



KMS Family Parsha

LEARN ABOUT THE PARSHA WITH THE KMS YOUTH DEPARTMENT
Compiled By Rabbi Aaron and Elisheva Levitt

בְּהַר-בְּחֻקֹּתַי - Behar-Bechukotai
5.8.21

PARSHA QUESTIONS

ANSWERS ARE ON THE BACK

- 1) How often does Shmitah occur and what happens during that year?
- 2) How often does Yovel occur and what happens during that year?
- 3) What pasuk in Behar appears on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia?
- 4) What is (25:17) אֲנֹכְתִי דְּבָרִים
- 5) What do we learn from the words "והחזקת בו" (25:35))?"
- 6) What do the words "אם בחקתי תלכו" (26:3)
- 7) Why do we read a big part of Parshat Bechukotai quietly? (26:14)
- 8) Why did Galut Bavel last exactly 70 years?
- 9) Why does the Torah say "Torot" (plural) and not "Torah" (singular)? (26:46)
- 10) Why is the name יַעֲקֹב is written with an extra Vav? (26:42)

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Discussion starter for your Shabbat table..

If you could take a Sabbatical year off what would you do for that year?

DID YOU KNOW?

What is a Pruzbul? (Chabad.org)

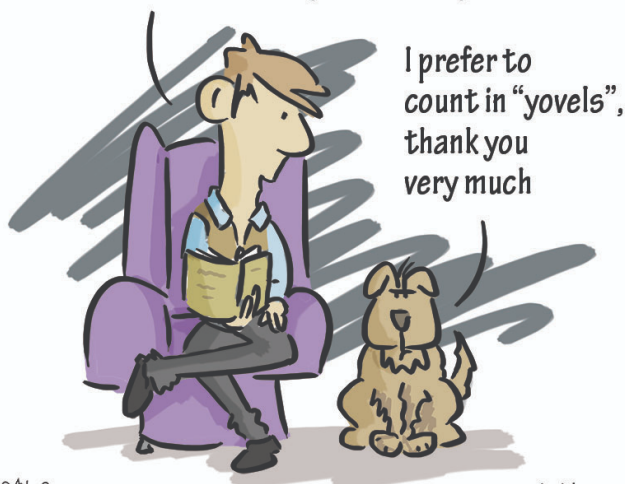
This tells us that part of the observance of Shemitah is the forgiving of all loans. Any debts that are unpaid at the conclusion of the last day of the Shemitah year are canceled. Even if a borrower wishes to repay his debt, the lender may not accept it unless he reminds the borrower that the debt has been canceled, and the borrower still insists on giving him the money "as a gift." (Indeed, it is considered praiseworthy for a borrower to do this.)

At the same time, the Torah forbids us to refrain from lending money for fear of Shemitah canceling the loan, and commands us to lend happily, despite the possibility that we may not be paid back. So where does this leave the modern lender and borrower? How is someone supposed to lend money knowing that the debt will be wiped out in just a few years?

This problem has been around for over 2,000 years. In the first century BCE, Hillel the Elder saw that people were avoiding giving loans as the Shemitah year neared. This posed two problems: 1) The wealthy people were transgressing the Torah prohibition against withholding loans out of fear of Shemitah. 2) The poor people who desperately needed loans had no way to procure them. He came up with a novel solution. Hillel noted that the Torah tells us that only private debts are canceled by Shemitah: "He shall not exact from his friend or his brother." If, however, one owes the court (i.e., the community) money, Shemitah does not affect the loan. Based on this rule, he instituted the pruzbul: a mechanism by which debts are transferred to a beit din (religious court). By making a pruzbul, you make your private debts public—and therefore redeemable.

The Talmud explains that nowadays the Shemitah loan amnesty is no longer in effect according to biblical law. Thus, since the Shemitah that we observe today is a rabbinic injunction, Hillel was empowered to circumvent these laws due to pressing need.

How old are you in dog years?
Or should I say "Shmitah years"



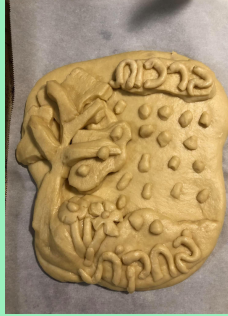
PARSHA ANSWERS

- 1) Every 7 years in Eretz Yisrael the land rests and debts are forgiven.
- 2) Every 50 years in Eretz Yisrael land goes back to its original owners and slaves go free.
- 3) 25:10 - "Proclaim Liberty Throughout All The Land Unto All The Inhabitants Thereof."
- 4) אִוְנַת דְּבָרִים is the prohibition to say anything that would pain, anger, hurt, frighten, bother, or embarrass another person.
- 5) Rashi 25:35 - If you see someone in need give them Chizuk and help before they fall apart.
- 6) Rashi 26:3 - We must effort into Torah study: שְׁתַּחֲיוּ עַמִּלִּים בְּתוֹרָה
- 7) When we get to the section of the Tochecha, where we read about the punishments that can happen when we don't act the right way, the Baal Koreh leyns quietly to show that we hope these warnings will never come true.
- 8) Rashi 26:35 - 70 years because the Jewish People violated 70 Shemita and Yovel years.
- 9) Rashi 26:46 - To teach that both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah were given to Moshe on Har Sinai.
- 10) Rashi 26:42 - There are 5 times that Yaakov's name is written with an extra VAV and 5 times that Eliyahu HaNavi's name is written without a VAV. Yaakov took this letter as a collateral until Eliyahu comes and declares the Geulah.

ELISHEVA'S PARSHA CHALLAH



FOR BEHAR THE CHALLAH IS IN THE SHAPE OF THE LIBERTY BELL. THIS IS BECAUSE THE WORDS ON THE LIBERTY BELL " PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT THE LAND" ARE THE SAME ONES THAT WE SING IN DEROR YIKRA ON SHABBAT AND WHICH ARE IN THIS PARSHA.



THE SECOND PARSHA TALKS TO US ABOUT THE BLESSINGS AND CURSES THAT HASHEM WILL GIVE US IF WE DO OR DO NOT KEEP THE MITZVOT. THE CHALLAH SHOWS THE BRACHA OF RAIN WHICH WE ALL RELY ON WHEREVER WE LIVE TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE.

**MAY HASHEM ONLY BLESS US GOING FORWARD AND CONTINUE TO BRING LIBERTY TO US AND OUR LAND IN WHATEVER WAY HE SEES FIT.
SHABBAT SHALOM!**

DVAR TORAH

Rabbi Benji Levy (Aish.com)

As the Torah approaches the end of the Book of Leviticus, it dedicates several chapters to a description of the rewards for observing God's commandments, and the punishments that will befall us should we choose to disregard them. The Torah begins this section with the famous line, 'im bechukkotai telechu' (Lev. 26:3). Most translate this phrase as, 'if you will follow My decrees'. However, the word telechu comes from the Hebrew root halach, which means walk, and therefore this perplexing phrase could be translated literally as, 'if you will walk with My decrees'.

The Midrash interprets this verse by referring us to a different verse, in the Book of Psalms. King David says, 'I considered my ways, and I returned my feet to your testimonies' (Psalms 119:59). The midrash explains that King David says to God, 'Master of the Universe! Every day, I think things over, and decide to go to such and such place...But my feet keep returning me to synagogues and to houses of learning' (Lev. Rabba 35:1). On a simple level, King David seems to be saying that each day he ponders where to go, but no matter what destination he decides upon, his feet always end up leading him to a synagogue or a house of learning, places of holiness.

The Sefat Emet, however, has a novel approach to this midrash. Everything in the world contains the same inherent Godly spark. In some places this holiness is more apparent, whilst in others it is more obscure. Therefore, according to the Sefat Emet, King David is saying that despite the fact that during each day he may go to a number of different places, wherever he goes, even if it is to the most mundane destination, he encounters the Divine Presence to the same extent that he would were he in a synagogue or place of study. In other words, the world's inner reality is identical everywhere. There is a wellspring of spirituality lurking beneath the surface of every moment and every place. Sometimes it is more easily accessible, and at other times it requires more effort to dig deep enough to reach it.

Our challenge in life is to tap into this source of infinite holiness that is present in all our endeavours and in every place. It is often thought that learning Torah and praying, in contrast to the rest of our mundane daily activities, are two of the only ways to connect with God. According to the above explanation of the midrash, however, we can and should strive to attain a connection with the Divine Presence everywhere. Godliness can be seen in almost everything, from admiring a sunset at the beach, for example, to listening to the laughter of children as they play. Through paying attention to the beautiful details that exist in God's masterpiece of a world, we can elevate the spiritual level of our existence to one that is not restricted to the hallways of the study house or the benches of the synagogue.

This point is clearly illustrated through a famous story told of Rabbi Shimshon Rephael Hirsch, the great nineteenth-century leader of German Jewry, who once travelled to Switzerland by foot in order to see the Alps. When his students tried to dissuade him from traveling so far, Rabbi Hirsch explained to them, 'When I come before God, I will have to answer for many things. But what will I tell Him when He asks me, "Have you seen My Alps?"'

God created a beautiful world for His creations to encounter and enjoy. It is incumbent upon all of us to seek out the spiritual threads that are woven within every element of the world, as it says in Deuteronomy, 'And you shall seek the Lord thy God, and you shall find Him, if you search after Him with all your heart and with all your soul' (Deut. 4:29). Every place that we go to, and every endeavour upon which we embark, contains a divine spark waiting to be tapped into. In that context we can understand why the entire set of Jewish laws and practices are called halacha – a term that uses that same root, halach, walk. The Jewish laws and practices are far more than a system of rules. Rather, they represent an entire way of life, geared towards elevating all that we do and everywhere we go to a higher spiritual level, and serving as a constant reminder of our relationship with the Divine. Thus, every encounter affords us with an opportunity to fulfil the opening phrase of this portion of the Torah, allowing us to find holiness everywhere if we 'walk' with God's decrees.

As Jews, our religious experience should not be simply confined to the synagogue. Rather, we must delve into every situation armed with the knowledge that we have the potential to tap into the infinite wellsprings of holiness that underpin our existence.