. Now when the Jews who left Mitzrayim talk this way we understand. This is 40 years later, these are Jews who grew up in the Midbar. They are accustomed to the fact that living in the Midbar does not prevent one from having what to eat and drink. What is this (וְלָמָּה הִעֲלִיתֶנּוּ, מִמִּצְרָיִם) what is (לֹא מְקוֹם זֶרַע, וְהַתְּאֵנָה וְגִבְעַן וְרִמּוֹן), Moshe Rabbeinu told them that they are going to go to Eretz Yisrael that is the place of (וְהַתְּאֵנָה וְגִבְעַן וְרִמּוֹן)? Very strange expression!

The Netziv says an absolutely beautiful Pshat in his Hameik Davar. The Netziv says in 20:5 that as Klal Yisrael was getting ready to enter Eretz Yisrael HKB"H wanted to prepare Jews who grew up in the Midbar for the culture shock of suddenly being in a land where things work Al Pi Teva, where things are not provided to you miraculously but you have to put effort into getting them. Here, the Ribbono Shel Olam therefore, didn't have water ready for them, they were in Kadeish, they could go around and try to find water, try to purchase water. The Teva of going out to get water is something the Ribbono Shel Olam wanted to get Klal Yisrael accustomed to. Klal Yisrael didn't understand this so they said we understand that when we get to a place that runs Al Pi Teva that we are going to have to get our own water but now we are still in the Midbar (לא מקום זרע, ויתאנה ונפן ורמון). This is not a place where things grow (לשתות) even though we were in Kadeish that is not the place. Now suddenly the way they talk makes so much more sense.

Actually, this concept of the Netziv that it was a preparation is something that he already wrote about in Parshas Beshalach. Because in Parshas Beshalach we find the same thing. After Klal Yisrael crosses the Midbar there is no water to drink 15:23 (כי מרים הם) the water is bitter. There, he says the same thing. At that point they thought they were going into Eretz Yisrael, then had they not sinned, and the Ribbono Shel Olam wanted to prepare Klal Yisrael for a life of Teva. But there he adds a point. Because what happens there in Parshas Beshalach 15:23 - 15:25. Klal Yisrael doesn't have water to drink and what do they do (ויצעק אל-ירור). Klal Yisrael calls out to the Ribbono Shel Olam. (ויורהו ירור עץ, וישלח אל-המים, וימתקו המים) there the Netziv says in a world of Teva what do you do. What do you do in a world of Teva in order to be able to have water to drink? You know what you do? (ויצעק אל-ירור) Davening is part of the HKB"H's world of Teva. Therefore, the Netziv in both places explains the mysterious idea that the Ribbono Shel Olam left them somewhere without water which is very difficult to understand. With this understanding we have an insight.

3. Let me move to my third lesson of the Parsha. At the end of the Parsha we have the episode of the Milchemes Sichon and Og, we have the battle, the killing of Sichon and Og. We know that Moshe Rabbeinu himself did this as Rashi brings. Moshe was 10 Amos, he jumped 10 Amos, with a stick of 10 Amos, whatever that Aggadeta means precisely, but it was Moshe Rabbeinu personally who killed Sichon. This needs an explanation. Against Amaleik Moshe Rabbeinu did not go personally to do battle. Against Midyon Moshe Rabbeinu did not go personally to do battle. So why here did Moshe Rabbeinu go to do battle to kill Sichon personally? There are other things that need an explanation. That is that Sichon and Og seems to be a major event. In the beginning of Sefer Devarim Moshe Rabbeinu sits down to teach Klal Yisrael and the time is described as it says in 1:4 (את סיחון מלך האמרי, אשר יושב, בחשבון--ואת, עוג מלך הבשן, אשר-יושב בעשפרת,) (באדרעי). It's time lined to the killing of Sichon and Og. Why? So much has happened.

In addition, in the Hallel Hagadol, Hallel Hagadol is (הודו לירור כי-טוב: כי לעולם חסדו) that can be found in Tehillim 136. The Hallel that we say on Rosh Chodesh is called Hallel Mitzra'i, the Hallel of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Hallel Hagadol are the 26 (כי לעולם חסדו) Ki L'olam Chasdo that we say on Shabbos. In those 26 there is a separate one for Sichon (לסיחון, מלך האמרי: כי לעולם חסדו) and Og (ולעוג, מלך הבשן: כי לעולם חסדו). The other 31 kings that were killed in conquering Eretz Yisrael are given short shrift. We talk about HKB"H destroying the Melachim in a general way. Sichon and Og get their own billing. Why?

In order to answer this I would like to review a Vort that we said on Parshas Noach 5774. At that time we had a Kasha. The difficulty was that HKB"H promises there won't be a Mabul ever again. We had a Kasha. What is HKB"H's promise? We understand that if the Ribbono Shel Olam brings a Mabul that that is what the world needed. The world needed the Mabul. Of course it came because of people's Aveiros but at that point that is what is best for the world. HKB"H does that which is best for the Briya. So now the Ribbono Shel Olam says I will never bring a Mabul again. I don't understand. If the Mabul is not proper for the Briya, if the people don't deserve a Mabul, of course HKB"H will not bring a Mabul. If a Mabul is what is best for the Briya so who wants this promise of HKB"H that I won't bring a Mabul. Why are you promising you won't bring a Mabul, if the Mabul is what is best for the Briya then by all means it should happen.

It is similar to a doctor that tells a sick man I promise you I won't amputate your leg. What kind of promise is that? If his leg doesn't need amputation of course he won't amputate his leg. If to save his life an amputation is necessary so why are you making a promise? The same thing here. What does it mean that HKB"H says I won't bring a Mabul. We answered then in the name of an Adom Gadol (a Talmid of Rav Yitchok Hutner) that HKB"H said before the Mabul all human beings lived on a level L'mayla Min Hateva, they had power to affect nature. The actions they did could improve nature or can be Mazik or Mashchis. The actions of human beings destroyed the nature of the world, even animals misbehaved because of the Hashpa'a the influence of sinners. After the Mabul Hashem said no more. Human beings will no longer have the power to be Mashchis, to destroy the nature around them. They will be Tachas Hateva and no longer will it be possible for the world to come to a state that will require a Mabul. So that, before the Mabul, human beings had an extraordinary ability which they lost afterwards.

We know that Sichon and Og survived the Mabul. The Gemara in Sotah says that Sichon hung on to the Taiva and survived the Mabul (Ed. Note: I could not find the source. Please email me if you can find it - There is a Tosafos in Niddah 61a (זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול)). The Pirkei D'rabbi Elazar says the same thing about Og. So Sichon and Og survived the Mabul. They were the only two human beings in the entire world that were not descendants of Noach. They were the only two human beings in the entire world that still had the power of Hashchasa of the Briya. The power to destroy the Briya. For that, Moshe Rabbeinu was necessary. Moshe Rabbeinu came and with the Koach Hatorah which is L'mayla Min Habriya. Lo Nitna Torah Ela L'ochlai Hamon. Moshe Rabbeinu was able to kill Sichon and Og and it is a major event in world history. Now for the first time there was no human being in the world who had the power of Hashchasa in the entire world. (כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסְדוֹ), the power of Hashchasa of destruction was now gone.

The lesson of course is that Moshe Rabbeinu and what he represents is the power of L'mayla Min Hateva, the Tzad Hakedusha. Although the power to influence all of nature is gone, the ability to withstand the Teva around us, the ability to withstand the Shmutzadik world around us. B'Teva someone who would grow up today, with all kinds of sick ideas, with all kinds of strange distractions, we have the ability if we connect to Limud Hatorah. We have the ability to live above that, to live L'mayla Min Hateva. To destroy the Kochos Hashchasa in the world around us. It is our job. That is the death of Sichon and Og.

I refer you to the Ohr Gedalyahu at the beginning of Sefer Devarim (pg. 173) where he makes the point that destroying Sichon and Og was the key to entering Eretz Yisrael. You want to go into

Eretz Yisrael that world Hashchasa has to be gone. With that, a person who is a Lomed Torah could live L'mayla Min Hateva on the Tzad Hakedusha.

With these three thoughts I bid everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos. If you are going up to the country please I beg you don't get dragged down by others in your bungalow colony, in your Seviva. If you dress as a Ben Torah, dress as a Ben Torah there too. Don't let the influence of the people around you drag you to a lower level. If people are sitting and speaking Lashon Hora walk away and don't be ashamed. Don't be ashamed to walk away. There are bungalow colonies where there is a sense of pride in the learning, in the Davening, be part of that. It is a big Shas Nisayon, be Omed the Nisayon. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5773

1. This week I have some really wonderful thoughts to share with you. The first has to do with the Cheit Mei Miriva, with the Cheit of Moshe Rabbeinu which involved his hitting the stone and bringing forth water. Rashi's Shittah which is the best known of the different opinions brought in 20:12 on the word (לְהַקְדִּישֶׁנּוּ) is (שְׂאִילוֹ דְבַרְתֶּם אֶל הַסֵּלַע וְהוֹצִיאָהּ הַיַּיִתִּי מִקְּדוּשׁ לְעֵינֵי הָעֵדָה וְאוֹמְרִים מֵה סֵלַע זֶה) (שְׂאִינוּ מְדַבֵּר וְאִינוּ שׁוֹמְעִים וְאִינוּ צָרִיךְ לְפָרְנֶסָה מִקִּיָּים דְּבוֹרוֹ שֶׁל מִקּוֹם, קָל וְחוֹמֵר אֲנוּ) that the sin of Moshe Rabbeinu was that he had been commanded to speak to the stone and it would give forth water and erroneously he thought that he had been commanded to hit the stone and by hitting the stone and bringing forth the water that somehow diminished the Aveira. The Ramban in Posuk 8 wonders whether Rashi's Pshat makes any sense at all. The Ramban says that there is no difference in the level of miracle whether one hits a stone and it gives water or whether one speaks to a stone and it gives water. The miracle is a miracle which is identical. What is the difference? Stones don't give water if you talk to them they don't give water if you hit them. Why was one greater than the other?

I would like to offer you a few answers for the Ramban's Kasha. The Kasha of why it would have been a greater miracle to speak to the stone rather than to hit the stone.

In the Ayeles Hashachar (page # 139), Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman says the following Yesod. He says that Mofsim (amazing acts) don't by themselves convince people of Kiddush Hashem because it is the nature of the Yeitzer Hora to bring Teirutzim (to say possible answers). The Rambam says Maiolam Lahem Yahaminu B'koach Hamofsim. Klal Yisrael's Emunah in Hashem is not because of Kriyas Yam Suf, not because of the miracles of Mitzrayim. Our Emunah comes from Har Sinai, it is from Gilui Hashem. Mofsim themselves do not produce Emunah. However, a Mofes that comes from the Koach of a Mitzvah, that Koach of the Mitzvah is Matmia the Yeitzer Hora and gives Kedusha. The Neshamah takes note of a Mofes (an amazing thing that happens) as part of a Mitzvah. Someone Davens for something and feels the Gilui Shechina that he was answered, that lifts him up, because when it is part of a Mitzvah it influences the person.

So Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman's rule is that a Mofes influences the Neshama only when it is part of a Mitzvah. Therefore, had Moshe Rabbeinu done what HKB"H commanded him speaking to the stone, that would have influenced Klal Yisrael in a great way. It would have been a Mofes that had been part of the Mitzvah (what he had been commanded). Since he pulled off a Mofes but it was not what had been commanded, that did not have the Hashpa'a on Klal Yisrael.

I want to point out that last week I mentioned to you from Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman that a Segulah has no power unless the Segulah is connected to a Mitzvah. He is saying a similar idea this week. That a Mofes doesn't influence a person unless it is connected to a Mitzvah.

Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman has a Sefer entitled Yimalai Pi Tehilasecha. There in the second volume page (Taf Reish Mem Vav) he offers a totally different Teretz to the Ramban's Kasha as to what is the difference in the miracle if Moshe Rabbeinu had spoken to the stone or hit the stone. There he offers a more technical Teretz. He says that Kishuf (magic) exists in the world and when Moshe Rabbeinu caused water to come from the stone, maybe that is because he is a great magician. Says Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman, magic as it appears in Chazal whether in Tanach or Gemara is always influenced by an act (by a Maiseh) that is done. Magic doesn't work with Dibbur (speech) alone. Speech is a spiritual thing and therefore, magicians had to do acts in order to bring about magic. Therefore, had Moshe Rabbeinu spoken to the stone it would have been clear that this is not through the Koach Hakishuf. Since Moshe Rabbeinu hit the stone it left place for doubters and skeptics to say it was a magic trick and Moshe Rabbeinu was a great sorcerer. Therefore, it caused a (Yerida) lesser Kiddush Hashem when the water came from hitting as opposed to when it came from speaking. These are two Teirutzim of Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman to the Ramban's Kasha.

I will add that in Taima Dikra, Rav Chaim Kanievsky offers a third Teretz which is very typical of his style. He brings a Medrash. When Moshe Rabbeinu was to speak to the stone what was he to say to it? Rav Chaim Kanievsky brings a Medrash that he would have said a Dvar Torah to the stone and with that Klal Yisrael would have learned that sustenance comes from Divrei Torah. Sustenance comes from learning Torah as opposed to from the Hishtadlus of hitting the stone. That was the failing of Moshe in not bringing about the water through Divrei Torah. So 3 Teirutzim from Gedolei Hadar Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman's 2 Teirutzim and Rav Chaim Kanievsky's one.

2. Let us move on to a different thought. At the end of the Parsha barely noticed because Parshas Chukas has as the most famous part of it being the Parah Adumah of course and the Mei Miriva. Hardly noticed is that the last 15 Pesukim in the Parsha are the story of the war against Sichon and against Og. The fact that Klal Yisrael conquered these two kingdoms and vanquished these two kings. The battle against Sichon and Og is mentioned in Hallel Hagadol. Hallel Hagadol is the Hallel of 26 lines which we say on Shabbos before Baruch She'amar (Nussach Sfarad). The Hallel that has (פי לעולם חסדו). It is interesting. There we say (Tehillim 136:17) (מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים: פִּי לְעוֹלָם) and 136:18 (וַיַּהַרְג, מְלָכִים אֲדִירִים: פִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד) and 136:19 (וַיִּלְעֹג, מֶלֶךְ הַבְּשָׁן: פִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד) & 136:20 (לְסִיחֹן, מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי: פִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד). Sichon and Og are mentioned specifically even though there were 31 kings that were vanquished by Yehoshua and even though Moshe Rabbeinu also vanquished Midyan but Sichon and Og the battles of this week's Parsha are mentioned specifically and that needs an explanation.

Also in the beginning of Parshas Devarim we read as it says in 1:5 (הוֹאִיל מִשָּׁה, בְּאֶרֶץ אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת) (לְאֹמֵר אֲחֵרֵי הַכְּתוּב, אֵת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי, אֲשֶׁר) 1:4 (יָוֵשׁב, בְּהַשְּׁבֹן--וְנָאֵת, עֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבְּשָׁן, אֲשֶׁר-יָוֵשׁב בְּעֵשְׂתָרֶת, בְּאֶרְצֵי). After he vanquished Sichon and Og then he explained Mishna Torah to Klal Yisrael. What is going on? What is that? Why is Sichon and Og mentioned specifically? It should have said Acharei Hakoso Es Midyan, after he destroyed

Midyan then of course Moshe Rabbeinu knew that he would not live any longer. So it should say (משה הרגו) Acharei Hakoso Es Midyan. Yet it specifically mentioned Sichon and Og. It needs an explanation.

Also it is also interesting to note that Moshe Rabbeinu personally killed Og as Rashi brings on the Posuk 21:35 (וַיִּכּוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנָיו וְאֶת כָּל עַמּוֹ עַד בְּלִתֵּי הַשָּׁאִיר לוֹ שָׁרִיד וַיִּירְשׁוּ אֶת אֶרְצוֹ). That (משה הרגו). This is something that didn't happen in the other battles. Therefore we need some sort of explanation as to what is so special about the conquering of Sichon and Og.

People say Kol Hascholos Kashos, when you start something it is hard. We wonder, to us it looks like a beginning of a Zman is easy. The beginning of a Machzor of Daf Yomi, you start Berachos it is easy. Haschalos are Kashos? Haschalos are easy. The answer is it depends what you are starting. If you are starting something you want to do and you like to do then it is easy. But if you are looking to change your nature, and you are looking to improve, if you are looking to do things differently than Kol Haschalos Kashos, change is difficult. Change does not come easy.

Klal Yisrael here had gone through 40 years in the Midbar. This generation hadn't sinned. This generation sat and learned for 39 years. Now a change was taking place. Suddenly they had to become warriors and they had to go do battles. They had to go fight the war that HKB"H had commanded them to do. Kol Haschalos Kashos, it is very hard to change. It is very hard to change from what you are doing. Change comes with difficulty. A person has to celebrate the first step of successful change. When a person is not Matzliach in Davening with Minyan, in getting up in the morning and then he does it, he has to celebrate the Haschala, he has to remember the Haschala. That will give him Chizuk to move forward. The battles of Sichon and Og were the first battles this generation. (כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֻסְדּוֹ). Therefore, it had a very special meaning. So one thought regarding Mei Miriva and one regarding Sichon and Og.

3. The third thought is something related to contemporary news. As you may know, this week something unprecedented happened. The Kosel was declared off bounds to Orthodox Jews. It was declared off bounds so that the women of the wall could go and have their prayer services there. What a Busha, what a shame! What a Kitrug on Klal Yisrael that the Kosel is declared off bounds on a Rosh Chodesh. Unfortunately, we suffer from a lack of appreciation of the Kosel in general. It is something that we need to be Mechazeik. We go there and it becomes a place of Shmuzzing, a place of joking, even a place of laughing and dancing. It is a remnant of the Churban Bais Hamikdash.

I would like to share with you a thought that I had regarding visiting the Kosel Hamaravi. To explain this I would like to be Makdim (I would like to preface) with a thought regarding human nature. We have often noted that it is difficult for a human being L'kabeil Maros. It is difficult for a human being in general and Jews specifically to accept and to listen to things that other people command a person to do. It is not easy. Not in relation to other people and not in relation to Hashem. It is hard to just take orders and do something. The way to succeed in that is that HKB"H created in the human being a capacity for love, a capacity to connect to others. If someone bosses you around and says do this and that it is very hard to get yourself to want to do it. However, when a human being has love for another person, when a human being feels connected to another person, when a human being feels a special relationship for that person. When the person says do

something that makes it easy to do what the person wants. When there is Ahavah then it is easy to follow the other person's wishes.

So too in our relationship with Hashem. The Bais Hamikdash is called the Cheder Hamittos, the place of intimate love. It is a place of His'achdus with HKB"H, a place where Keruvim hugged each other. The Bais Hamikdash is a place of Ahavah. For us, we have the Kosel Hamaravi. It is a remnant of the Bais Hamikdash. It is a place to feel the Ahavah of Hashem with tears in our eyes the longing for HKB"H. The Remez to the Kosel is a Posuk in Shir Hashirim, the song of love. That is because the Kosel is supposed to remind us of our longing for HKB"H our desire to get back, to connect ourselves once again the whole Klal Yisrael, a Hiskarvus to HKB"H. That is what a visit to the Kosel is supposed to evoke. A desire to feel close to Hashem. When a person feels close to the Ribbono Shel Olam it is not difficult to listen to his command and to do his Mitzvos. Perhaps when we visit, we can try to have that feeling. When you look at the Kosel, look at the Kosel as the Luz bone of the Bais Hamikdash. We are taught that every human being has a Luz bone which is a tiny bone from which he will once again get up at Techias Hamaisim, from which his body will be reconstructed. The Kosel Hamaravi look at it as the Luz bone of the Bais Hamikdash. The remnant from which Binyan Habayis Hashlishis will come. Look at it with longing with an Ahavas Hashem and visiting the Kosel will not be a place of levity, it will not be a place for Shmuzzing. Let us honor the Kosel. If we don't give honor to the Kosel how can you expect a secular government to give honor to the Kosel?

4. I would like to end with a great Kasha. This Kasha is Rav Chaim Kanievsky's Kasha. What an imagination. Listen to this Kasha. We have in this week's Parsha the Halacha of Cherev Harei Hu K'chalal as is found in 19:16 (וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יִגַע עַל-פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה, בְּחֵלֶל-הָרֶב אוֹ בְמַת, אוֹ-בְעֵצִים אֲדָם, אוֹ בְקֶבֶר--יִטְמָא,) (שְׂבָעַת יָמִים). This is a Halacha which is a metal utensil that touches a dead body gets the Din of the dead body itself. Rashi holds that this only refers to a metal utensil such as a sword. The Rambam and Tosafos say that this applies to all metal Keilim. A metal Keili which comes in contact with a Meis is itself like a Meis, it is Tamei for 7 days. Not only that but if a human being were to touch this metal utensil, he too would have the Tumah of touching the Meis and would be Tamei for 7 days. Freigt Rav Chaim Kanievsky in Taima Dikra, how is it ever possible to Tovel (to put into a Mikva) this metal utensil. You have to wait until the 7th day. This metal utensil doesn't need Parah Adumah to become Tahor only (מִי נִדָּה) (Toveled in a Mikva). But when you Tovel it in a Mikva the person Tovelng it touches this utensil and then he himself becomes Tamei for 7 days. Ok he is Tamei for 7 days. Once he is Tamei for 7 days and he touches the utensil the utensil now gets a fresh Tumah for 7 days and you can't Tovel it that day. So when you grab onto the Keili in order to Tovel it the Keili is Mitamei you for 7 days, you are in turn Mitamei the Keili for a new 7 days and this should go on forever. How is one ever Tovel a metal Keili which is under the rule of Cherev Harei Hu K'chalal? Tzorech Iyun. Have a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5772

In the beginning of the Parsha we read in 19:4 (וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, מִדָּמָה--בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ) (וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, מִדָּמָה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ). The Kohen in dealing with the Parah Adumah takes from the blood with his finger. There is a Drasha and I am not sure of the source of the Drasha but it is brought in the Rambam. The Rambam in Hilchas Parah Adumah 4:4 brings (קִיבַל דָּמָה בְּכָלִי פְסוּלָה שְׁנֵאמַר וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן מִדָּמָה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ מִצוּתָהּ יָד וְלֹא (מִצוּת כְּלִי). Someone who caught the blood of the Parah Adumah in a utensil which is the way that

it is normally done when a person brings any other Korban, Posul. Here it would Pasul the blood of the Parah Adumah. As it says in the Posuk that I just quoted (ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו מצוותה) (מצות יד ולא מצות כלי). The Mitzvah is to catch the blood with the hand and not with a Kli. So that is something we learn out from this Posuk.

In the Sefer Haksav V'hakabbalah (Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg 1785-1865 on page # 268) he brings a nice technical Vort that as you will see will be connected to something that we discussed earlier in the year and we end up with something absolutely incredible. Let's start with the technicality. Here is the Kasha. An Etzba is a finger. Does a person catch blood with his finger? (ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו), I would understand that a person would take some of the blood with his finger. Normally people don't catch things in their finger.

Because of this difficulty he writes that the word Etzba in Hebrew actually refers to a part of the body that is used to grab things with. The Torah uses the word Etzba to refer to the part of the body which one uses to hold onto things or grab things. Normally the finger is used for that. But it is not just the finger. It is the finger and the palm right under the finger. The palm and the fingers together are used to hold onto things. Therefore, he writes that technically the word Etzba can refer not just to the finger but to the part of the palm directly under the finger that is also used for grabbing. So that the word Kaf which means palm is used for a reference to the palm excluding the fingers. But when one is referring to the fingers and the palm together the word Etzba is appropriate. With that he says (ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו) refers to the hand, to the palm with the fingers. The way you would hold the Kli in your hand you cup your hand in a way that the fingers and the palm together would hold the liquid. Again it is a technical answer but it is a Chiddush that the word Etzba refers not to the finger alone but to the palm under the finger as well.

Earlier in the year we mentioned a Kasha of the Chasam Sofer in regard to the Haggada Shel Pesach. In the Haggada we read what is actually a Braissa that (מנין אתה אומר שלקו המצרים במצרים) (עשר מכות ועל הים לקו חמשים מכות). We are taught that in Mitzrayim there were 10 Makkos and at Yam Suf there 5 times as many Makkos. So that if there were 10 in Mitzrayim there were 50 at the Yam Suf. We learn this from the fact that in Mitzrayim it says (אצבע אלרים הוא) Etzba Elokim Hu. We refer to the miracles of Mitzrayim as the finger and on the Yam it says (היך הגדלה). It says that HKB"H caused the Makkos with the Yad. The Yad is 5 times the Etzba. Therefore, if in Mitzrayim it was the equivalent of an Etzba or 1 then in the Yam it was equivalent to a Yad or 5 times as much. This is what it says in the Haggada.

The Chasam Sofer in a Teshuva asks that it is not so. A finger is not a 5th of the hand. A finger is a 5th of 5 fingers. There is also the palm. The finger is about a 10th of a hand. So that if the Makkos of Mitzrayim were an Etzba or a finger and on the Yam it was a Yad it should be more than 5 times as much. This is a Gevaldige Kasha.

According to the Ksav V'hakabbala this will be answered because he is saying that it is a reference to the finger down including the palm and indeed the Etzba is a 5th of the hand. So this would answer this Kasha in a very nice way. What makes this even more striking is when we compare this Teretz to the words of the Chasam Sofer. The Chasam Sofer in the Teshuva writes that perhaps the word Yad as in Yado Hachazaka on the Yam Suf refers only to the fingers as the word Yad refers only to the fingers as in Netillas Yadaim which according to many Rishonim is the obligation

to wash your hands until the knuckles. It is a Machlokes the Rif and the Rosh whether the palm is included and we hold that it is just the fingers meaning to say that Yad refers to the finger alone. Of course this would answer the Chasam Sofer's Kasha because the Yad is the 5 fingers. It turns out that we have an incredible set of opposites. The Chasam Sofer although he writes it B'derech Efsher writes that the word Yad may refer to the finger alone. The Ksav V'hakabbalah writes that even though even the word Eitzba may refer to the finger and all the way down to the wrist. Two opposite understandings of a word in the Torah. As I said this is a technical issue but something that when taken together with the Chasam Sofer actually is a beautiful Vort.

19:2 (זאת תקת התורה) Many of the Rishonim including the Klei Yakar, Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh and later Rav Moshe and Rav Yaakov in this week's Parsha say that (זאת תקת התורה) Zos Chukas Hatorah is to tell us that really all Mitzvos of the Torah have some aspect of Chok to them. We keep the Mitzvos as if they are a Chok even when we can really understand a reason. We keep it because it is Hashem's will.

The Rambam writes regarding the Mitzvos that are Sheaino Sichlios, as he writes regarding the Mitzvos of Kashrus for example. A person should say I really would want to eat Treif, I want to eat Chazair, however, HKB"H was Gozeir on me not to eat it. The idea here being that we keep the all Mitzvos as if it was a Chok. Even when we have a peek a little bit of an understanding into the meaning of the Mitzvah.

I would refer you if you have the time to an important and beautiful note in the Michtav M'elihu Cheilek 4 page # 355 footnote # 4 which has a beautiful explanation of how this applies and stretched to certain areas of scientific issues. It is a Divrei Chazal on the Gemara and it is a footnote worth seeing.

I also want to tell you that the Aruch Hashulchan in Hilchos Cholov Akum writes that what we are saying now is true about the Rabbanans as well. Even though in the Rabbanans the Rabbanan gave us open reasons for the Takana D'rabbanan such as not drinking Cholov Akum because of the fear that other non-Kosher milk was mixed in. The Aruch Hashulchan writes that you should know for every Drabbanan (there is a Tam Komus) there is a hidden reason, a reason that is not revealed and therefore, the reason that is revealed appears not to apply don't be quick to ignore a Takanna Drabbanan. So this is a technical Vort on Hashgachik insights into the beginning of the Parsha.

Turning to the end of the Parsha we have a Milchamah where Klal Yisrael goes and does battle with Og Melech Habashan. Here HKB"H tells Moshe as it says in 21:34 (אל-תירא אתו--כי בְּיַדְךָ נִתְתִּי) (אתו). Do not fear him because I am going to put him into your hands. Rashi says (אל תירא אותו) משה ירא להלחם, שמא תעמוד לו זכותו של אברהם, שנאמר (בראשית יד, יג) ויבא הפליט, הוא עוג, שפלט מן הרפאים (שהכו כדרלעומר וחבריו בעשתרות קרנים, שנאמר (דברים ג, יא) כי רק עוג מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים why would I think that Moshe would be afraid? The answer he says is because many many years earlier, generations earlier Og had gone to tell Avraham Avinu that Lot had been captured and as a result he had a Zechus. The fear was that maybe that Zechus would stand against Moshe Rabbeinu. So Hashem had to say (אל-תירא אתו--כי בְּיַדְךָ נִתְתִּי אתו). This appears to be an absolute Pele. This is because the reason why Og did that is as Rashi tells us in Parshas Lech Lecha 14:13 (ויבא [מדרשו] לפי פשוטו זה עוג שפלט מן המלחמה, והוא שכתוב (דברים ג יא) כי רק עוג נשאר מיתר הרפאים, הפליט וזהו נשאר שלא הרגוהו אמרפל וחבריו כשהכו את הרפאים בעשתרות קרנים, תנחומא (חקת כה). ומדרש בראשית רבה

(מב ח) זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול, וזהו מיתר הרפאים שנאמר (ו ד) הנפלים היו בארץ וגו' ומתכוין שיהרג אברהם וישא (אח שרה). Og was hoping that Avraham would be killed and then he would marry Sarah. This does not seem to be an act worthy of reward. Specifically because we know that when it comes to non-Jews they do not get Schar for a Mitzvah Shelo Mushlam. It says this regarding Tzedakah in Maseches Bava Basra 10b (18 lines from the bottom) (נענה רבי יהושע ואמר צדקה תרומם גוי אלו) ישראל דכתיב ומי כעמך ישראל גוי אחד וחסד לאומים חטאת כל צדקה וחסד שאומות עובדי כוכבים עושין חטא הוא להן שאין עושין אלא כדי שתמשך מלכותן שנאמר להן מלכא מלכי ישפר עליך וחטיך בצדקה פרוק ועויתך במיחן עניין הן תהוי ארכא לשלותיך וגו' נענה רבן גמליאל ואמר צדקה תרומם גוי אלו ישראל דכתיב ומי כעמך ישראל [וגו'] וחסד לאומים חטאת כל צדקה וחסד שעכו"ם עושין חטא הוא להן שאין עושין אלא להתיהר בו וכל המתיהר נופל בגיהנם שנאמר זד יהיר ליך שמו עושה בעברת זדון ואין עברה אלא גיהנם שנאמר יום עברה היום (ההוא). Therefore, why would Og get Schar?

Rav Moshe in the Darash Moshe (Cheilek Aleph page # 127 on 21:34) writes an incredible thing. He writes that when someone does something good even though he is going to get punished for it as in the case of Og because he did it not just for an ulterior reason but for a bad reason. For him it was an Aveira to tell Avraham to do things that Avraham should get killed so that he could take Sarah. Nevertheless the Tzad Tov brings Schar.

I remember that the Nesivos in his Hakdamah to Megillas Esther says that because Haman was the Keili through which HKB"H brought a Kiddush Hashem, the miracle of Purim, Haman had a Zechus. In that Zechus Haman's great grandchildren were Megayeir and taught Torah in Bnei Brak. Because every Zechus, every good thing that a person does deserves a reward. This is an incredible Limud that even in such a case, even in such an unusual circumstance a person who is a Keili for something good happening does get reward. I would guess that the reverse is true as well as Rav Moshe points out that a person has to be very careful even when he is doing things Lishmah to try as much as he can not to cause pain to others. Chalila that itself can bring about a retribution.

The first question of the week is: In 20:16 it says (וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָךְ, וַיִּצְאָנוּ) (מִמְצָרַיִם). Moshe Rabbeinu relates when we were in Egypt we cried out to Hashem and He listened to our prayers, and he sent an angel who took us out of Egypt. We say at the Seder (לֹא עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ,) (וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי שָׂרֵף, וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי שְׁלִיט, אֲלֵא הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּכַבּוּדוֹ וּבְעֶצְמוֹ). That HKB"H took us out himself. Why does Moshe Rabbeinu say (וַיִּצְאָנוּ מִמְצָרַיִם, וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָךְ)?

This is a difficult Kasha and I was going to leave it at that. Then I had a thought. HKB"H did send a Malach to take us out of Egypt. The Malach's name was Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe Rabbeinu was HKB"H agent to take us out. Moshe Rabbeinu wasn't going to say HKB"H sent me. He wasn't going to speak in a haughty way. So he said (וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָךְ) that Hashem sent his messenger. Really it was him himself. If you are going to wonder could it be that a human being is called a Malach?

I would like to share with you a Vort that Rav Schwab says in his Mayan Beis Hashoeva pg # 347 on Posuk 20:16. At a Bris the Minhag is that the Mohel says that Eliyahu Malach Habris Amod Al Yimini L'samcheini. Eliyahu the angel of the Bris stand on my right side and help me. The Kasha Rav Schwab asks is that we know that it is Assur to Daven to a Malach for help. How could the Mohel Daven to a Malach?

Rav Schwab answers that it is Assur to ask a Malach to help you but you are allowed to ask a human being to help you. Since Eliyahu never died Amod Al Yimini L'samcheini. This was an appropriate request. We see then that the word Malach does apply to a human being (to Eliyahu). So perhaps here as well the Malach referred to is a reference to Moshe Rabbeinu and that would answer this question.

The second question of the week is: This question is on Rashi in Shemos 15:25 (במרה :שם שם לו) which tells us that the Mitzvah of Parah Adumah was already commanded in Marah. It is known that there is some question as to the source of this Rashi as the Gemara doesn't mention Parah Adumah. Rashi says it and the Ramban brings it in the name of Rashi which indicates that it is not a mistake. Rashi holds that Parah Adumah was commanded in Marah. That would seem to contradict a Rashi in our Parsha. Rashi in 19:22 says (פרה אדמה) that the Parah Adumah is a Kapparah to the sin of the Eigel. What is going on? The Mitzvah of Parah Adumah was commanded in Marah which is prior to the Cheit Ha'eigel. These two Rashi's appear to be a contradiction.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5771

Of course the Sod of the Parah Aduma has to do with the fact that it is somehow Metamei Tehorim Umitaheir Temai'im. The Parah Aduma has the unique ability to make a Tamei Meis be Tahor but at the same time a Tahor person who touches it becomes Tamei. This is a secret which Chazal say that even Shlomo Hamelech could not understand. He could not figure it out.

Naturally, when an Acharon comes and figures it out we are quite suspicious because if Shlomo Hamelech couldn't understand it and you are coming up with an explanation then obviously there is something wrong with your explanation.

The Klei Yakar in this week's Parsha explains Metamei Tehorim Umitaheir Temai'im in a way that explains the mystery of this unique idea regarding the Parah Aduma. The Klei Yakar writes that there is something totally unique about the Parah Aduma, but it touches on one of the secrets of the Briya, something that is consistent in the nature of Hashem's world.

That in the words of the Klei Yakar is that in the world, things are moved by their opposites. ("שכל" דבר אינו מתפעל כ"א מהפכו ולא ממה שהוא ממינו Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafcho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino. Things are moved by their opposites and not by similarities. What does that mean? On a simple level we would say that opposites attract. What he is saying is that for example, the Yeitzer Horah does not look to deal primarily with Reshaim.

The Yeitzer Horah looks to mislead primarily Tzaddikim, so that the Yeitzer Hora works more on Klal Yisrael than the Umos Haolam and more on Tamidei Chachamim than on anyone else.

We too are that way, Ein Adam Omeid Al Dvar Halacha Ela Im Kain Nichshal Bo. A person who is Nichshal in an Aveira and realizes it will then be able to remember the Dvar Halacha. You might

forget a Halacha, however, if you make a mistake and subsequently you correct your mistake, you will be stronger than if you hadn't made the mistake in the first place.

So too in many of the areas of nature, Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafcho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino. Things are moved to action from things that are the reverse of it rather than things that are similar in and of themselves.

The Klei Yakar refers to something that he says at the end of Parshas Shemos, that before something disappears it has its greatest strength. In other words, before a flame of a candle goes out, you will notice that it sparks up and it has a very bright light at the last minute. It is said that before the morning is the darkest part of the night. Somehow darkness is Misgabair right before it disappears. Why, Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafcho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino Dafka. It is the nature of things to be moved by their opposites. If something is bent in one direction and you want to straighten it out you have to bend it in the opposite direction. That is a secret of the Teva Habriya.

The Parah Aduma is therefore Metamei Tehorim, when it touches something it becomes the opposite (Mispa'el). A Tahor becomes Tamei and a Tamei becomes Tahor. This is all part of the mystery of Shlomo Hamelech. It is not the way we would logically think the world would work. It is however the way the world does work.

A parent is often closest to a child who when growing up gave him a hard time, gave him Agmas Nefesh growing up rather than to a child that was easy. Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafcho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino.

What is interesting in Bain Adam L'chaveiro, perhaps in Bain Adam L'ishto, is that human beings, human nature, interaction with other human beings is the same way. If you are tough with someone that person may back down temporarily for a moment, but in fact the person really doesn't back down. The person is really distanced from you. In the long run, being soft to people is more successful than being tough. That is the nature of a person. If you insist on doing things a certain way and it is a debatable topic, things might be able to be done in a reverse way, the person listening will think maybe the other way. Or let us say for example that you have a child who slept through Shacharis, if you say to him you always oversleep Shacharis, his reaction to the tough talk will be "I always" how can you say that? The fact that he did indeed sleep through Shacharis 10 days in a row isn't the point. He doesn't always do it. The tough talks evokes a reverse reaction.

This is a very important lesson from this Kli Yakar. Shekol Davar, everything, is Mispa'al, moved to action, Mai'hafcho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino., from its reverse not necessarily from which you would expect.

The lesson that I am taking out is from this Nikuda. That a person should be soft and not tough.

Later on in this week's Parsha we find the Cheit of Moshe. Moshe Rabbeinu at Mei Miriva does some sort of an Aveira. It is very hotly debated. What is the Aveira? Rishonim bring numerous Peshatim and reject them. Certainly Moshe Rabbeinu's sin is not something that is easily understood by people on our level.

The Cheit of Moshe Rabbeinu according to Rashi is that Moshe hit the stone. To this the Ramban says that he doesn't understand. What is the difference to a stone if you hit it or you talk to it? He also asks that Moshe Rabbeinu was told Kach Es Hamate, take the stick.

That should be understood to mean to take as hit the stone just as we found during the Makkos when Moshe Rabbeinu was told Kach Es Hamate, he did a physical act with the Mate. Therefore, this Rashi needs a Hesber.

I saw an incredible Vort from Rav Yonasan Eibishutz who explains as follows. He says the idea that Moshe Rabbeinu should have spoken before he hit has nothing to do with the rock itself. It has to do with Moshe Rabbeinu's own Middos as a Manhig Yisroel as a leader of Klal Yisrael. It is a rule in life, before you hit, speak. Before you are tough be soft. Before you do things with a tremendous push, do them with a gentle push. This is very much the lesson of the Mei Miriva according to this Pshat and therefore, there is no difference to the stone if you hit it or talk to it, however, to Moshe Rabbeinu the Manhig Yisroel should have understood to talk and only later to hit.

Again, a lesson, in life when you have choices, be soft and don't be tough. When you are tough you alienate the people close to you. When you are soft you might lose the battle but at the end of the day you will win the war. An important lesson in dealing with other people.

The summer months are upon us and it is a time of great Nisayon in many many areas. Vacation time should be a time of Aliya, no work, yet it is a time of Nisayon, of test.

I would like to mention two areas that are important. Number one, Shaylos that have to do with Yichud. This time of year people are in bungalow colonies living in close proximity one to the other. Errors in Hilchos Yichud take place. If someone in an attached bungalow is going shopping, it would be normal to say to the neighbor keep an eye on my children, my children may be sleeping, maybe they are going to sleep, maybe they are playing, please keep an eye on them.

Keep in mind that there is an Issur for a man to be Miyacheid with a girl over the age of 3 years old. So if there is a 4 year old girl sleeping in the bungalow and someone asks you to just step in and be there, and if the girl will cry you would pick up the girl, that is an Issur Yichud.

An Issur Yichud is an Issur onto itself, it is not because something may happen. Even if nothing will happen the Issur Yichud is an Issur. In the case of a girl who is a bit older it is an Issur D'oraisa, by somebody who has reached the age of Niddah. For a younger girl it is still an Issur P'nuya, which is still an Issur Yichud.

The reverse is also true. For a boy over 9 years old is an Issur Yichud for a woman and that Issur is an Issur D'oraisa. For a woman to be Miyacheid with a 9 year old. During the year, a married woman has the Heter of Bai'la B'ir. In the bungalow colonies there is no Heter of Bai'la B'ir because the husband is not in town. Certainly a single girl should not go babysitting for a 9 year old boy, even for 2 boys, because in the case of 2 boys even though 2 men and one woman is not an Issur Yichud, however, B'layla (by night) at the time people go to sleep an extra Shomer is required.

These are things that I am bringing to your attention. Issurei Yichud which are more Noge'a in a bungalow colony setting.

One more point. Unfortunately not everyone goes dressed properly at this time of the year. Be careful, it is Assur to recite a Beracha or Dvar Torah facing a Tefach B'isha Erva, facing a woman who is not properly covered. This is even if the woman is a Tinuk Shenishba and it is no fault. I am not condemning any person. I am talking about what we the Bnei Torah have to know. That making a Beracha facing (even if you are not looking) either a married woman whose hair is uncovered. Many women wear snoods that leave the hair in the front uncovered. The most Kuladicka Shitta allows 2 fingerwidths to be uncovered. Actually, this Shitta is a bit less than 2 fingerwidths, more than that is considered to be uncovered. Making a Beracha facing that even if it is a relative, be it a wife or daughter, is Assur. So be careful.

Similarly when you are on the street, if you want to make a Shehakol on something, be careful if you are facing an Ervah even if you are not looking there is a problem making a Beracha, you can look to the side and make the Beracha that way.

If you are travelling in the trains it is certainly a problem this time of year. Rav Moshe writes in a Teshuva that Bishas Hadchak a person can rely on the Shittos Harishonim that doesn't require looking to the side and that allows looking down or looking away. That is certainly a Heter. You are better off looking in a Sefer on the train instead of anywhere else.

I heard an incredible story about Rabbi Avigdor Miller which I had never heard before. Somebody wanted to speak to him and Rabbi Miller told him that he didn't have any time. So the person said that I know that you go on a walk everyday so let me accompany you on the walk and I will discuss my issue with you then. Rabbi Miller replied fine, however, when I go for my walk I pick up rubber bands. The mailmen here in NY have their mail in bundles with rubber bands and they drop the rubber bands on the sidewalk. I don't want them to be wasted. So I pick up the rubber bands as I walk. You will have to help me. The young man said fine. So they went for their walk and as they were walking they picked up 4 or 5 rubber bands. When they got to Rabbi Miller's home at the end of the walk this man thanked him and offered him the rubber bands. Rabbi Miller said I don't need rubber bands. The young man said I thought that you collect these rubber bands?

Rabbi Miller said I don't need rubber bands, however, it is July and you asked me to go for a walk. Am I going to take a young man for a walk down Coney Island Avenue? You know what is going on in the street? So I told you to look at the floor for rubber bands and this way I was sure that your eyes were trained on the floor and not all over the place. What an interesting story. What a Mussar Haskeil.

The first question of the week is: we are always taught that Tzaddikim B'misanan K'dolim Mai'B'chayehem, the Zechusim of a Tzaddik after death are greater than the Zechusim of his lifetime. He can be Poel, he can do more in death than when he was alive. Certainly we see that by Eliyahu Hanavi and his influence on Elisha. I have a problem with the Parsha, we are told that for 40 years in the Midbar the Zechus of Miriam kept the B'eir flowing. Water kept flowing from the B'eir Bizchus Miriam. As soon as Miriyam dies in this week's Parsha, the B'eir ceases to give water and it is necessary for Moshe Rabbeinu to have the incident with the Mei Miriva.

I don't understand, Tzaddikim B'misasan K'dolim Mai'B'chayeiheim. Why couldn't Miriyam continue to be the Zechus for the B'eir at that time? Tzorech Iyun Gadol M'od.

The second question of the week is: Klal Yisrael in the Midbar are carrying the bones of the Shevaim to be buried in Eretz Yisrael. Aharon and Miriyam two of their three greatest leaders pass away. Why do they bury them in the Midbar? Why don't they carry their bones into Eretz Yisrael to bury them there as well?

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5770

וְלָמָּה הֶעֱלִיתֶנּוּ, מִמִּצְרַיִם, לְהָבִיא אֹתָנוּ, אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הַרְעָה הַזֶּה: לֹא מְקוֹם זֵרַע, וְהָאֲנָה וְגַפְּן וְרִמּוֹן, וּמִים אֵין, ה' 20:5
Why did you bring us up from Mitzrayim to this terrible place, it is not a place of planting, nor of figs, grapes, or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink. The idea that it is not a place of planting is brought in Shulchan Aruch in Hilchos Kisui Hadam Siman 28, where it says that earth of the desert is not acceptable to be used for Kisui Hadam because you need Afar Harau Litzmoiach, earth from which things can grow and since in the Midbar things can't grow, it is not good earth.

We have a difficulty from Parshas Shelach **15:32** where we learned the story of the Mekoishesh Eitzim. וַיְהִי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בַּמִּדְבָּר; וַיִּמְצְאוּ, אִישׁ מִקְשָׁשׁ עֲצִים--בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִת לֵב. This is the story of the person who according to the Gemara in Maseches Bava Basra 119a2 (note 19 in the Artscroll Gemara) cut something that was growing from the ground on Shabbos which is the Issur of Toilesh and Koitzer. According to others he was Me'ameir, which is gathering things in the place that it grew. Either way, wood did grow in the Midbar. This would seem to contradict the Posuk here in Parshas Chukas that says that the Midbar is not a Makoim Zera, meaning that things can't grow in the Midbar.

A second question. They complain that it is not a place of planting and that they do not have water. For the last 39 ½ years they had water however, now after Miriam's death they do not have water. However, the complaint that they can't plant anything is not something new, they had already lived like this in the Midbar for the last 39 ½ years. Why all of a sudden are they complaining now that it is not a place that things can grow?

A third question. It is not the nature of a person, who has never experienced something to complain about the lack of it, so since most of this generation had grown up in the Midbar why did they have this complaint about things not growing in the first place?

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadoish (page # 56 on 15:32) on the story of the Mekoishesh Eitzim in Parshas Shelach asks why did the Posuk say בַּמִּדְבָּר בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, if throughout the whole Sefer Bamidbar the Yidden were in the Midbar? The Posuk is telling us that when Klal Yisrael was in the Midbar the Midbar was different. Normally nothing grew in the Midbar, however, when Klal Yisrael was in the Midbar the Be'eir Shel Miriam not only gave Klal Yisrael water to drink but also provided nutrients for the Midbar for things to grow like orchards and gardens. So the Posuk is really coming to answer our question. The Bnei Yisrael were in the Midbar and then there was a Mekoishesh Eitzim, because it was possible to find things growing in the Midbar at this time

because of the Be'eir Shel Miriam. Mimeila all the questions are answered. This is why they were missing things that grew because Miriam had been Nifteres and there was no water to give nutrients to the earth in order that things should grow.

21:18 - 19 וממתנה, נחליאל; יט באר חפרוה שרים, פרוה נדיבי העם, במחקה, במשענתם; וממקבר, מתנה יה **19 - 21:18** Chazal interpret the word Matana to mean the Toirah. The Gemara in Eiruvim says that if a person behaves humbly like a Midbar that everyone treads upon, then he is Zoiche that Toirah is given to him as a gift. This idea that Toirah is given as a gift to someone who behaves with humility is one of the 48 things that you are Koine Toirah with.

In the Sefer Yikar Tiferes he explains that this is the way we begin Eloikai Nitzar at the end of Shemone Esrei when we say V'nafshi K'afar Lakoil Ti'ye. This is the concept of a person who treats his own honor and Nefesh as like the dust upon which everyone treads. We follow that with a Bakasha that P'sach Libi B'soirasecha that Hashem should open our hearts to Toirah.

There is a Teshuva in the Netziv's Maishiv Davar, that a Talmid Chochom was Niftar and he left in his will that his Chidushai Toirah that he learned while learning a Sugya can be published, however, his Teshuvos to people can't be published because he was not into the Sugya and he didn't trust himself that the Teshuvos were reliable to print. The children wanted to know if they were Mechuyav to follow the father's command of not publishing the Teshuvos or is the Toirah not his and he is not in control of the concepts he came up with.

The Netziv bases his answer on our Posuk of מתנה וממקבר, The Psak he gives is that Toirah can't belong to a person. Someone can choose where to disseminate his Chiddushim and who to teach it to, that is his right. However, a person can't say he doesn't want anyone to have it, as that is not his right.

On the topic of the Parah Aduma we have to understand a little bit about Tumah. When Moshiach will come Bim'heira B'yamainu, we will once again be Noiheg Tumah and Taharah and everything will be divided between things that are Tamei and things that are Tahor. We will have to have a separate set of dishes for the days of Tumah and Taharah unless you want to use plastic. We will have to have a separate car for Tumah and Taharah.

At the end of Megillas Rus in **4:7** we learn וזאת לפנים בישראל על-הגאלה ועל-התמורה, לקנים כל-דבר, ז The custom was to do a Kinyan Chalipin which today we do with a handkerchief that is used when you sell your Chameitz or by the Kesubah and that exchange creates a Kinyan. The custom in those days was to use a Na'al as is used in the Posuk which some want to say means a shoe, however, others like the Even Ezer here and Rabbeinu Bachye in Parshas Shemos want to say it means a glove. If it meant a shoe it would have said Na'aloi Mei'al Ragloi so here it means a glove. The question is why was everyone wearing gloves? The Teretz is that in a world of Tumah and Taharah you want to wear gloves.

Let's say you have a friend who went to a Levaya, he is now an Av Hatumah. The Meis is an Avi Avois Hatumah and he became an Av Hatumah. If you shake his hand you become a Rishoin L'tumah. A person can't become a Sheini, however, as just illustrated; it can happen that a person becomes a Rishoin. For that reason it was common to wear gloves. If a person who was at a Levaya

shakes your hand and you are wearing a glove than the glove becomes a Rishoin and the Tumah is not transmitted to the person wearing the glove. So it was a wise practice in those days to always wear a glove.

We read in the Haftorah to Parshas Zachar that Shmuel kills Agag. Shmuel 1 **15:33** **לִגְּ** וַיִּאָמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל--כִּי־אֶשְׁרֵף אֶת־אֲגַג לְפָנַי יְרֵר, בְּגִלְגָל If Shmuel was a Nazir how could he become Tamei by killing Agag? The answer may be the same that he wore perhaps 2 gloves and the outside glove became the Av Hatumah and the inside glove became the Rishoin L'tumah and the Tumah is not transmitted then to a human being as a Sheini.

The question of the week is: The Gemara in Gittin **60a on the bottom to 60b on the top** says that the Parsha of Parah Adumah was taught to Klal Yisrael on the day that the Mishkan was set up, on Rosh Choidesh Nissan. אי נמי לכדרבי לוי דאמר רבי לוי שמנה פרשיות נאמרו ביום שהוקם בו המשכן. אלו הן פרשת כהנים ופרשת לויים ופרשת טמאים ופרשת שילוח טמאים ופרשת אחרי מות ופרשת שתויי יין ופרשת נרות They had been told about Parah Adumah at Marah. The first Parah Adumah ever was prepared on the second day of Nissan. Why was it not done earlier? One of the requirements as listed in the Posuk 19:4 is **וְהָיָה אֵל-נֹכַח פְּנֵי אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד, מִדְּמָה--שְׁבַע ד** וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, מִדְּמָה--בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ; וְהָיָה אֵל-נֹכַח פְּנֵי אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד, מִדְּמָה--שְׁבַע ד that there should be an Ohel Moed, so until there was a Mishkan there can be no Parah Adumah.

Moshe Rabbeinu served as Kohen Gadol the week before Rosh Choidesh Nissan. Moshe Rabbeinu should have been a Tamei Meis as there was no Parah Adumah at that time, so how was he able to be Meshameish as a Kohen Gadol especially if the obligation of the Parah Adumah had already been taught at Marah? You might argue that maybe Moshe Rabbeinu wore gloves all the time and made sure not to become Tamei. However, we find that Moshe Rabbeinu was Oisek with Aroinoi Shel Yosef, he is credited with taking Yosef's coffin into the Midbar and we know that the Aroinoi Shel Yosef is Metamei because the whole Mitzvah of Pesach Sheini came about because of the people who were Tamei Meis from carrying the Aron of Yosef. So Moshe Rabbeinu should have been Tamei, so how could he have served as the Kohen Gadol during the Shivas Yimei Hamilulim?

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas Balak 5769

At the beginning of Parshas Chukas in 19:1 - 2 the Posuk says **וַיְדַבֵּר יְרֵר, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן** (לאמר). (זאת חקת התורה, אשר-צוה יְרֵר לְאָמֹר דְּבַר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלֶיהָ פָּרָה אֲדָמָה תְּמִימָה אֲשֶׁר אֵין-בָּהּ מוֹם, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עָלָה עָלֶיהָ, עַל) The word Leimor is mentioned an extra time. The first Leimor is typical. Why is the second Leimor there? The Ksav Soifer explains something else about the beginning of the Parshah. Rashi in 19:22 in D"H Parah Aduma says (**פרה אדמה**) משל לבן שפחה שטינף פלטין של (מלך). אמרו תבא אמו ותקנה הצואה, כך תבא פרה ותכפר על העגל the connection between Parah Aduma and the Eigel is that the Inyan of the Parah Aduma is that the same way a child's mother comes and wipes away the filth so to let the cow come and atone for the Eigel. The connection between the Parah Aduma and the Eigel is vague as to exactly what it is. The Ksav Soifer gives us a nice connection. We have a Kabalah that the Choitim by the Eigel were the Eiruv Rav. They were the ones who wanted to make the Avoida Zarah. Klal Yisrael who had Kashas as to where Moshe Rabbeinu was since the time was up, just followed along. Klal Yisroel's history especially in Galus is always a challenge. The Goy asks questions and puts a Yid on the defensive and then he feels

uncomfortable and is in Sakana. By the Parah Aduma, Rashi brings that idea when he says, in Posuk Bais, (לפי שהשטן ואומות העולם מונין את ישראל לומר מה המצוה הזאת ומה טעם יש: זאת חקת התורה) (בה). Dafka here we say, (זאת חקת התורה), that there is no reason. This is supposed to be our Chizuk against our association with the Eiruv Rav to be strong in what is correct even without knowing the reason. That is the Kaparah. The second Leimor is Hashem telling Moshe to tell Klal Yisroel that Dafka here is where it is (זאת חקת התורה) without a reason.

In Perek 20:1 we have the death of Miriam. We learn from (וּתְמַת שָׁם מְרִיָם, וּתְקַבֵּר שָׁם), a Gizairas Shava, Sham Sham to Egla Arufa. That just like by Egla Arufa we find that it is Asur B'hana, so to we learn from here that the body of a Mais is Asur B'hana. That Limud is the subject of a Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA in Yoire Dai'a. They argue as to whether the Mais if it was a Goy is Asur or Mutar B'hana. The Mechaber writes that the Goy's body is also Asur B'hana, because Sham Sham applies to all Maisim. The GRA argues and Paskens like Toisafos that only the body of a Yid is subject to the Limud of Sham Sham and would be Asur B'hana. Toisafos brings a Raya from Navi.

After Dovid killed Golias, Shaul had promised that whoever kills Golias can marry his daughter. Shaul at this time became jealous of Dovid. So Shaul said to Dovid, you can marry her, however, you must bring 100 Orlois of Pilishtim. The Gemara in Kiddushin says that they are Royi to feed animals and are worth a Shava Peruta and with that you can be Mekadeish her. Shaul's Kavana was to put Dovid in Sakana by having him kill 100 Pelishtim. What did Dovid do? He brought 200 Orlois and was Mekadeish with that. The GRA learns B'sheim Toisafos from here that you see that a Mais of a Goy is Mutar B'hana.

The Mishne L'melech has a nice Teretz to this Raya. He says it is not a Raya at all and on the contrary it is a Raya Farkert. Why? Dovid killing the Pelishtim is not unusual. He had just killed Golias and he was a Gibor. He could have gone with others for the Pelishtim, he didn't even have to go himself. To kill 100 Pelishtim was not a big thing. So Farkert, Dafka Orlois of Pelishtim. Because, Orlois of Maisai Pelishtim is Assur B'hana. Here Dovid was really challenged. He had to injure 100 Pelishtim in a way to get the Orlois when they were still alive, and use it. That was Shaul's Kavana, to put Dovid in great Sakana.

This Shaila of whether a Mais is Muttar or Assur B'hana came as a Halacha L'maiseh to Rebbi. In 1995 Rebbi had surgery to replace a bone in his leg. At that time Rebbi was given a choice of putting in a metal rod in place of the bone or a cadaver bone as a replacement bone. Rav Pam was consulted because medically each way had benefits. The reason for this consultation was to discuss if this Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA should be Machria whether or not to use a cadaver bone. Rav Pam said there is a Teshuvah Igrois Moshe which is talking to medical students, and says for purposes of medicine, one can be Soimech on the GRA. Rav Pam said make the best medical decision and Rebbi used a cadaver bone at that time. That only lasted for about a year and Rebbi had another surgery in 1996 where it was replaced and there is no longer a cadaver bone in Rebbi.

Rabbi Akiva Eiger asks, how is it Muttar for a Shoimer of a Mais to be paid. If the Mais is Assur B'hana and we learn from Pesachim Daf Chaf Bais that even secondary Hanaois are Assur by Isurai Hana'a. So how can a Shoimer be paid?

In the Moiadim Lizmanim Cheilek Gimmel, Siman (Ois) Raish Aleph. There are 2 different types of Issurai Hana in the Toirah. There are some Issurai Hana that the Toirah is Meracheik like Avoida Zora and Basar V'Chalav because they are Ma'us. Here even a secondary Hana'a would be Assur. There are other things that are Assur B'hana because of their great Kedusha like the Bais Hamikdash and Kodshim for example. People who worked in the Bais Hamikdash got paid, it is a Bifairush in a Mishnah. If it is Issurai Hana'a why should they get paid? The Teretz is, the Issur is only deriving benefit from the thing itself meaning the Guf of the Bais Hamikdash. Mimaila, a Mais is Assur why? Because the Guf is a container for the Neshama and it has a level of Kedusha, that is why it is Assur B'hana. Im Kain, you can get paid for being a Shoimer the same way people got paid for working in the Bais Hamikdash. Ulai, the Machloikes between the Mechaber and Gra maybe Talui in this. Maybe if you hold that the reason (וְהָמָּת שָׁם מֵרִיָּם) brings it to a higher level of Kedusha, then we only know it by Klal Yisroel and we have no reason to think that it applies to a Goy. Because we don't know to say that a Goy's Guf has Kedusha like a Yids Guf. On the other hand, the Mechaber might hold that a Guf without a Neshama is Assur B'hana because it is a Davar Ma'us and then it would include the Guf of a Goy in this Issur as well.

Both Miriam and Aharon die in Parshas Chukas and are buried. If at this time, Klal Yisroel was carrying the bodies of Yosef and the rest of the Shevatim for burial in Eretz Yisroel, and here it is already at the end of the 40 years, why didn't they take the bodies of Aharon and Miriam into Eretz Yisroel as well?

We know that Balak had a son Egloin. Egloin had a daughter or granddaughter Rus. Chazal tell us that the Schar for the Korbanois that Balak brought even though it was Sheloi Lishmah, he was Zoiche to have Rus come from him. The problem is Rashi in Perek 22:4 says (לא היה :בעת ההוא) (ראוי למלכות. מנסיכי מדין היה, וכיון שמת סיחון מנוהו עליהם לצורך שעה) Balak was actually from Midian. In Kiddushin in the 4th Perek it says that Goyim's Yichus go after the father. That would mean that Rus who came from Egloin who came from Balak was not a Moivis but a Midyanis. If so, then the whole Lomdus that Dovid is Mutter Bikhhal because of Moivi V'loi Moivis shouldn't start because she was actually a Midyanis?