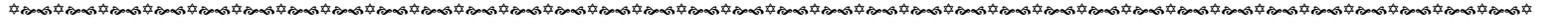


HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

We count the months starting with Nissan, even though it is not the beginning of the year with respect to Creation, nor is it the month of the giving of the Torah, which would be the beginning of Am Yisrael. Rather, Nissan is in the middle of the preparation period for the receiving of the Torah - explains Rav Moshe ZT"l - because without preparation it is not possible to receive the Torah; the importance of the whole creation of the world is only in relation to the receiving of the Torah, and with proper preparation, everyone can merit accepting and receiving the Torah.

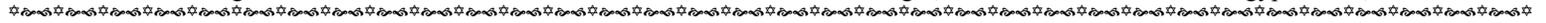
What an inspiration this can be if we keep this thought in mind when we speak about the months of our calendar!

Our Chachamim compare the *mitzvah* of *kiddush levana* to a meeting with the *sh'chinah* of Hashem. One should educate his children in this *mitzvah* from when he understands the basic concept of a *b'racha* and to Whom it is directed. In the month a boy becomes *bar mitzvah*, if possible, it is preferable that he wait to say the *b'racha* until after he becomes a *gadol*. An *aveil r"l*, should wait to say the *b'racha* until after the *shiv'ah*, if possible. If it will be too late, he is allowed to say the *b'racha* (and walk out of the house). However, he should not say "*shalom aleichem*", and others should refrain from saying "*shalom aleichem*" to him, through 30 days, and to an *aveil* for a parent *r"l*, one should not say it for 12 months. The custom is that ladies do not say *kiddush levanah*. If there is a thin cloud covering the moon, and one can still enjoy a benefit from the light of the moon, he may still say the *b'racha* (MB 426:3), and the same is true in a case where the moon is partly covered, but the part that is not covered is shining. If one calculates that from when he starts saying the *b'racha* he will not be able to finish it before the moon will become covered, he should not start. But if he started saying the *b'racha* assuming that the moon will remain uncovered, and then it became covered by the clouds, if he thinks that by waiting a short amount of time (the time it would take to recite the whole *b'racha*) the moon will reappear, then he should wait; if it will take longer, then he should just finish the *b'racha* without waiting. Before saying the *b'racha*, one should look at the moon, but if he was in a place that he could have seen it, just that he didn't look, such as in a case where he just followed other people outside and didn't pay attention to look at the moon, *bedi'aved* he was *yotzeh*. Even though once we start saying the *b'racha* we are not supposed to look at the moon, nevertheless, one has to stand and say the complete *b'racha* in a place from which he is able to see the moon. If a person is sick and cannot go outdoors to say the *b'racha*, so long as he can see the moon, even though he cannot benefit from its light, such as if he can see it only through a crack, he can still make *kidush levanah* (MB 21). In a case where he can't even get out of bed, and he can't see the actual moon, but the light of the moon does shine into his room, he is allowed according to most opinions to say the *b'racha* (Sha'ar Hatziyun 25). Preferably, one should open the window and see the moon without the interference of the glass, but if this difficult for him because of the cold, he could say it after seeing it through the glass. This does not apply to eyeglasses; since that is the normal way for a person to see, one doesn't need to remove glasses to look at the moon. If the window is glazed, in order to be allowed to say *kiddush levanah* by seeing the moon through it, one would have to be able to get pleasure from the light that shines through it to the same extent as if it would not have the glazing. One should not be *mekadesh* the *levanah* through a mirror; however, in case of need (a sick person) it would be permitted to do it after verifying that what he is seeing is actually the moon, and not the reflection of something else (to be cont'd).

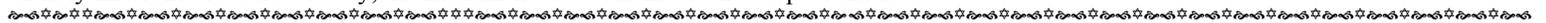


THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro

As we constantly stress, the Sefrei Neviim should not be viewed as 'history books' but rather a collection of specific messages from Hashem to His people. But sometimes to clearly understand the message one needs to have a basic understanding of the historical events surrounding it. Our Haftara (Yirmiyahu 46:13-28) is a perfect example. Yirmiyahu, in a *nevuah* very similar, and in many ways identical, to the one given to Yechezkel (Yechezkel 28:25-29:21 normally the Haftara for Parshas Va'era), calls upon Nevuchadnetzar to rise up against Egypt and to utterly destroy her. But in the last 2 *pesukim* of the Haftara he switches gears and speaks to the Jewish people, encouraging them, and promising that they will not be destroyed. What is the significance of these *pesukim*, which contain a seemingly out-of-place message in a prophecy directed at Egypt? Furthermore, these 2 *pesukim* are a repetition practically verbatim of an earlier *nevuah* of Yirmiyahu (30:10-11) to the Jewish people; why repeat them again in our Haftara? To answer these questions, we need an historical background to our Haftara. After the destruction of the first Bais Hamikdash and the exile of most of the Jews to Babylonia there still remained in the land of Israel a number of Jews. Gedalyahu ben Achikam was appointed their leader by the king of Bavel, but soon after was assassinated by Yishmael ben Nesanya. Although the assassins fled to Amon, the remaining Jews feared they would be blamed for Gedalya's death and decided to escape to Egypt. Before leaving, they decided to consult Yirmiyahu who eventually brought them word from Hashem that they should under no circumstances go down to Egypt! Unfortunately, they wantonly ignored Hashem's command and went down anyway. Chronologically, our Haftara occurs not long after these events. As explained previously, the destruction of Egypt was to be absolute, with no living being to found there for 40 years, including these Jews who had gone down. When the rest of the Jews scattered throughout the world saw what had happened to Egypt and to their brothers there, they began to fear that the same fate awaited them where they resided. Yirmiyahu reassured them that while there was a general promise that the Jews in Galus were to eventually come home and would not be destroyed, it only applied to those who had been taken out of Eretz Yisroel against their will; but those who went against the words of Hashem and chose on their own to leave might, and in the case of those in Egypt would, not return!



LESSONS FROM OUR GEDOLIM: בא אל פרעה: A certain *chassid* once expressed hesitation about intervening with a certain Polish nobleman, known for his violent temper, to try and prevent an anti-Semitic edict. R' Yitzchak of Vorka encouraged the *chassid*, saying that Hashem says בא אל פרעה, as if to say "let's go together to Par'oh, rather than, לך אל פרעה, meaning that Hashem certainly accompanies those on holy missions. Needless to say, the nobleman was "convinced" not to pass the law...



SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת

מעריב	מנחה	סוק"ש	שחרית
5:39	4:19	9:43	7:00/8:50

ערב שבת

הדלק"נ	מנחה	שקעה
4:29	4:32	4:47

SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; **MAARIV** Mon-Th 9:30; **MINCHA/MAARIV** Sun 4:37, next Fri 4:40 (candles 4:37)

KNESSES KNEWS

MAZEL TOV! to Mr. and Mrs. Barry and Devorah Adler on the forthcoming marriage of their daughter Ricki to Yoel Genuth
MASMIDEI YISRAEL boys Fri. night learning program, grades 6-8, 7:50-8:30PM by Rabbi Shloimie Eisenberger, at Eisenberger, 4 Patricia
TAHARAS HAMISHPACHA final part of refresher for women, by Rebbetzin Devorah Schabes, 7:45PM at the Shul, Sunday Jan. 20

KOMMUNITY KORNER

PIRCHEI for boys Pre1A-6th Grade at Knesses Yisrael 2:30-3:30; **AVOS UBANIM** Motz'ei Shabbos 6:40PM
MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
SHABBOS MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, 1:30PM (also Sunday), **MAARIV** Mon-Th 7:00PM, 8:15PM; **SUN SHACHARIS** 7:30 & 8:30
DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) 6:40AM
SUNDAY MINCHA 1:45PM at Zichron Yehuda **MAARIV** daily at 9:15PM **WEEKDAY MINCHA** Mon-Thu, 4PM, at Tefilla L'Moshe
TEHILLIM FOR LADIES 8:30PM Tuesday at Willner (19 Bedford Ct)
FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS and any other inclusions to this publication please contact Moshe Orlian at: 364-0572, or morlian@verizon.net

KONTINUING KLASSES (aka ONGOING SHIURIM)

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael; 6:00AM at Zichron Yehuda (*chabura*)
Maseches Kiddushin (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael
Hilchos Shabbos chabura, Shabbos, after the early minyan
Navi Melachim for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe
Minchas Chinuch Sun. 8:30PM; *shiur klali* on **Maseches Kesubos** Mon-Thurs. 8:15-9:15PM; by R' Bronspiegel at Zichron Yehuda;
Maseches Bava Metzia, Shabbos afternoon 1 hour before Mincha, by R' Yehoshua Kohl at Kehillat New Hempstead
Ladies Shiur: Fri. night, on hold

Mondays 8:40 PM, **Megillas Rus**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler

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ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

Ibn Ezra mentions two interesting points on the same *pasuk* (Sh'mos 12:37), which relates that **ויסעו בני ישראל מרעמסס**. First, on the word **ויסעו**, "they traveled", Ibn Ezra points out that the **ס** should really get a *dagesh*. This is because the pattern for roots beginning with a **נ**, such as **נסע** here, is that in constructs where the root-**נ** drops out the following letter gets a *dagesh*, such as in the word **ויתנו** (where the first **נ** of the root **נתנ** drops out). Ibn Ezra suggests that this is "perhaps" to facilitate pronunciation. Second, he notes that **רעמסס** here has a *sh'va* under the **ע** while in Sh'mos 1:11 there is a *patach* under the **ע** (**רעמסס**). He distinguishes between the two vocalizations, saying that the *patach* version refers to the city itself while the *sh'va* version refers to the region including the city. In support of this it should be mentioned that in B'reishis 47:11 it says **ארץ רעמסס**, using **ארץ**, "land of", to describe **רעמסס**, also with a *sh'va*, and it is not referred to as "city of" **רעמסס**. In addition to the three citations already mentioned, **רעמסס** appears only two other times in TaNaCh, both exactly as it appears here: **ויסעו מרעמסס**, with a *sh'va*.

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MECHOCHMAS HAS'FORNO... By Rabbi Shmuel Burstein

What is the significance of the mitzvah of "*peter chamor*" (redeeming the first born of a donkey, by giving a Kohen a sheep)? What is the reason for the Torah's isolating a *chamor* for this mitzvah? Furthermore, why must we commit such a violent act, axing it at the neck, if the mitzvah is not fulfilled? Well, S'forno understands the complexities involved in this mitzvah to be the motivating force behind the question we usually ascribe to the "*ben tam*", the third of the proverbial four sons, when he asks **מה זאת**?. Most of us are used to thinking of the question as related directly to the Pesach seder. Indeed, this is the intention of the Ba'al Haggadah in placing the *ben tam*'s question, too, in the center of the evening's events. But S'forno understands the question to be directly related to the mitzvah of *peter chamor*, and not one asked necessarily by a *ben tam*. Imagine. One has just learned about the mitzvah of *peter chamor*, or the killing of the donkey by axing his head off, if not redeemed. One asks: Since when do we find any concept of *kedusha* whatsoever operative by a non-kosher animal? And imagine if "your son" (**בנך**) happened to have been present at the more graphic end of the ceremony, (the axing). This forces him to shout **מה זאת?!** Or as we might have said: "What in the world is going on here?" S'forno sees this as a legitimate question asked by *any* son of Yisrael, not just the simple one. The answer lies in the events surrounding Yetzi'as Mitzrayim. S'forno says that travelers in the time of the Pharaohs carried their possessions on wagons. (One immediately calls to mind the events surrounding the gifts to Ya'akov by Yosef: "**וירא את העגלות**") But due to the extraordinary haste with which Bnei Yisrael were pressured to leave Egypt, and due to all manners of wealth in their arms, they had no time to find or load wagons. Instead, the donkeys did their work. But more: the donkeys ended up carrying much larger burdens than normal, in place of the unavailable wagons. This act of *chessed* catapulted these otherwise stubborn, spiritually unclean beasts into objects of mitzvah. All first-born donkeys, alone among non-kosher animals, are to be redeemed... otherwise, killed. They are not private property until one has paid his due. But S'forno goes further. The last words of the *parasha* are meant as further explanation of this otherwise difficult mitzvah. Par'oh, as we learned in S'forno last week, could have redeemed himself and his entire nation by sending out Yisrael voluntarily, earlier on in the *makkos* tournament. S'forno reminds us that Mitzrayim is compared to a donkey. (see Yechezkel 23:20, **אשר בשר חמורים בשרם**) And Yisrael is compared to a lamb (see Yirmiyah, 50:17 and Yechezkel 34:17). Now all fits into place. Par'oh (the donkey) should have been redeemed by allowing the freedom to worship Hashem to Yisrael (the sheep, lamb). Instead, when Par'oh became so stubborn that he would not fulfill his duty, Hashem then killed the sons of Mitzrayim (compared to donkeys), "**על כן אני זוכה לה' כל פטר רחם**" cutting them off. Therefore, if one fails to redeem a donkey with a sheep he too must kill the donkey. The Torah, says S'forno, provides its own answer and explanation to this elusive mitzvah.

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