



# Torah Bits

Volume XIII No. 16

January 24, 2009

28 Tevet 5769

## This Week's Torah Bits is Sponsored By The Family And Friends of Akiva Pomerantsev On The Occasion Of His Yahrtzeit

*“And G-d spoke to Moshe and said I am Hashem.”*

*(Shemos 6:2)*

Rashi expounds that Hashem was disappointed with Moshe for saying (at the end of *Parshas Shemos*) “Why have you done evil unto this Nation and why have you sent me?” Hashem responded to Moshe, “Now you shall see that which I shall do to Pharaoh”. (5:22) Rashi there elucidates that there was a subtle implication in G-d's words: “Now you shall see”, but you will not see what will be done to the seven nations that occupy Canaan. At this point it was decreed that Moshe would not enter the Land of Israel. It is for this reason that the *parsha* begins with G-d chastising Moshe. It was a reprimand of his second-guessing G-d's decree. The difficulty here is understanding what was wrong with what Moshe said? As the leader of an oppressed people, it was his duty to advocate on their behalf. To not express his grief regarding their plight would be an abdication of his responsibility as leader of the people. Furthermore, we know that G-d's ways are just and divine retribution is measure for measure.

In what way did Moshe's punishment befit the crime?

The answer lies in a profound comprehension of Moshe Rabbeinu and what made him so great. Moshe was the quintessential *Mivakesh*. He yearned for nothing more than closeness to G-d and having a better appreciation of his ways. This was exhibited at the burning bush. Moshe, upon witnessing a spiritual manifestation, is drawn to the phenomenon, wishing to understand the significance of the miracle. He yearns for spirituality and quests for a connection with G-d, and so he approaches the bush. Yet, at a certain point, G-d tells Moshe to stop. Here too there is a relevant message. There is a limit to how close the human can get to G-d in this world. There comes a point where our job is not to understand G-d, but to follow his directive or accept his judgment even if it seems, at times, illogical.

Moshe tried again. Before receiving the Torah, Moshe is given a prophetic vision of the great Rabbi Akiva. Upon witnessing the horrible death he endured at the hand of the Romans, Moshe challenges Hashem, “Is this the reward for Torah?”

Moshe wished to understand the sometimes mysterious ways of G-d, but G-d tells Moshe to desist from asking.

This scenario repeated itself when, following the sin of the Golden Calf, Moshe asks G-d to show him His glory. Talmud in *Berachos* explains Moshe's request was for G-d to explain to him the greatest of all quandaries and the greatest of all mysteries; why do the righteous suffer? According to an opinion there, G-d did not answer him, rather he told Moshe, “from where I am, you can understand, but the human can never understand.

Maybe this was Hashem's criticism of Moshe. Surely it was Moshe's responsibility to pray for the alleviation of the Jewish plight. What he was admonished for was asking why Hashem allowed his children to be tyrannized. Hashem had his reasons and they were apparently not anyone's concern. Although Moshe did not lack in faith, his thirst for knowledge and understanding of G-d trumped accepting G-d's judgment in silence.

With one small introduction, we can now understand the punishment Moshe was given. The Netziv, in his introduction to *Bamidbar* explains that there was a distinction between the generation of the desert, and the generation that entered Israel. Moshe's generation lived through open miracles. With the ten plagues followed by the splitting of the sea, the receiving of the Torah, then forty years of eating *man* and being protected by the clouds of glory, every aspect of their lives defied the natural order of the world. The next generation though, had to live by the laws of nature (more or less). G-d's hand was not as apparent as it used to be, and it took more faith to feel that every occurrence was the hand of G-d.

Maybe Moshe did not merit to lead a generation that would experience a somewhat veiled relationship with G-d and have to be taught faith despite G-d's concealing himself. Yehoshua, Moshe's successor, was the paradigm of faith under all circumstances. As the Medrash tells us, he was selected to lead the nation in war against Amalek, “for let the grandchild of the one who said, ‘it is G-d that I fear’ and avenge those about whom it is said ‘and they fear not G-d’”. (*Shlomo Soroka*)

Please Learn These Halachos at your Seudas Shabbos for a Refuah Shelaima for **Reuven ben Tova Chaya**

**“TRAPPING OR RESTRICTING THE MOVEMENT OF A LIVING BEING”**

- 1) It is forbidden to catch or kill an animal or insect on Shabbos, unless it is very dangerous (like a poisonous snake); or an animal whose bite would be very painful and it is chasing him.  
(Source: “*Practical Halachos of Shabbos*,” Rabbi Mayer Birnbaum, pg. 41)

**A community initiative in conjunction with:**

Agudas Israel, Bais Avraham, Bais HaMedrash HaGadol Shaarei Chesed Shul, Nusach Hari, TICK, Young Israel

## “ASK THE RABBI”



**Dear Rabbi:**

*Who wrote the Torah?*



**The Rabbi Answers:**

One of the thirteen principles of faith and a cornerstone of Judaism is the belief that every word of the Torah was authored by G-d Himself and dictated to Moses to give over to the Jewish people. One of the many proofs for the divine origin of the Torah is that we are the only religion that claims a mass revelation to the entire nation at the time our holy book was given to us. Other religions are based on claims of a “prophet” who had a vision from G-d that was not proven by any real evidence. It could conceivably be the figment of someone’s imagination if not an outright fabrication. The Torah uniquely claims that the entire nation was present at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah, heard with their own ears the word of G-d himself, and saw with their own eyes a miraculous revelation. No human author could make up such a ridiculous story, as it would be immediately refuted by the people. The most rational explanation is that it’s true. G-d did write the Torah, and gave it to the Jewish nation in an open display of miraculous splendor. All the best,

Shlomo Soroka

## “ANSWER THE RABBI”

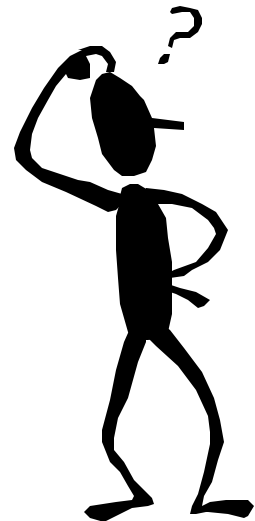
***This Week’s Question:***

After Moshe and Aharon caused all of the water in Egypt to turn to blood, Pharaoh’s magicians duplicated the feat and therefore he wasn’t impressed (7:22).

If all of the water had turned to blood, from where did they obtain water to turn into blood?

*Great answers last week from: Sarah Brodsky, Yisrael Meir Golombeck, Mr. Hillel Anton, and Dr. Neil Abramson*

*Email your answers to [ssoroka@stlkollel.com](mailto:ssoroka@stlkollel.com) and you will be entered into a raffle for a \$50 Gift Certificate from the Kollel Bookstore....Congratulations to our Raffle winners: Sarah Brodsky, Yisrael Meir Golombeck, and Rabbi Baruch Mandelbaum. Next Raffle...Motzei Shabbos, February 14th.*



Torah Bits is distributed to all of the St. Louis area Orthodox shuls. Torah Bits is compiled by Rabbi Soroka under the direction of the Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Greenblatt. Torah Bits has Torah content; please treat it respectfully (and yes, you may take it home with you). To sponsor Torah Bits or place an announcement, please contact the Kollel office. **Sponsorship Rates:** Cover \$50 per issue **Inside page:** \$36 for announcement box. Four weeks in a row ~ \$30 per box. Eight weeks in a row ~ \$25 per box.

**Candlelighting: 4:52 P.M.**  
**End of Z’man Krias Shema-  
Gra: 9:43 A.M.**  
**Magen Avraham: 9:07 A.M.**

ST. LOUIS  
**KOLLEL**  
18<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**St. Louis Kollel**  
8200 Delmar St. Louis, MO 63124 314-726-6047  
To subscribe to the free weekly e-mail edition,  
e-mail your request to [webmaster@stlkollel.com](mailto:webmaster@stlkollel.com)

# HALACHA

## “Rising For An Older Person” (THE WEEKLY HALACHA)

### **QUESTION:**

*What are the halachos in regard to the mitzvah min ha-Torah of rising for an older person - “mipnei seivah takum?”*

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Torah commands that one give honor to any frum Jew - man or woman- over the age of seventy by rising to one's full height when the older person comes within four amos (approx. 6-8 feet), until the older person leaves the area of his four amos. Although the older person is not necessarily a learned or distinguished person, we still recognize and pay tribute to him "because in his great number of years he has seen and recognized a bit of the workings of Hashem and His wonders, and he is thus worthy of honor."

Although the halachah clearly obligates one to rise to his full height when honoring an older person, it is true that many people are not careful to fulfill this mitzvah properly and rise only slightly when an older person approaches. While some poskim attempt to justify this custom on halachic grounds, it does not change the basic halachah that obligates one to stand fully in order to perform this mitzvah properly.

### **QUESTION:**

*Under which circumstances is one exempt from fulfilling the mitzvah of mipnei seivah takum?*

### **DISCUSSION:**

In the following cases the mitzvah of mipnei seiva takum, which requires one to rise to his full height, does not apply. Instead, the mitzvah is merely to show some measure of respect, such as rising slightly from one's seat:

- \* When the "younger" person is also over seventy.
- \* When the younger person is a greater talmid chacham than the older person.
- \* When the younger person is an employee and standing up will require wasting his employer's time.
- \* When the older person specifically forgoes the honor that is due to him.
- \* When the younger person is in the middle of davening and standing will disturb his kavanah.
- \* When the younger person is ill, or a mourner during shivah.

*Weekly-Halacha, Text Copyright © 2006 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and [Torah.org](http://Torah.org).*

### **Nusach Hari B'nai Zion Presents...**

LION'S DEN "DINE IN" PIZZA NITE  
"ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PIZZA-PASTA-SALAD"

**Sunday, January 25th...5PM to 7PM**

*(First come - First served) (Cholov Yisroel)*

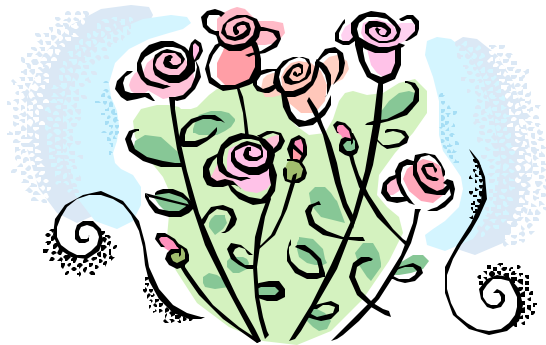
**Adults \$10 Kids 4-12 \$6 Kids 3 & Under FREE**

**Next Carry-Out Pizza Nite -Wednesday, February 11th**

Winter "Wine & Dine" at Nusach Hari  
Motzai Shabbos, February 28, 8:00 p.m.  
Wine-Tasting, Scrumptious International  
Soup, Salad & Dessert Buffet  
Martini & Sushi Cash Bars, Live Music!  
\$20 per person RSVP 314-991-2100, Ext. 5

**This Wednesday  
Night!**

St. Louis Kollel Proudly Presents  
**"Eishes Chayil"**



*An Institute of Jewish Studies for Women, by Women,  
whose mission is to provide inspiration and enrichment  
programs for Jewish women of all ages and backgrounds,  
including lectures, study groups and social activities.*

~ ~ ~

*Please Join Us For Our Inaugural Event  
Featuring*

***Rebbetzin Tehila Jaeger***

*Noted and Beloved Teacher of Torah*

***"Connecting To Wellsprings of Clarity and Joy"***

***Wednesday, January 28th at 8:00 p.m.***

***BHH Shaarei Chesed Shul ~ 700 North & South***

***Suggested Donation: \$5.00***

***Light Refreshments Will Be Served***

*Rebbetzin Jaeger is a much sought-after speaker, beloved teacher, and the daughter of renowned outreach pioneer Rabbi Shlomo Freifeld, who together with his Rebbetzin Chaya Sarah, founded the famed Yeshiva Sh'or Yoshuv in Far Rockaway, New York. Mrs. Jaeger's husband, Rabbi Naftali Jaeger, is the current Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Sh'or Yoshuv.*

*Rebbetzin Jaeger passionately believes that the future of the Jewish people is keenly affected by the degree that women, molders of the next generation, spiritually deepen themselves. Toward this end, Rebbetzin Jaeger has traveled extensively across the United States sharing the Torah that uplifts and illuminates her life, and the lives of those around her. She resides with her family in Far Rockaway, where she pursues "her most sacred priority" - nurturing her family.*

**NEW ARRIVALS AT YOUR KOLLEL BOOKSTORE:**

**MISHPOCHA MAGAZINE**

**IN ADDITION TO YATED, HAMODIA & BINAH  
PICK UP YOUR SHABBOS READING  
EVERY FRIDAY FROM 11AM TO 1PM**

**REFLECTOR BELTS  
NOW IN STOCK!**

**DON'T WALK WITHOUT ONE!**

**33% OFF ALL ARTSCROLL HALACHA TITLES**

*Chofetz Chaim Daily Companion, Lessson A Day  
Business Halacha ~ Cases In Monetary Halacha  
Children In Halacha ~ Kitzur Shulchan Aruch  
Chol Hamoed and Festivals In Halacha  
Fifth Commandment ~ Laws of Ribbis  
Laws of Berachos ~ Laws of Daily Living  
Laws of Kashrus ~ Laws of Tzedakah & Maaser*

*Mourning In Halacha  
Muktzeh  
Nishmat Avrohom (3 Volumes)  
Radiance of Shabbos  
Shabbos Home ~ Shabbos Kitchen  
Jewish Calendar ~ Visiting The Sick  
**Much More...Thru January 27th!***