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IN ISRAEL: FOR THE WEEK ENDING 14 SIVAN 5759 · MAY 29, 1999

PARSHA INSIGHTS

THE RIGHT PLACE

“According to the word of Hashem they would encamp, and according to the word of Hashem they would journey” (9:23)

A baby traveling in its mother’s arms. The ultimate feeling of security. The world beyond those arms may be dangerous. A thousand threats may lurk beyond those arms, but the baby feels only the warmth and security of its mother’s love.

When G-d created the world, He employed thirty-nine types of creativity. Those thirty-nine types of creative activity find their parallel in the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tent of Meeting) which the Jewish People took with them during their wanderings in the Sinai desert.

When we keep Shabbat we are refraining from those thirty-nine categories of creative endeavor. The definition of what the Torah calls *melacha* (inaccurately translated as “work”) derives from the paradigm of the *Mishkan*.

There’s a fascinating problem which the Talmud addresses in Tractate Shabbat: We know that on Shabbat there is a prohibition against demolishing a building. However, there are certain limitations to this prohibition. The Torah prohibition of demolition on Shabbat is limited to when the intention of the demolition

is to rebuild on the same spot. If you intended to rebuild the same building down the block, you would not have transgressed a Torah law.

Now, here’s the problem. As we know, the Jewish People didn’t stay in one place during their 40 years in the desert. They made 42 different stops. Some were for a few hours, whereas some were for years. If the Torah prohibition of demolition is derived from the *Mishkan*, why is it prohibited only to demolish with the intention to rebuild in the *same place*? The law doesn’t fit the paradigm. The paradigm of life in the desert was that the *Mishkan* was demolished, broken down into its parts and reassembled *somewhere else*. According to the principle that *melacha* parallels the paradigm of the *Mishkan*, the Torah prohibition against demolition on Shabbat should apply even if the intention is to build in another place, not just on the same spot.

The Talmud answers “*According to the word of Hashem they would encamp and according to the word of Hashem would they journey.*”

The “place” of the Jewish People in the desert was “according to the word of Hashem.” The entire Creation is nothing more than the expression of G-d’s Will — His Word. The fact of “place” is nothing more than the expression of G-d’s Will. Nowhere exists except because G-d wills it to be, because there is no exis-

tence outside the Will of G-d. Thus, wherever G-d wills the Jewish People to be *defines* their place. When they moved “*by the word of Hashem,*” in ultimate terms they stayed in the same place.

A baby in its mother’s arms, traveling on a train from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The mother has traveled many miles. Relative to the mother, however, the baby hasn’t moved.

Sometimes we look at our lives and think “I’m in the wrong place.” “If only I lived in Bel Air.” “If only I had a million dollars.” “If only I was taller/shorter/cleverer/better looking/more famous.” “If only I had a Porsche instead of a Subaru.” If we really thought about it, we’d realize that we’re just where we’re supposed to be.

In G-d’s arms.

THE SEVEN BOOKS OF MOSES

“When the Ark would journey, Moshe said ‘Arise Hashem, and let Your enemies be scattered’...And when it rested, he would say, ‘Return, O, Hashem the myriad thousands of Israel!’” (10:35-36)

Everyone knows that there are five books of the Torah. The Pentateuch. Or are there?

The Talmud tells us that there are actually seven books of the Torah. Not only that, but the above two verses

PARSHA OVERVIEW

Aharon is taught the method for kindling the menorah. Moshe sanctifies the *levi'im* to work in the *Mishkan*. They replace the firstborn, who were disqualified after sinning through the golden calf. The *levi'im* are commanded that after five years of training they are to serve in the *Mishkan* from ages 30 to 50; afterwards they are to engage in less strenuous work. One year after the Exodus from Egypt, Hashem commands Moshe concerning the *korban Pesach*. Those ineligible for this offering request a remedy, and the mitzvah of *Pesach Sheini*, allowing a “second chance” to offer the *korban Pesach* one month later, is detailed. Miraculous clouds that hover near the *Mishkan* signal when to travel and when to camp. Two silver trumpets summon the princes or the entire nation for announcements. The trumpets also signal travel plans, war or festivals. The order in which the tribes march is specified. Moshe invites his father-in-law, Yitro, to join the Jewish People, but Yitro returns to Midian. At the instigation of the *eruv rav* —

the mixed Egyptian multitude who joined the Jewish People in the Exodus — some people complain about the manna. Moshe protests that he is unable to govern the nation alone. Hashem tells him to select 70 elders, the first Sanhedrin, to assist him, and informs him that the people will be given meat until they will be sickened by it. Two candidates for the group of elders prophesy beyond their mandate, foretelling that Yehoshua instead of Moshe will bring the people to Canaan. Some protest, including Yehoshua, but Moshe is pleased that others have become prophets. Hashem sends an incessant supply of quail for those who complained that they lacked meat. A plague punishes those who complained. Miriam makes a constructive remark to Aharon which also implies that Moshe is only like other prophets. Hashem explains that Moshe’s prophecy is superior to that of any other prophet, and punishes Miriam with *tzara’at* as if she had gossiped about her brother. Moshe prays for her, and the nation waits until she is cured before traveling.

HAFTARAH

This Haftarah, describes Zecharia’s prophetic vision of an allegorical menorah. Thus, it is in keeping with this week’s Parsha, which describes the command to prepare and light the candles of the menorah in the Sanctuary.

Zecharia’s prophecy begins with Yehoshua, the *kohen gadol*, who served in the early years of the Second Temple. Then he receives a vision of a golden menorah with a large vessel of oil situated above it, from which oil is pouring into the seven lamps of the menorah. Two olive trees grow there, one on each side of the menorah.

This prophecy is associated with the building of the Second Temple after Babylonian exile. At the time of this prophecy, the building of the Second Temple had been halted. The prophet is told that this vision means that the building will commence by the good will of Darius, and not by conflict. According to some commentaries, the menorah represents the house of the Hasmoneans who would reign in the second half of the period, after the miracle of Chanuka.

ZECHARYA 2:14 - 4:7

In the beginning of the Haftarah G-d proclaims “Sing and rejoice, O Daughter of Zion, for I will appear and dwell among you.”

This means that we will “sing and rejoice” as a result of perceiving the coming of the future salvation. Happiness and rejoicing is a preparation towards the Divine revelation we will experience at the time. Happiness and contentment are fundamental conditions for the Divine presence. Some people think that the Torah demands the gloomy life we see in other religions. The truth is just the opposite: In Jewish perspective, happiness is a requirement. On a hot day, eating an ice cream is a tool by which we worship G-d, because with happiness and good spirit we can nurture our love and compassion towards G-d.

• Teshuvah M’Avava

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

The menorah in the Temple had seven stems, nine flowers, eleven pomegranates, and twenty-two cups. Its height was, according to one opinion, seventeen handbreadths.

These numbers correspond to the number of words in the first verse of each Book of the Torah: The first verse of *Bereishet* has seven words; the first verse of *Shmot* has eleven words; *Vayikra*, nine words, *Bamidbar*, seventeen words; *Devarim*, twenty-two words.

This idea is hinted in the verse “The beginning of Your words will give light” (*Tehillim 119*).

• Vilna Gaon

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constitute an entire book by themselves. What we know as the book of Bamidbar really consists of three separate books.

How can it be that just two verses can have the status of an entire book of the Torah?

These two verses are like a history book of the Jewish People, a microcosm of everything that will happen: “When the Ark would journey...” The Jewish People have spent more time in exile, *journeying* from one land to another, than we have spent in our homeland. It is to this phase of Jewish

history that Moshe addresses his prayer “*Arise Hashem and let Your enemies be scattered.*” When the Jewish People are hounded from one country to another, in peril of their lives, Moshe prays that Hashem will not let His people be destroyed.

“*And when it rested....*” When the Jewish People do find calm and rest, we face another and more pernicious enemy. Rest brings complacency. We forget Who it is who really protects us, placing our trust instead in politicians, in mere mortals who cannot save us. With regard to this period of Jewish history Moshe prays “*Return, Hashem,*

the myriad thousands of Israel.” In the seeming calm of post-war acceptance, there will be a generation of people who have no desire to be Jewish, and no idea what it means to be Jewish. It is to this generation that Moshe turns his prayer to G-d, beseeching Him to return the myriad thousands who have been swallowed up and assimilated amongst the nations.

Sources:

The Right Place - Talmud Shabbat 31b, Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz - Sichot Mussar 5733/Essay 23, Rabbi Mordechai Perlmán
The Seven Books Of Moses - Talmud Shabbat 117, Rabbi M.Z. Zachs in Iturei Torah

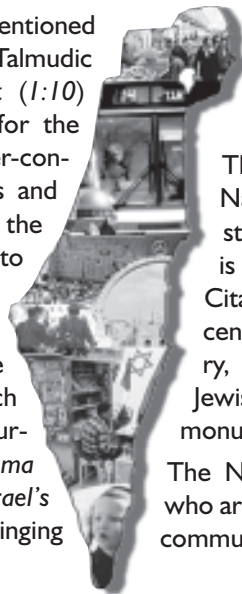
LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

AKKO

Although this ancient coastal city is not mentioned in *Tanach*, its name comes up often in Talmudic and Midrashic literature. In *Bereishet (1:10)* Rashi cites the Midrashic explanation for the Torah’s plural term “seas” to describe the inter-connected mass of water forming the earth’s seas and oceans: “The taste of a fish caught in Akko is not the same as that of a fish in Aspamia” — a reference to the fishing done in Akko, which even visitors to the city today can appreciate.

Akko as a port appears in the Talmudic narrative of Nikanor’s gate for the *Beit Hamikdash*, which was cast overboard in a storm and miraculously surfaced as the boat reached Akko (*Mesechta Yoma 38a*). This city was also designated as *Eretz Yisrael’s* northern border regarding the laws of an agent bringing



a divorce document from husband to wife (*Mesechta Gittin 2a*), and Tosefot suggests that one part of the city was actually outside the border.

This Old Town of Akko, its walls a reminder of Napoleon’s failed attempt to conquer the city as a stepping stone to establishing an Eastern Empire, is a popular tourist attraction. It contains the Citadel, erected by the Turks at the end of the 18th century on Crusader foundations of the 13th century, where the British imprisoned and executed Jewish underground fighters. It now serves as a monument to the struggle for liberation.

The New Town is populated mostly by immigrants who arrived after statehood, but also has a sizable Arab community.

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THE CHICKEN AND THE EGG

Anyone who has studied the Torah account of creation has no doubt that the chicken came before the egg. But how to view the egg which comes from the chicken presents an interesting problem — is it like fruit produced by the chicken or like juice flowing from it?

An egg laid on a holiday, the first *mishna* in this *mesechta* teaches us, may not be eaten on that day. The next couple of pages explain the reason for this rabbinic decree. The explanation offered by two of the Sages, Rabbi Yosef and Rabbi Yitzchak, are similar — but with a crucial difference:

Rabbi Yosef compares such an egg to fruit which falls from a tree. The Sages decreed that fruit which falls from a tree on a Shabbat or holiday is forbidden to be eaten on that day, lest it mislead one to pick fruit from a tree in violation of Torah Law. And when the Sages made this decree, they extended it to include anything like fruit, such as an egg, which drops from its source.

Rabbi Yitzchak, however, compares the egg to juice which flows from fruit. The Sages decreed that juice which flows on its own from fruit on a Shabbat or holiday cannot be consumed on that day, because it might mislead one to actually squeeze fruit for juice in violation of Torah Law. And when they made this decree, they included anything resembling juice, such as an egg, which flows from the source in which it is absorbed.

In explaining the difference between these seemingly similar approaches, the *gemara* focuses on what we might laughingly describe as two sides of the egg. Since Rabbi Yosef views an egg as food which is eaten rather than drunk, he concludes that it bears a closer resemblance to fruit than to juice; thus, it is more likely to lead one to pick fruit rather than squeeze fruit for juice. Rabbi Yitzchak, however, views the egg's relationship to its source as the criterion: Both the egg before it is laid and the juice before it is squeezed are not visible, as is the fruit on the tree. Consumption of the egg is therefore more likely to lead one to squeeze fruit to acquire its concealed juice than it will to pick visible fruit from a tree.

There is indeed more than one way to view an egg, just as there is more than one way to eat an egg — provided that it is not laid on a holy day.

• *Beitza 3a*

FRUITS FOR JERUSALEM

Fruits in *Eretz Yisrael* that grow in the fourth year of a tree's life have a special status. They are no longer forbidden as those that grow in the first three years. But neither can they be eaten in regular fashion like those which grow in succeeding years.

These fruits are called "*revai*" and in the time of the *Beit Hamikdash* they could be eaten within the walls of Jerusalem or redeemed. In the latter case, the money used for redemption had to be spent on food which would be consumed in Jerusalem, while the redeemed fruit could be eaten anywhere. (Today the fruit is redeemed for token value and consumed, and the coin is eliminated.)

During one period of Jewish history there was a rabbinic decree in effect that the fruit grown anywhere within the radius of a day's journey to Jerusalem had to be brought to Jerusalem for consumption and could not be redeemed. The purpose of the decree was to beautify the marketplaces of Jerusalem with an abundance of fruits.

Rabbi Eliezer owned a vineyard located between Lod and Jerusalem close enough to the latter to disqualify the option of redemption of his fourth-year crop. Bringing such a large crop to Jerusalem presented too much of a burden so he considered relinquishing ownership of the grapes and allowing the poor to claim them and bring them to Jerusalem. His disciples reminded him, however, that this was not necessary because his colleagues, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai and his court, had already abolished that decree and redemption of the fruit was once again possible.

This incident is cited as an illustration of a major halachic point — that a decree made by the Sages is in effect until it is annulled by the Sages, even if the original reason for the decree no longer applies. Jerusalem, in the time of Rabbi Eliezer, was in Roman hands; there was certainly no longer any reason to bring fourth-year fruits there to beautify the marketplaces of the heathens. Nevertheless, Rabbi Eliezer felt compelled to do so until he was informed that a formal annulment of the decree had been made.

• *Beitza 5b*

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Toward which direction did the wicks of the menorah burn, and why?
2. From what material and in what manner was the menorah made?
3. Moshe was commanded to cleanse the *levi'im* by sprinkling on them "*mei chatat*." What is "*mei chatat*"?
4. Which three "*tnufot*" (wavings) are in the Parsha?
5. Why did Hashem claim the firstborn of the Jewish People as His possession?
6. Why are the words "*Bnei Yisrael*" repeated five times in verse 8:19?
7. When a *levi* reaches age 50, which functions may he still perform?
8. Why was the mitzvah of *Pesach Sheini* not commanded directly to Moshe?
9. What similarity is there between the menorah and the trumpets?
10. What three purposes did trumpet signals serve?
11. How many tribes marched between the Gershon-Merari detachment and that of Kehat? How was the time differential used?
12. The tribe of Dan, who traveled last, was called "the gatherer of all the camps." What did they gather?
13. When the Jewish People entered the Land, who took temporary possession of Jericho?
14. Which *aron* is referred to in verse 10:33?
15. Which two topics are out of chronological order in the Parsha?
16. Which tastes did the manna not offer, and why not?
17. Moshe was commanded to choose 70 elders to help him lead the Jewish People. What happened to the elders who led the Jewish People in Egypt?
18. Who did Moshe choose as elders?
19. What was the prophecy of Eldad and Medad?
20. Why did Miriam merit to have the people wait for her?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. 8:2 - They leaned toward the middle wick so people wouldn't say that the the menorah was lit for its light. | were rewarded by being the catalyst for the teaching of this mitzvah. | broken pieces of the first tablets, which was taken to the battle-front. |
| 2. 8:4 - It was made from one solid piece of gold. | 9. 8:4, 10:2 - They were each made from a single, solid block. | 15. 9:1, 10:35,36 - The Pesach sacrifice, and the traveling of the <i>aron</i> . |
| 3. 8:7 - Water containing ashes of the <i>parah aduma</i> . | 10. 10:2-7 - Announcement of the gathering of <i>Bnei Yisrael</i> , the gathering of the <i>nesi'im</i> , and the beginning of a move of the encampment. | 16. 11:5 - Cucumbers, melons, leeks, onion and garlic — these are harmful to nursing women. |
| 4. 8:11 - The wavings of Kehat, Gershon and Merari. | 11. 10:17-21 - Three: Reuven, Shimon and Gad. In the meantime Gershon and Merari set up the <i>Mishkan</i> . | 17. 11:16 - They were consumed in the fire at <i>Taverah</i> (11:3). |
| 5. 8:17 - Because in Egypt He spared them during <i>makat bechorot</i> . | 12. 10:25 - They gathered and returned things lost by the other tribes. | 18. 11:16 - People who were supervisors in Egypt and had pity on <i>Bnei Yisrael</i> at risk to themselves. |
| 6. 8:19 - To show Hashem's love for them. | 13. 10:32 - The children of Yitro. | 19. 11:28 - "Moshe will die and Yehoshua will lead the Jewish People into the Land." |
| 7. 8:25 - Closing the courtyard gates of the <i>Mishkan</i> and <i>Beit Hamikdash</i> ; singing during the <i>avoda</i> ; loading the wagons to transport the <i>Mishkan</i> . | 14. 10:33 - The <i>aron</i> which held the | 20. 12:15 - Because she waited for Moshe when he was cast into the river. |
| 8. 9:7 - The people who asked about it | | |

KASHA! (KASHA MEANS "QUESTION")

How would you answer this question on the Parsha?

Saul Cohen from Worcester, Massachusetts
<scohen@cwix.com> asked:

In Parshat Beha'alotcha (12:1-13), both Miriam and Aharon are specifically said to be talking together about Moshe separating from Zipporah, yet only Miriam is punished with *tzara'at*. Why is only Miriam punished? Is Aharon also punished in some way that does not appear in the Parsha?

Dear Saul Cohen,

Note that the verse mentions Miriam first, indicating that she was the primary actor. Furthermore, only Miriam spoke *lashon hara*, as can be seen from the Hebrew grammar of the verse, which literally reads, "She spoke (*vatedabair*), Miriam and Aharon, about Moshe...." Aharon is included because he listened in silence, or showed agreement. (*Ibn Ezra*)

The Midrash (*Sifri cited by Ohr Hachaim*) states that indeed Aharon was also afflicted with *tzara'at*, but that his *tzara'at* healed immediately.

Do you have a KASHA? Write to kasha@ohr.org.il with your questions on any Parsha!

JURASSIC JUDAISM

The following question is one of many “Ask the Rabbi” has received regarding the Torah’s attitude toward the existence of dinosaurs:

Dear Rabbi,

A friend recently asked me how Orthodox Judaism deals with the issue of scientific proof of dinosaurs’ existence. Is there an explanation to be found in the Torah? Your answer or explanation would be greatly appreciated as we are both teachers in a Hebrew day school and the children argue amongst themselves about whether dinosaurs did or did not really exist.

The following essay, part of Ohr Somayach’s forthcoming “Torah and Nature” series, deals with this issue:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, strange artifacts began to be discovered. They were bones, bones of gigantic and monstrous creatures the like of which had never before been heard of. Sir Richard Owen, the renowned British paleontologist, coined the collective term Dinosauria, Greek for “terrible lizards.”

Even the plant-eating dinosaurs were awe-inspiring. Triceratops, larger than an elephant, had a fearsome array of horns on its armored skull. The large sauropods, Brachiosaurus and Ultrasaurus, weighed more than eighty tons and stood as tall as a five-story building. But the meat-eating dinosaurs were downright terrifying. And none more so than the greatest predator ever to walk the earth. Twenty feet tall and forty feet long, with a massive head boasting six-inch fangs, Tyrannosaurus Rex, the “king tyrant lizard,” was a fearsome beast indeed.

Dinosaurs are terrifying creatures. Fortunately, there aren’t too many of them around nowadays, so there is little to fear. But some Jews do still walk around in fear of dinosaurs. However, this has nothing to do with the dinosaurs’ extreme size or their tendency to crush or eat anything in their way. It has more to do with their very existence. Paleontologists assert that dinosaurs lived hundreds of millions of years ago, while the Jewish calendar sets

the age of the universe at under 6000 years plus six creation days.

I remember a young student in yeshiva once drawing me aside in a conspiratorial manner.

“Do you believe in dinosaurs?” he asked me in a hushed tone.

“No,” I replied, surprised. “I believe in G-d.”

I wasn’t sure as to exactly which religion he belonged to (The New Age Temple of the Dinosaur Worshipers, perhaps?), but as far as I’m concerned, it’s only G-d, and religious affairs, that are matters of belief. (And even with those, we’re not talking about blind faith, but rather acknowledgment based on firm evidence and reasoning.)

Dinosaurs aren’t a matter of belief. The fossils really exist; I own one myself. How one interprets these fossils is a different matter.

It has been suggested that G-d placed fossils in the ground as a test of our faith. There are two main difficulties with this explanation.

The first objection is that it’s not a particularly good test. As we shall see, there is more than plenty of room for accepting the former existence of dinosaurs and the Divinity of Torah.

The second objection is that, without being overly presumptuous about G-d’s ways, everything that we know about Him tells us that He doesn’t act that way. G-d does not create evidence against His Torah and ask us to blind ourselves to it with a leap of faith. Rather, He presents us with evidence for His existence, and preserves free will by implanting within us a powerful ability to ignore that which is inconvenient.

This point is powerfully presented by Rav Elchanan Wasserman, *atzal*. He raises the question of how a twelve year old girl or a thirteen year old boy can be commanded in the mitzvah of *emunah*, faith, which the brilliant Aristotle didn’t even manage. His answer is that *emunah* just requires one to draw the logical conclusions from the evidence that surrounds us; if great minds slip up, that is because of personal agendas.

Nature points towards G-d, not away from Him. We are told, “Lift your eyes upon high and perceive Who created

these!” (*Yeshayah 40:26*); and that “The heavens speak of G-d’s glory, and the sky tells of His handiwork!” (*Tehillim 19:2*). Contemplating nature is not only a means to affirm G-d’s existence, but also, as Rambam explains, the fulfillment of another mitzvah:

This honored and awesome G-d — it is a mitzvah to love Him and to fear Him... And how does one come to love and fear Him? When man contemplates the great wonders of His deeds and creations, and he perceives from them His boundless and infinite wisdom, instantly he loves and praises and gives glory, and he has a great desire to know G-d... And when he contemplates these matters, he instantly recoils and is in awe, and he knows that he is a small, dismal, lowly creature, standing with a minuscule weakness of intellect before the Perfect Wisdom... (*Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 2:1–2*).

Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi, in his famous work the *Kuzari* (1:67), writes that “Heaven forbid that there should be anything in the Torah to contradict that which is manifest or proved.” Likewise, Heaven forbid that there should be anything manifest or proved which would contradict anything in the Torah. If one is convinced that G-d wrote the Torah and created the world, then one should fear no scientific discovery. Conversely, if one is afraid of what the scientists will discover, then one is clearly not fully aware that everything discoverable was created by G-d.

But doesn’t the apparent age of the dinosaurs contradict the Torah? Well, to claim so, one would have to claim to understand what the Torah actually means with its account of Creation. But this raises many matters of interpretation; for example, how do you measure a “day” when the sun is only created on the fourth one? How do you determine the flow of time when it varies depending on how near you are to objects of large gravitational mass? Since we have so little understanding of these matters, how can dinosaurs frighten us?

Far from being frightened by dinosaurs, Rabbi Yisrael Lifshitz, author of the *Tiferet*

Yisrael commentary on the Mishna, received the news of fossil discoveries in the nineteenth century with delight. As he had undoubtedly expected, they confirmed everything that we knew all along. He writes:

...As regards the past, Rabbi Abahu states at the beginning of *Bereishet Rabbah* that the words “and it was evening, and it was morning” (in the apparent absence of the sun) indicate that “there was a series of epochs before then; the Holy One created worlds and destroyed them, approving some and not others.” The Kabbalists expanded upon this statement and revealed that this process is repeated seven times, each *Shemita* achieving greater perfection than the last...They also tell us that we are now in the midst of the fourth of these great cycles of perfection...[Editor’s note: Interestingly, many paleontologists also consider there to have been four eras: the Precambrian, Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic.]

We are enabled to appreciate to the full the wonderful accuracy of our Holy Torah when we see that this secret doctrine, handed down by word of mouth for so long, and revealed to us by the Sages of the Kabbalah many centuries ago, has been borne out in

the clearest possible way by the science of our generation.

The questing spirit of man, probing and delving into the recesses of the earth, in the Pyrenees, the Carpathians, the Rocky Mountains in America, and the Himalayas, has found them to be formed of mighty layers of rock lying upon one another in amazing and chaotic formations, explicable only in terms of revolutionary transformations of the earth’s surface.

Probing still further, deep below the earth’s surface, geologists have found four distinct layers of rock, and between the layers fossilized remains of creatures. Those in the lower layers are of monstrous size and structure, while those in the higher layers are progressively smaller in size but incomparably more refined in structure and form.

Furthermore, they found in Siberia in 1807, under the eternal ice of those regions, a monstrous type of elephant, some three or four times larger than those found today...

Similarly, fossilized remains of sea creatures have been found within the recesses of the highest mountains, and scientists have calculated that of every 78 species found in the earth, 48 are species that are no longer found

in our present epoch.

We also know of the remains of an enormous creature found deep in the earth near Baltimore, seventeen feet long and eleven feet high. These have also been found in Europe, and have been given the name “mammoth.” Another gigantic creature whose fossilized remains have been found is that which is called “Iguanodon,” which stood fifteen feet high and measured ninety feet in length; from its internal structure, scientists have determined that it was herbivorous. Another creature is that which is called “Megalosaurus,” which was slightly smaller than the Iguanodon, but which was meat-eating.

From all this, we can see that all that the Kabbalists have told us for so many years about the repeated destruction and renewal of the earth has found clear confirmation in our time.

(Tiferet Yisrael, in Derush Ohr HaChayyim, found in Mishnayot Nezikin after Masechet Sanhedrin)

Huge and fearsome creatures that they were, dinosaurs can’t possibly be a threat to the religious Jew. As G-d’s creations, they are another example of His wondrous might. There’s nothing to be afraid of.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous “Ohrnet” features

Re: CyberBranch:

Great page! (<http://www.ohrnet.org>) You should open a branch of Ohr Somayach in Ashdod.

Akiva Kotler <akiva@barak-online.net>

Re: Liberty Through ALL the Land (Torah Weekly, Behar):

Regarding Ohrnet’s “Torah Weekly” for *Parshat Behar*: I should like to point out that the inscription on the Liberty Bell, “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land,” is in fact a deliberate misquotation from *Parshat Behar*, although nobody seems to point this out. The Torah actually states “Proclaim liberty throughout the land” (and this is the ver-

sion in the King James Bible that they presumably used) and it seems that the Americans changed it into “all the land” in order to make it apply to America, and not just to the Land of Israel. *Biveracha*.

Prof. Vivian (Haim) Halpern,
Physics Dept., Bar-Ilan University,
Ramat-Gan, Israel
<halpern@physnet.ph.biu.ac.il>

Re: Adobe Acrobat Format:

My brother came home from Yeshiva in Israel with a stack of Ohrnets. My entire family is in love with them and that’s the reason that I am now subscribing.

Chaya from Canada <Chaya@Email.Withheld>

Plant your garden with patience and it will sprout understanding; because...

AS YE HOE...

Every Friday I prepare a list of the jobs that need to be done in preparation for Shabbat and divide them up among my children. The list is then posted on the refrigerator with the child's initial next to each of his jobs. It is a pretty good system and works fairly well, but there are always the last minute jobs I forget about. Then

my husband or I grab the nearest child and ask him to do that particular task. Sometimes, though, there are misunderstandings. Last spring, for example, my husband asked my eleven year old to put away the gardening hoe that had been left out. She cheerfully agreed. A half hour later when he was ready to leave for *shul* and he saw the hoe still out, he hit the roof. "Didn't you tell me you had put the hoe away!"

My daughter came running to the front door insisting that she had put the hoe away and pointed to the garden hose neatly coiled around the garden faucet. And so we learned in our household, where English is not the first language for all of our children, there are many situations where we need to judge their deeds with the benefit of the doubt.

YIDDLE RIDDLE

Shimon Goldstein from Neve Yaakov <e-mail@withheld> wrote with the following riddle:

My friend told me the following Yiddle Riddle: Rabbi Yehuda Hachassid, in his famous will writes that nowadays a person should not have a *mechuten* (someone whose son married his daughter or vice versa) with the same name as he. What three people in the *Chumash* had a *mechuten* who had the same name as they?

Answer next week....

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

RAMBAN

8:2 Preview of *Chanukah*
 9:1 *Korban Pesach* in the *Midbar*
 9:10 *Pesach Sheini*
 9:14 *Pesach* of the *Ger*
 10:29 Yitro's Choice
 10:35 Flight from Sinai
 11:1 Sin of Complainers
 11:5 Fish and Vegetables in Egypt
 11:6 Complaints about Manna

11:16 Significance of Number 70

SEFER HACHINUCH

380 *Pesach Sheini*
 384 Significance of Trumpets

SFORNO

9:1 The Four Merits
 11:22 Never Satisfied

derech

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