

*SHABBAT SHALOM AND MOADIM L'SIMCHAH!  
Today is Shabbat Chol HaMoed Sukkot, 19 Tishrei  
5782. The Shacharit Amidah is for Shabbat with the  
inclusion of Ya'aleh Vyavo for Sukkot. Hallel is  
chanted. The Mussaf Amidah is for Yom Tov with the  
inclusion of all references to Shabbat. There is no  
"duchanin" on Chol HaMoed. Hoshanot are said  
without Lulav and Etrog, without the parade.*

KOHELET (p. 573 Machzor)  
ECCLESIASTES קהלת

"For everything there is a time..." The Chatam Sofer interpreted this verse in a humorous vein: People tend to blame all of their failings on the times they live in. They say that they cannot observe the Torah as their ancestors did because "the times have changed." They cannot study as much as they should because society places too many other demands on their time.

לכל זמן – for all of one's shortcomings and wrongdoings there is one excuse – the times we live in.

TORAH DIALOGUE (p. 329 M)  
from KI TISA "כי השא" נ  
[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis (RED),  
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1. When Moshe makes this seemingly vague request of "Give me insight into the manifoldness of Thy Way" the Talmud (Brachot 7a) interprets the request succinctly enough: Moshe says to Hashem, "Master of the universe, why is it that some righteous men prosper and others are in adversity, some wicked men prosper and others are in adversity?" Hashem replied: "Moshe, the righteous man who prospers is perfectly righteous; the righteous man in adversity is not a perfectly righteous man. The wicked man who prospers is not a perfectly wicked man; the wicked man who is in adversity is a perfectly wicked man." Hashem's answer is difficult to comprehend. Why should a not perfectly righteous man be treated worse than a not perfectly wicked man? We are compelled to say that Hashem's response is only for what happens in this world. A wicked person who is not completely wicked receives his reward for good deeds in this world and not in the world to come. A not perfectly righteous person who suffers in this world is to receive his just compensation in the next world. (Torah Temimah)

2. Once before (in Parshat Mishpatim) the Torah commanded us regarding the three pilgrimages, requiring us to spend the holidays in Jerusalem. In today's reading, after the Torah says, "Three times in the year shall all your males appear before Hashem..." the Torah says, "...No man shall desire your land ..." The reason we require this blessing is clear. Consider what it must have been like in the days of the Holy Temple. Jews were settled by tribe throughout all of Eretz Yisrael. Sukkot comes, and all the men leave their homes in Akko and Jaffa; from Dan in the north to Beer Sheva in the south, to travel to the nation's

capital, Jerusalem. At this time the country is quite vulnerable to attack. When all the men are observing this mitzvah who is protecting the borders? Who is protecting the other cities and homes? God will, with this special statement: "No man shall desire your land." When you observe these pilgrimages, no enemy will invade.

But why did God not make this promise before in Parshat Mishpatim (Exodus 23:17) when he first introduced the mitzvah of the pilgrimage festival? The answer is found in a comment in the Talmud (Eruvin 54b): Had the first set of Tablets not been broken, no other nation could possibly rule over the Jewish people. As such, prior to the sin of the Golden Calf, they would not have to fear an outside invasion. Today's reading occurs immediately after the Golden Calf debacle. Henceforth they will be vulnerable to outside attack, but not when they come to Jerusalem to observe the mitzvah of the pilgrimage festivals.

3. After the first man ate from the tree of knowledge, God cursed the earth and exclaimed, "thorns and thistles shall come forth from the ground." The B'nei Yissaschar makes an insightful comment. The word for thistles is דרדר and the *mesorah* tells us that in a Sefer Torah there is a large letter "daled" and a large letter "reish." The "daled" is the last letter in the verse שמע ישראל ה' אחד – Listen Israel, God is our Lord, God is One... (Deuteronomy 6:4). The "reish" appears in this morning's Torah reading – לא תשתחוה לאלה אחר – "Do not bow down to any other god" (Exodus 34:14). The reason for this, he explains, is that there is only a hairbreadth difference between these two letters. The little appendage on the right hand side of the top of the "daled" that extends over its vertical leg sets it off from the "reish." One could easily confuse the two, were they not written in bold large print. In these verses, of course, much confusion would be a tragic and blasphemous error.

When Adam did not fulfill the only Divine imperative he had been commanded, he brought confusion to the world; the confusion of דרדר – the "daled" which represents a clear knowledge of God and the "reish" which symbolizes a worship and adoration of other forces in the world. In all times, therefore, there would be periods of "daled" and "reish," times blessed with clarity of vision and times cursed with the clouds of concealment. Periods in which man would see God's Hand in history and periods in which man would lose sight of God. Man swings from faith to doubt to disbelief and then, hopefully, back again. Now he sees God as the author of history and then he blocks God out of his consciousness and sees himself, his wealth, his will and resources, as the object of his adoration to the point of self worship.

4. "Six days shall you work and on the seventh day shall you rest..." (34:21). In Psalms 15:5, King David writes: "He who does not give his money out on interest nor takes a bribe against the innocent – he who does things shall never be moved." One problem in this verse is the switch from the negative to the positive. The verse deals with one who lends with interest or takes a bribe; why switch to "he who

does these things"? The truth is that for a person who had nothing to do with these types of monetary matters, there is no test at all. The true test is for the person involved in financial dealings, he who does these things – he does lend money but is able to hold the line and not charge interest. Bribery is a test only for him who sits on the bench or holds some other judicial position. So it is with our verse regarding Shabbat. For a person who sits idle all week, there is hardly much of a test for him to observe Shabbat. Furthermore, he will not appreciate the Divine day of rest as a day of delight. But he who works all week, then to observe the Shabbat is truly fulfilling the mitzvah of Shabbat in its truest force. (Maggid of Dubno)

MAFTIR (p. 335 M) PINCHAS פִּינְחָס  
HAFTORAH (p. 339 M) EZEKIEL יְחֻזְקֵאל

The war of Gog and Magog in today's reading has been the subject of much recent modern analysis. Who is the Gog who will be bold enough to invade Israel? Is it Al Qaeda or ISIS which personify all the forces hostile to Israel? No matter how things turn out in these current events, we note the prophet's assurance to Israel that the ingathering of the exiles will soon occur. We cannot know how God will bring about the initial ingathering of the exiles. Perhaps, as in the time of Cyrus when the Persian king encouraged the return of the Jews to Israel to build the Second Temple, international political considerations will cause the nations of the world to help and encourage a return of the Jews to their land. (See Ramban, Shir HaShirim 8:13; Chofetz Chayim, Shem Olam, ch. 4.) By whichever way they return, it is God who brings them there. The outward appearance may be that they come by their own volition, but in reality they are liberated from the nations.

#### SHABBAT HALACHAH

A vase with cut flowers in it is not muktzeh. One may not place cut flowers in a vase with water in it on Shabbat. One is not allowed to add water to flowers already in water in a vase on Shabbat. One is allowed to add water on Yom Tov. One is allowed to take flowers out of water on Shabbat as long as the flowers have not begun to take root. Once removed, one is not allowed to return the flowers to the vase with water on Shabbat or Yom Tov. One is permitted, though, to return a tree branch (no flower on it) to water on Shabbat or Yom Tov.

The halachah is quite apropos since it includes the law of returning a lulav to water. One is allowed to return a lulav to water on Yom Tov and to even add water to the utensil or vase, but one is not allowed to change the water on Yom Tov. One is also permitted to envelop the lulav in a wet towel if it is already wet from before Yom Tov. One may not wet the towel on Yom Tov.

On Shabbat, the lulav, hadasim, and aravot are muktzeh. The etrog is not muktzeh. Why is the etrog not considered muktzeh? (You will get the answer once you smell the etrog.)