

עֵפֶרֶת הַשָּׁבֻעַ

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

פרשת מסעי
ר"ח מנחם אב תשס"ה
August 6, 2005

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| Candle Lighting: | 7:48 |
| זמן קריאת שמע: | 8:57 |
| Second זמן קריאת שמע: | 9:30 |
| Latest שחרית: | 10:40 |
| Earliest הבדלה: | 8:54 |

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ON THE RUN

Rabbi Leibe Wolf, 10th Grade Rebbe

In this week's parsha we find a commandment to set up *Orei Miklat*, cities where a person who accidentally killed someone can run to for safety. The killer must remain there until the death of the present Kohen Gadol, after which he may return home safely. The concept of *Orei miklat* is somewhat strange; even though the killer is safe from harm he must live in a strange and foreign land. He is isolated and put in "galus" away from his family.

It is interesting to note that the parsha of *Orei Miklat* is read during the three weeks - a sad time for the Jewish people. The three weeks begin with the seventeenth of Tammuz when the walls of Yerushalayim were breached by our enemies. It culminates on the ninth of Av when the Beis Hamikdash itself was destroyed. The breaching of the walls and the *Churban Bayis* was the beginning of a dark "galus", a time of suffering that has lasted so many years until today. This lengthy exile that we mourn over is not only because of the removal from our homeland but truly over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and what it stood for. The Beis Hamikdash exemplified the revelation of Hashem to Klal Yisroel and indeed the entire world. The destruction of the Beis HaMikdash personifies the removal of the shechina from Klal Yisroel.

There is a famous mashal told of a king who had a favorite son who had been sent away from the kingdom. While in galus, the young prince experiences all sorts of miseries, not to mention not having his father's protection. The one goal the prince always boar in mind was to return home; then he thought, all of his worries would disappear!

The same is true of Klal Yisroel - our focus should be to always return home, to join with our King in His castle - the Beis HaMikdash. Once this will happen all our fears and troubles will be swept

(Continued on page 3)

TO BE EXILED IS TO BE EXALTED

Tzadok Picker, 12th Grade

In this week's *parsha*, we interestingly find several hints to the coming of Moshiach and of the final *geulah* (redemption). The first is mentioned by the Skulener Rebber *shlit"a*, who explains that the main reason why Parshas Masei is usually in the period of time known as *Bein Hamitzarim* (time between *Shiva Asar B'Tammuz* and *Tisha B'Av*), is to teach us that just as all of the traveling and work done by Bnei Yisroel after leaving Mitzrayim were in order to arrive in Eretz Yisroel, so too by us we must know now that all of the troubles we are going through - all the pain, suffering, and wandering amongst different lands and nations, and especially in this period of time when we are mourning the loss of the two *Batei Hamikdash* - is to gain the *zechuyos* (merits) for Hashem to bring us the final redemption and return us to Eretz Yisroel.

The Kad HaKemach points out another place in the *parsha* where we see a hint to the times of the final redemption. In the second *pasuk* of the *parsha*, the Torah says, "And Moshe wrote down their goings forth according to their journeys...and these were their journeys according to their goings forth." The Kad HaKemach is bothered as to why the Torah found it necessary to say twice in the same *pasuk*, "their journeys according to their goings forth" - why isn't one sufficient? He answers that all of the Neviim agree that the final redemption will occur in a similar fashion to the first *geulah* of *Yetziyas Mitzrayim*. As the Navi says, "Like the days which you left Egypt, I (Hashem) shall show you wonders." Just as Bnei Yisroel left Mitzrayim and went through the

(Continued on page 2)

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | |
|------------------------------------------|---|
| <i>On the Run</i> | 1 |
| <i>To Be Exiled is to Be Exalted</i> | 1 |
| <i>Focus on Greatness</i> | 3 |
| <i>Gematria</i> | 3 |
| <i>Stories of Tzaddikim</i> | 3 |
| <i>Emes L'Yaakov</i> | 4 |

FOCUS ON GREATNESS

by Yaakov Sonnenblick

Rabbi Mordechai Schwab *zt'l*

5671 / 1911 – 5754 / 1994

- Mordechai was born in 5671 to his father Reb Yehuda, a distinguished disciple of Harav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch and a pillar in the Frankfurt Community.
- From a young age he was brought up on the German model of *Torah im Derech Eretz*.
- As Mordechai grew older, so did his search for spiritual fulfillment bringing him to the Mirrer Yeshiva at the age of 18.
- Upon arriving at the Yeshiva during the beginning of the mussar session, Mordechai was exposed to the hundreds of sincere Torah Scholars immersed totally in Torah and in self perfection. After an awe inspiring *maariv*, he decided to commit his life, heart and soul to Hashem and his Torah.
- Mordechai learned at the Mir for three years, after which he went to learn for seven years of intense study under the great Kamenitz Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz.
- Because of the beginning of WWII, Reb Mordechai had to escape to Shanghai together with the Mirrer Yeshiva.
- In 5706 (1946) he arrived in the United States. It was very difficult in the beginning to make a living;



Reb Mordechai began by working in an office, later as a wine salesman, barely earning a living for his growing family.

- Even with such hardships during these years, he dedicated every available moment to learning Torah and growth in spiritual heights.
- A few years later, Reb Mordechai was hired in a Yeshiva as a rebbi of young children. Some time later he accepted a position to teach teenagers in a Monsey Yeshiva, which he did for several years.
- Eventually, at an age when many people are retiring, Rav Schwab was selected to serve as a Mashgiach of Yeshivas Bais Shraga in Monsey.
- Over the next twenty years he absolutely enthralled the entire Torah *velt* with his *drashos* and lectures, but above all, with his personality, nobility and amazing honesty.
- His constant devotion to *Hashem Yisborach* during davening and even daily life, served as a living *mussar sefer* for all who observed him.
- Rav Schwab was looked up to with deep respect and awe by the entire Monsey Community.
- Rav Mordechai passed away on Adar 18, 5754. He is survived by a generation of Torah scholars and distinguished Rabbanim around the world.

TZADOK PICKER (continued from page 1)

desert on their way to Eretz Yisroel, so too by the final *geulah* we will go through a desert in a similar fashion on the way to Eretz Yisroel. That is why the Torah needs to repeat the words “*their journeys according to their goings forth*”; once to tell of the journey Klal Yisroel went through leaving Mitzrayim, and the other for the journeys which Bnei Yisroel will take upon going to Eretz Yisroel for the final *geulah*.

We see several connections between our *parsha* and the final *geulah*. There is an interesting story told over by the Brisker Rav about Reb Chaim Volozhin. A Russian officer once approached Reb Chaim Volozhin and asked him how the Jews could believe that by the final *geulah*, they will come to defeat and rule over all of the non-Jews, if they outnumber the Jews by millions, if not billions? Reb Chaim answered him, “have you ever seen someone take a female chicken, and put it in a room where

(continued on page 3)

THE ROD AND THE STAFF

Yaakov Chesed Polansky, Mesivta Graduate

This week's parsha begins by describing the Jewish People's journey throughout their time in the desert. With the guidance of our leaders and appointed princes, we eventually made it to Eretz Yisroel, as all twelve *shevatim* worked together to reach the ultimate goal. We are told that the tribes are called *matos*, which means “staves,” because the head of each tribe carried a staff of leadership. The tribes are also called *shevatim*, which means “rods.”

What is the difference between a rod and a staff? Both are sticks, but a rod can be bent, while a staff is firm and hard.

A rod is a stick, which has been freshly cut or is still connected to the tree from which it grew. A staff is a stick that has been cut from its tree a long time ago. Over time, it has become dry, hard and firm.

Before our *neshamos* come to this world they are like rods, connected to Hashem and easily able to bend in the direction of his holiness. But in this world, our *neshamos* are trapped in physical bodies and are like staffs; the holiness of Hashem is not easily felt.

The fact that it is hard and firm doesn't mean that it is a bad thing. Firmness can be good. Our *neshamos* need to be firm in this world in order to withstand all the temptation and do what Hashem really wants them to do.

We should all be *zoche* to be like staffs and turn away from the bad. We should be strong enough to withstand temptation, and do what Hashem truly wants us to do. With that we should be *zoche* to the *geula shelaima*, speedily in our days.

THIS IS THAT WHICH HASHEM HAS COMMANDED



This *pasuk* is written by the halachah that a woman may inherit from her father if she had no brothers, and is in response to the request of the daughters of Tzilofchod. The daughters of Tzilofchod were then commanded to marry within their *shevet* so that the inheritance not pass from one *shevet* to another. The Baal HaTurim explains that the words “*zeh hadavar*, this is the thing,” has the same gematria as the words “*bedor zeh*; in this generation”. This comes to teach us that this halachah of a women who inherits must marry within her *shevet* is only a temporary one. Since this was the original devision of Eretz Yisroel among the *shevatim*, the Torah watned to prevent *haavaras nachalah*, the transfer from one shevet to another. In later generations however, if a daughter would inherit her father, she would be allowed to marry whoever she wanted, even from a dsdifferent *shevet*.. However, In this first generation preventing that a woman may inherit from her father and brother was only a temporary one..

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM by Avi Lieberman

Rabbi Aryeh Zev Ginsberg, *Morah D'Asrah* of the Chofetz Chaim Torah Center in Cedarhurst NY, relates that a husband and wife living in Bnei Brak, Yerushalayim, were once having a dispute. Being a very poor couple, they were overjoyed upon coming into some much needed money. The husband wanted to use this money to purchase a car, since their current one was a vehicle of *tzaros* and much agony. A new car would be a great benefit and helpful tool for their everyday needs.



HoRav Steinman speaking at Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway, NY. In background is the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yaakov Bender

The man's wife, on the other hand, felt that there are many people in Bnei Brak that cannot even afford a bicycle – “How can we purchase a car?” Such a luxury would be a source for an *ayin hara*, since so many people would surely be jealous and envious of what they have acquired.

The couple took their disagreement to Rav Aryeh Leib Steinman *shlit"i*, who listened carefully to both sides of the case. After hearing the husband's feelings that a new car would be an essential asset to their needs, and the wife's view that such an extravagance would cause their community to be jealous, Rav Steinman turned to the husband and asked the following question. “Tell me,” Rav Steinman inquired. “Did you ever make a *siyum* on the occasion of completing a *masechta* of *gemara*?”

The man hesitated, and then answered, “No, I have never completed a *masechta*.” Rav Steinman continued, “Well, is there any area in *shas* that you can say you have acquired as your own and know very well?” Not knowing where the Rav was getting with this, the husband replied further, “No, I don't.”

After hearing this, Rav Aryeh Leib Steinman turned to the couple and replied, “If this is the case, you may go ahead and purchase the car – there is nothing to be jealous of.”

TZADOK PICKER (continued from page 2)

there are plenty of male chickens? All of the male chickens will fight for the one female, and they end up damaging, or even killing each other in battle, until only the female chicken is alive and healthy. The female chicken will be the strongest of them all without doing any work! So too, Hashem will fulfill what is stated in the *pasuk* in Yeshaya, “I will mix up Mitzrayim within Mitzrayim”, and the nations will destroy themselves without Bnei Yisroel doing any fighting. In the end, Bnei Yisroel will come out alive and healthy, while the other nations will be weak or will have died out.” The Brisker Rav adds that this is true by other nations, however by *galus Edom*

which we are in now, the redemption will be different. As the *pasuk* in Yeshaya says, “I will destroy them by Myself, no man will be with Me”. The Brisker Rav understands this to mean that Hashem will destroy Edom by Himself, in His own honor and glory, and ‘no man will be with Me’ - no other nation will assist in the annihilation of Edom.

Reb Yochanan Luria *zt"l* mentions that we should have strong *emunah* in our days, as the prophecy of Hashem destroying Edom has already been fulfilled with the destruction of Constantina. The *nevuah* of the final *geulah* is next to be fulfilled. May it come speedily in our days. Good Shabbos.

RABBI WOLF (continued from page 1)

away. It is true that we were sent away into a *galus* by our father just as someone that accidentally sins is sent to the *Orei Miklat*. Yet we must remember that although things may seem safe here in exile and that we have escaped into wonderful lives, it is our duty to remember that we are far from our family and our homeland, and most importantly our Father in Heaven. During the three weeks we are given a chance to rise above the problems around us. True, our home may have been destroyed but our *tefilos* should be focused towards the main solution, the returning of Hakodesh Baruch Hu to His home, the *Bais* that we call home as well. May we be *zoche* in the near future to the returning of Klal Yisroel to the greatest source of strength and ultimate abode of all - the Beis Hamikdash!

אמת ליעקב

Weekly Insights from Moreinu HoRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l

In this week's *parsha*, we read about the division of Eretz Yisroel amongst the *shevatim*. The Torah lists the *nasi* of each *shevet*, who upon entering Eretz Yisroel would represent his *shevet* during the distribution of the land. For every *shevet*, the Torah uses the words "... נשיא בני . . . למטה בני . . .", And for the tribe of the sons of . . . the *nasi* . . .," and then inserts the name of the *nasi* for that *shevet*. However, by three *shevatim*, the usual format is changed.



When discussing the *shevatim* of Yehudah, Shimon, and Binyomin, the Torah writes, "... , . . . למטה בני . . .", omitting the word "נשיא." The expressions used while discussing the tribes of Yehudah and Binyamin deviate even further from the norm, in that the word "בני" is also absent.

HaRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l solves these issues in the following way. In omitting the word "בני" while discussing the *shevatim* of Yehudah and Binyomin, the Torah was hinting to the future split between *malchus Yehudah*, which included Yehudah and Binyomin, and *malchus Yisroel* which encompassed the balance of the *shevatim*. Before the split, every *shevet* was referred to as the sons of their patriarch (i.e. the sons of Reuven, or the sons of Asher) in order to distinguish which part of *Klal Yisroel* they were from. However, after the schism between the two parts of *Klal Yisroel*, the tribes of Yehudah and Binyomin became their own segment within *Klal Yisroel*, and were referred to simply as Yehudah and Binyomin. They were no longer part of a whole, but rather were a separate unit. As a *remez* to these future events, the Torah already refers to these two *shevatim* as Yehudah and Binyomin, without the word "בני." For the same reason, the word "נשיא" is omitted with regard to these two *shevatim*. One can only be considered a *nasi* when it is clear that they are the highest leader of their *shevet*, without any competition. After the split, the *shevatim* of Yehudah and Binyomin became so attached, that at times it was difficult to distinguish between the two. While there was certainly no competition between their *nessim*, no one person was recognizable as the ultimate authority, even amongst his own *shevet*.

However, the discrepancy found by *shevet* Shimon still needs to be clarified. Rav Yaakov explains that ever since Zimri, the *nasi* of *shevet* Shimon sinned during the war with *Midyan*, *shevet* Shimon had stopped using the distinction of *nasi*, due to its negative connotations. As such, the Torah did not use the title of *nasi* when discussing the *shevet* of Shimon.

The Rebbe of Alexander once came to an inn, and noticed a young boy reciting *pesukim* from the chumash. As he came closer, the Rebbe noticed that the child was ending each *pasuk* with the name of Hashem. When the Rebbe questioned the child about this, he explained that he was following what his rebbe taught him in *cheder*. The child told the Rebbe that he had learned that whenever there are two *yuds*, it is really the name of Hashem and should be pronounced as such.

The Rebbe of Alexander realized that the young boy was mistakenly applying this lesson to the colon; the two dots at the end of each *pasuk*. The Rebbe smiled sympathetically at the child and said, "My dear boy, let me explain what your rebbe was saying. When one *yid* is on top of another *yid* trying to be superior to him, the name of Hashem is not pronounced. It is only when one *yid* is next to another *yid* that the name of Hashem can be pronounced."

Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz zt"l once noticed two talmidim carrying chairs to a classroom. Reb Shraga Feivel asked one of them, "For whom are you bringing this chair?" He answered, "For myself." He asked the same question of the other boy, and the answer was the same. Reb Shraga Feivel chided, "You brought a chair for yourself, and you brought a chair for yourself. So you're both just *schleppers*. If each of you had brought a chair for the other, each of you would have done a *chesed*."

The opportunity for an act of kindness comes in many different forms, and we must always look for the chance to fulfill them.

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