

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



**PARSHAT
BEHAR-BECHUKOTAI**

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

RECESSION PROOF!

The great success and years of plenty of the Tech/property boom have suddenly come to an end, and tougher times are forecast ahead. How should we be dealing with such distraught times? What is a Jew's best response? Our Parsha relates the Mitsva of Shemita.

Every seven years the land of Israel is to be left fallow – no growing of crops is allowed – farmers are to leave their jobs and leave the land to rest.

In the olden days everyone in business was a farmer. People had fields, crops, cattle; when it came to the seventh year they were told to pack up their shop, leave the land to grow wild and only maintain enough to sustain themselves directly. What a test! Not to work, not to invest in your land, just to watch potential profit sitting there doing nothing!?

The Torah is understanding, and attends to the people's worries - "And if you will ask: 'What will we eat during the seventh year?'

Hashem answers: Do not worry! - "For I will command My blessing for you during the sixth year, and it [the sixth year] will yield a crop [sufficient] for the entire three years." [Rashi explains that the produce of the sixth year was used over a three-year period: the second half of the sixth year, the seventh year, and the first half of the eighth year.]

What an amazing statement. The Torah is ready to guarantee for all future generations, that if the Jews keep the Shemita, leave their lands fallow, then the sixth year will produce enough produce to last 3 years. Only a divinely written Torah could make such a guarantee!

What is astounding however is why was such a farmer worried in the first place? When the sixth year would come, he would see that he had extra produce and was blessed by Hashem, so what cause was there to worry, why should he ask Hashem what he would eat the next year? He has plenty why worry?

Furthermore, the way the Torah records this, it seems to be that the blessing of the sixth year is dependant on us asking Hashem "what are we going to eat in the seventh year". Why didn't the Torah just state Hashem will bless the sixth

year? Why did it introduce the blessing by first saying if we ask what will we eat in the seventh year then Hashem will bring his blessing in the sixth?

The story is told of two people who were on their way, when they came across a stash of gold. They celebrated and split the gold equally, promising never to reveal their find. Each went home took a plank of gold to spend on for the next few years and cashed it, whilst burying the remainder planks. The first Levi, was a suspicious man, he made sure no one was looking when he planted the gold and he hid it in a very secure place 30 meters from his back garden. The second Moshe, was easy going, he too hid the gold in a great place, only he wasn't careful – his neighbour a thief was peeping through and saw where the gold was. The next day the thief latched out and dug up the gold. He took all of it, and replaced the earth as if nothing had ever happened. Meanwhile a few months passed and Levi being suspicious wished to check that his hidden gold was still there. He went out and by mistake measured 20 meters from his garden. Needless to say he didn't find it. He was distraught, so much gold and someone had stolen it! That night, he didn't manage to sleep, how could it be that he was so rich and now so poor? Who took it? Levi never got over his suspicions and lived a life full of worry. Moshe on the other hand was easy going, he didn't check his gold, he believed it was safe and he was keeping it for a rainy day.

Sometimes it is better not to worry, sometimes it is better to believe. It is the strong belief in Hashem which carries a poor person through hardships, and it is that belief in Hashem that has allowed the Jewish people to remain in tact through thousands of years of persecution.

The Gemara Makot (24a) cites different Tanach personalities who tried to synopsise the Torah, reducing the 613 commandments to their fundamental components. Chabakuk [2:4] finally came and reduced them to a single principle: Faith. Every mitzvah and every sin boils down to one thing – Belief. If our belief was real, we would be different people.

In the sixth year of the Shemita cycle the Jews could be blessed with an abundance to last for years. Yet those that lack belief, will always cry out – for they foresee that the next few years will be void of income. They are not satisfied; they are in constant worry. They thus ask Hashem,

22ND IYAR 5783

SHABBAT BEGINS:

20:27pm

SHABBAT ENDS:

21:40pm



Join our weekly TAL Shabbat Minyan.

- 8.45am
- Followed by hot delicious Kiddush



DVAR TORAH
Recession Proof!
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



DVAR TORAH
Lag B'omer
By Rabbi David Baadani



DVAR TORAH
Light Before Darkness
By Rabbi Benjamin Stone



OUR CHAHAMIM
Rabbi Yehia Lahlo



HALACHOT
By Rabbi Eli Mansour



KIDS ZONE
Quiz & Story



Do you enjoy the popular weekly Torah Insights?

The Community Parsha sheet is read by thousands online and at shuls.
For the opportunity to sponsor in the name of a loved one or for a Simcha please contact us on:

✉ info@torahactionlife.com

☎ 07792 460986

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

THE ORIGINAL COMMUNAL PARASHA SHEET, SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR OVER 12 YEARS!

what are we going to eat in the seventh year. Like our generation, they have an abundance in front of them, but their worry causes them to view the situation without clarity.

There is a saying in Israel that the first part of our life we spend our body (working) in order to gain income, whilst the second part of life we spend our income on our body. Our sustenance should not be the focus of our life. Yes, we must go out and work and earn a living, but for a purpose – sustain our family and serve Hashem.

Hashem created the world in such a manner that every creature has its needs taken care of.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: "Have you ever seen an animal or a bird with a 'profession'? Yet they all receive their sustenance without great effort!" (Kiddushin 4:14)

Rebbe Zusia of Anipoli zt"l said. The birds, the animals, and the insects all manage to survive comfortably. So, too, the world was created that man should be able to support himself with relative ease. Were we, says R' Zusia, to truly and wholeheartedly believe that Hashem provides for us, and that that

which we do to earn a living is merely the minimal effort required on our behalf, then we would indeed be blessed with a life of relative ease, and all our needs would be taken care of without having to extend great effort.

When, however, we doubt Hashem, when we question His ability to provide for us, this "ruptures" the spiritual paths through which our sustenance reaches us from above. We find ourselves unable to earn a living and sustain ourselves without great effort and exertion.

This, he says, is alluded to in the above passage. And if you will ask, "What will we eat in the seventh year..." Asking is an expression of doubt. By asking, instead of simply placing our trust in Hashem, we damage the "paths of sustenance." It should have been easy, but now it can not be easy because our belief has failed us. Even so, in the case of Shemita, Hashem will make an exception to our lack of faith, and still command His Blessing in the sixth year.

The Torah commands that every seven years a reminder is given to the people, the

land that works so amazingly well, the land that robotically produces crops and income, is not yours it belongs to Hashem. It is just a vehicle for Hashem to pass us our sustenance and we should focus on our belief in Hashem, rather than the land and stocks to sustain us.

A Rabbi once confessed to Rabbi Scheinberg (Shlita), that he was tempted to close down a Torah Centre because he was so short of funds. Rav Sheinberg asked "How often have you had this problem with funds?". The Rabbi answered "Every month". "Every month you have this problem," he replied, "and you get out of it each month, and yet you don't recognize a continuing miracle when you see it!"

Miracles didn't just exist in times gone by; they exist nowadays too. It's a matter of opening our eyes to all around us.

In our tough times, we have been given a reminder as to Who runs the world. Great economies have fallen, countries have been salvaged from bankruptcy, and the Jews response is Kavei El Hashem – have faith in Hashem – He has always provided for us and so will He always provide.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

LAG B'OMER

ואהבת לרעך כמוך. אמר רבי עקיבא זה כלל גדול בתורה.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THY FELLOW MAN AS THYSELF" –Rabbi Akiva said: "This is a fundamental principle of the Torah"

For thirty-three days of ספירת העומר the Jewish people mourn over the loss of 24 thousand students of Rabbi Akiva who died from a difficult epidemic. An epidemic that 750 students, on average, died every day, and this, according to our sages, מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה is because they did not treat each other with respect.

How can such people who were found worthy to be called 'Rabbi Akiva's students' and who were raised on the great principal, and the way of life of love ואהבת לרעך כמוך, and have lack of respect for one another?

The difference between love and respect in general, is that we love what is similar to us and respect what is different from us. Love comes in recognition of the unity of the beloved ones (אהבה בגימטריה = אחד). Conversely honour comes from admiration of features which emphasize the differences and uniqueness of the other.

Rabbi Akiva's students, probably followed in ways of their master, the way of loving every one of the Jewish people and especially their friends. They loved the similarities

between them, what united them, they 'loved their friends' only when they were כמוך, same as they are. But when it came to things which reflected the differences between them, where the other had their special personality, and qualities that made them 'not like you'. They would not respect each other.

During these days of counting the Omer, we will work on ourselves not only to love our friends and relatives because of their similarities, but also to respect them in the ways they differ from us. It is these differences that give each one of us our unique and individual personalities in G-d's world.

Shabbat shalom.



RABBI BENJAMIN STONE
Rabbi For Mens Wednesday Night Chavruta Program

LIGHT BEFORE DARKNESS; DAY BEFORE NIGHT

In this week's sedra we are given the ground rule for the survival of the Jewish people in exile.

We are told that if we learn Torah and keep the mitzvot we will merit great berachot in Eretz Yisrael including a flourishing econo-

my, internal peace and the ability to live free of fear of our neighbours. We will be a military power and the inhabitants of the land will be healthy and multiply. Finally and perhaps most importantly we are told that a Beit Hamikdash (temple) will be built and Hashem will be happy to reside amongst us.

The latter promise is expressed in somewhat curious terms; "I will make my home amongst you and my soul will not reject you (Vayikra 26:11)"

Now imagine if Reuven wished to express his affection to his wife (or anyone else beloved to him) and he was considering which turn of phrase to make use of so that his sentiments might be well received. He would surely be ill advised to collapse on one knee and utter the words "You do not repulse me". The more oft-used "I love you" would certainly be more impactful. Why then does Hashem use similar vocabulary when promising to reside in the Beit Hamikdash which his children would one

day build?

The Ramban (Nachmanides) asks the above question directly and he writes the following in explanation of the point: "...The root of the matter is a secret from the secrets of the Torah..Hashem said that he would place his sanctuary amongst us and the soul from which the sanctuary will come will not reject us like a vessel which we boil up to purify it. Rather at all times our clothing will be white and new."

Clearly these words are somewhat cryptic. Indeed it is disheartening when even those who composed the Arscroll elucidation of the Ramban refer to the meaning of these words as "beyond the scope of this work". I subsequently found an explanation offered by Rav Yitzchak Hutner z"l (Pachad Yitzchak, Pesach, 17;2) based on writings of the Maharal of Prague (1526-1609).

The Maharal (Gevurot 4;52) seeks to explain the reason why the Haggadah must be set out so that the lowly origins of the Jewish people are emphasized first, before their praises are mentioned (see gemarah, Pesachim 117). For example, the Haggadah

does not simply point to the strength of the Jews in retaining their identity in Egypt. It first details the history of the Jews as originating from Terach, Avraham's father and an idol worshipper.

The Maharal writes that this structure has its roots in the make up of Olam Hazeh (this world). In this world you do not just achieve perfection or "shleimut" at the outset. All perfection has to begin with something imperfect. This point is borne out by the fact that the world began as darkness. Light was not created straight away. Additionally every day is preceded by the darkness of night. This set-up stems from the lowly, physical nature of this world. Shleimut, which is a manifestation of Hashem Himself cannot appear instantly in a lowly material world such as this one unless it is preceded by much effort.

Rav Hutner ztsl writes that at the time of the future redemption the world will be elevated and will lose its base nature. As a result of this change the day will not need to be preceded by the night. Indeed any kind of perfection will be attainable without being

preceded by a negative beginning.

This is alluded to in the verse "On that day it will be neither day nor night and the light will be present in the evening (Zecharia 14;8). The Ramban is referring to these future days of redemption when he writes that Hashem will say "I will make my home amongst you and my soul will not reject you"

At that time Hashem's "soul" will not reject us as it has previously done in this world. Hashem's perfect "soul" could not sit comfortably in this world but in the days of redemption the elevated world will be able to accommodate the pure perfection of Hashem's "soul" in the most natural way.

This is also what the Ramban means when he writes that in the future Hashem will not "reject us like a vessel which we boil up to purify it. Rather at all times our clothing will be white and new.." We will no longer be compared to a non-kosher vessel which needs to be purified and purged of its treifut before use. Purity and perfection will be attainable right from the outset.

May we merit to see these days very soon.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Yehia Lahlo

Near Tefilalet, on the high peaks of the Atlas Mountains, can be found the tiny village of Ktsar-el-Souk. There rests the venerated Tzaddik Rabbi Yehia Lahlo.

About 400 years ago, Rabbi Yehia Lahlo was an emissary to Morocco from Israel. He settled in the village of Ktsar-el-Souk, and there he taught Torah and ethics to children, developed teachers and shocharim (ritual slaughterers), and was preoccupied with improving the material and spiritual lives of Jews in the region. The name of Rabbi Yehia became famous as a great Tzaddik and benefactor, and his home was the center of attraction for numerous crowds. If a resident was suffering from any illness, the first thing that he did was to go see Rabbi Yehia, for he had the conviction that because of the Tzaddik's prayers, which moved the heavens, his recovery

would not delay.

Rabbi Yehia passed away on the day of Purim and was laid to rest where he had lived, in Ktsar-el-Souk. Since then, the Jews of Morocco celebrate the Hilloul of Rabbi Yehia on Shushan Purim.

One day, a Jew from Marrakech went to pay a visit to his relatives who lived in the vicinity of Tefilalet. On the way he was attacked by thieves, who tied up his hands and feet and dragged him along to their secret hideout near Ktsar-el-Souk. In the middle of the night, the poor Jew murmured a last prayer of penitence, for he was convinced that his final hour had come.

The thieves traveled on the route by which Rabbi Yehia Lahlo had been laid to rest, and when the Jew noticed the tomb of the saint, he raised his eyes towards the sky and said, "Master of the world, by the merit of the Tzaddik Rabbi Yehia, deliver me from the hands of these thieves!" He also vowed to

make a Seuda for the poor at the gravesite of the saint if he managed to escape.

Several hours later, in the middle of the night, a company of French soldiers suddenly appeared. When the thieves noticed the soldiers, they saved themselves and thus abandoned the Jew, hands and feet tied up. Because they could not see well in the dark, during their escape the thieves fell into a ravine that was in their path.

The Jew stayed this way all night, hands and feet tied up, for the French soldiers had not seen him. It was only in the early morning that some Jews who were passing by freed him from his bonds. He arrived at the village of Ktsar-el-Souk and made a great meal for the poor as a sign of thanks. His mouth did not cease thanking and praising the Holy One, blessed be He, for having delivered him by the merit of Rabbi Yehia Lahlo.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

TREATING LEFTOVER BREAD WITH RESPECT

The Shulhan Aruch writes that it is forbidden to ruin or destroy pieces of bread that are the size of a Ke'zayit or larger. Leftover pieces of bread that are smaller than this

size may, strictly speaking, be discarded, but the Shulhan Aruch adds that this is not advisable, because it could lead to poverty. The Mishna Berura explains that this refers to discarding the pieces of bread in places where they will be trampled on, as this is a sign of disrespect. Leftover bread may, however, be discarded in a way that is not disrespectful. And thus, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv ruled that it is permissible to place

leftover bread – even pieces larger than a Ke'zayit – in a bag, and then place the bag in the trash, as this is not disrespectful to the bread.

Summary: Leftover bread – even small pieces – must be discarded in a respectful manner. Therefore, rather than being thrown directly into the trash, they should first be placed in a bag which may then be placed in a trashcan.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Behar

The Torah prohibits normal farming of the Land of Israel every seven years. This "Shabbat for the land" is called "Shemitta." After every seventh Shemitta, the fiftieth year, Yovel ("Jubilee") is announced with the sound of the shofar on Yom Kippur. This was also a year for the land to lie fallow. Hashem promises to provide a bumper crop prior to the Shemitta and Yovel years.

During Yovel, all land is returned to its original division from the time of

Joshua, and all Jewish indentured servants are freed, even if they have not completed their six years of work. A Jewish indentured servant may not be given any demeaning, unnecessary or excessively difficult work, and may not be sold in the public market. The price of his labor must be calculated according to the amount of time remaining until he will automatically become free. The price of land is similarly calculated.

Should anyone sell his ancestral land,

he has the right to redeem it after two years. If a house in a walled city is sold, the right of redemption is limited to the first year after the sale. The Levites' cities belong to them forever. The Jewish People are forbidden to take advantage of one another by lending or borrowing with interest. Family members should redeem any relative who was sold as an indentured servant as a result of impoverishment.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1

Why does the Torah specify that the laws of shemita were taught on Har Sinai?

25:1 - To teach us that just as shemita was taught in detail on Har Sinai, so too, all the mitzvot were taught in detail on Har Sinai.

2

If one possesses shemita food after it is no longer available in the field, what must he do with it?

25:7 - Remove it from his property and declare it ownerless.

3

The Torah commands, "You shall sanctify the fiftieth year." How is this done?

25:10 - At the beginning of the year the Beit Din declares, "This year is kadosh (sanctified)."

4

Which two "returns" are announced by the shofar during yovel?

25:10 - The return of the land to its original owner, and the "return" (freedom) of the slave from slavery.

5

From where does the yovel year get its name?

25:10 - From the sounding of the shofar. A ram's horn is called a yovel.



YOUR SUPPORT CAN HELP US CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND TOUCH THE SOULS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Since its inception in 2011, TAL has been a driving force in making Torah and Judaism relevant, living and accessible to a diverse audience, including young professionals, married couples, university and school students. TAL fosters an environment of Torah, Action, and Life, inspiring and empowering Jewish individuals.

ACHIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE WITH TAL

CRAZY TAL
TorahActionLife

ABOUT LIVING IT. LOVING IT. SHARING IT.

THIS WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY 10-11 MAY

LONDON'S LEADING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS PLATFORM AND JEWISH COMMUNAL CENTRE

WWW.TORAHACTIONLIFE.COM

Support us here

[HTTP://WWW.CHARITYEXTRA.COM/TAL555](http://WWW.CHARITYEXTRA.COM/TAL555)