



Ask The Rabbi...

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This edition contains:

1. 40 Day Fast
2. 40 Day-Old Cholent
3. 9 Days Without Meat (Answer to Yiddle Riddle)

Leo from <Issux@salami.bellcore.com> wrote:

What are you supposed to do if a Torah falls? Someone told me they were in the room with a Torah on a table and someone else was showing it to children. One side of the Torah rolled off the table and onto the floor. They said that the Torah itself was OK, but they asked if I know what people are supposed to do — should one person fast for a day, 40 people for a day, or one person fast for 40 days? Or is this a "bubba maisa" (tall-tale)?

Dear Leo,

It's no "bubba - maisa."

Maybe you've heard about the kid who told his mother, "Mom, you know that 3,000 year old vase you always worry about that I'll break it ... Well Mom, your worries are over!"

The Torah is a very holy object. To drop a Torah Scroll indicates a certain lack of care and realization of its sanctity — you'd be careful showing some children your 6th dynasty Ming vase, wouldn't you?

When someone does something wrong, certain acts can lessen his accountability. Such an act is called a "Tikun." A Tikun usually follows a rule known as *mida kneged mida* — meaning that it is related conceptually to the transgression. Fasting 40 days helps atone for the disrespect shown to the Torah, which was given in 40 days. Since everyone present sensed the enormous disgrace and degradation, they too would need to fast.

Now, this forty day fast would **not** have to be 40 days in a row, and would only include the daylight hours, but not the night before.

Nowadays, people are not as hale and hardy as they used to be. Instead of fasting, therefore, everyone present would give *Tzedaka* (charity) instead.

In your case, the *Sefer Torah* did not fall completely to the ground — rather, only one side fell. I asked Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, *shlita*, about this, and he said that since the *Sefer Torah* did not fall completely, it's not as bad as if it had fallen completely; *Tzedaka* should be given, however, since the *Sefer Torah* was nonetheless dishonored.

Source:

- *Iggrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 3:3.*

Cholent: Another Portion

Shimon Goldstein from Jerusalem writes:

I heard that the word Cholent comes from the words "Shul-end," because in many communities people didn't have private stoves, so before Shabbat they all put their cholent in the baker's oven. On Shabbat morning after shul (synagogue services) finished, everyone went to the baker to pick up their cholent.

Answer to Yiddle Riddle:

Question:	Answer:
In what situation is it a <i>mitzvah</i> to eat, but you may only eat foods that are <i>Parve</i> ?	At " <i>Malave Malka</i> " during the "Nine Days," after having eaten meat.

The 9 day period from Rosh Chodesh Av until the Tenth of Av is one of mourning for the destruction of the *Beit HaMikdash*, during which we refrain from eating meat and drinking wine. On Shabbat, however, eating meat is allowed. After eating meat, one must wait a period of time before eating dairy. Therefore, someone who ate meat near the end of Shabbat can't eat dairy for a period thereafter; but during the "Nine Days" he can't eat meat either. So the situation could arise where you are eating *Malava Malka* — "the fourth meal of Shabbat" — which is a *mitzvah*, and you are only able to eat foods that are *Parve*. [There is a dispute amongst the *Poskim* whether meat left over from Shabbat may be eaten at a *Malaveh Malka* during the "Nine Days." I asked Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, *shlita*, about this matter, and he said it's better to be strict.]

IMCR YHY — May we soon merit to see the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*!

Sources:

- *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 551:9.*
Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 89:1.
- *Shmirat Shabbat K'Hilchata*, Vol. 2 63:10.



The Rabbi is taking his annual Summer Holiday starting with Parshas Devarim. Look for his return with Parshas Shoftim.

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If you have **E-Mail** and a question, you can submit it to Ask The Rabbi for possible inclusion in a future edition. Just write your question using your E-Mail program, set the subject to "Ask The Rabbi" and send it to ohr@jer1.co.il. We can't include all questions submitted, but we do try to respond to everyone.

Ask The Rabbi is written by **Rabbi Benzion Bamberger, Rabbi Reuven Subar** and various other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel.

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