


## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

## Living Up To Ourselves

IMAGINE SEEING A DISTINGUISHED LOOKING MAN, impeccably dressed, hair well groomed, sit down in a sand box to play with the children. Not only is he playing with the sand, but he begins to fight with the other children for toys. What is strange about this picture is that, in essence, the man is not living up to the image that he outwardly projects.

Human beings were created in the "image" of Hashem. When a person does not act in accordance with the G-dly image he represents, it is just as incongruous as the man in the sand box. How do we live up to this inner greatness? We model the One in Whose image we are made. In this week's *parasha*, Hashem tells Moshe of the thirteen attributes of kindness which Hashem uses in his relationship with the world: "Compassionate

and Gracious, Slow to Anger, and Abundant in Kindness, etc." Rav Moshe Kordevero, in his work *Tomer Devorah*, says that aligning our actions with these attributes of Hashem is how we live up to the image we represent.

This idea applies to all the people of the world. Even though the Jewish people were given a specific *mitzvah* of "And you shall walk in his ways," which obligates us to model Hashem, all human beings were made in the "image" of Hashem and therefore have the capacity to either live up to that image or to tarnish it by not acting in accordance with their inner core. The Jewish people, though, are given another tool to purify their character. The Midrash expounds in several places, "The mitzvos were given to purify those that perform them." The Midrash teaches us that fulfilling the *mitzvos* is not only an avenue to draw closer to Hashem or a means to eternal reward—it is also something that changes who we are. We elevate our character and our being by performing the *mitzvos*. Rav Moshe Chaim Luzatto, in his work *Adir Bamarom*, writes, "Even though man was created in the 'image' of Hashem, he only completes that 'image' by performing the *mitzvos*." Every *mitzvah* we fulfill brings us closer to living up to the G-dliness we were given when we came into existence. 

RABBI  
MOSHE TZVI  
CRYSTAL

## A HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

We began a couple of weeks ago discussing the proper honor and respect we are supposed to give a *sefer Torah*.

When the Torah is removed from the Aron (ark) and makes its way through the right-hand side of the *shul* towards the *bimah*, it is considered proper for the congregants to honor it by following behind and escorting it as it passes by them (M.B. 149:7). Some suggest that to follow behind the *sefer Torah* just a few steps suffices (*Halichos Shlomo* 1:12, note 17). However, it is not necessary for those who are not in the path of the Torah (e.g., their seat is behind the *bimah*) to come to the front of the *shul* so that they can follow the Torah.


It is customary and considered correct *chinuch* for people to bring their young children forward so that they can respectfully kiss the Torah mantle (*Ramah O.C.* 149:1). The *Sha'arei Efrayim* (10:4) brings that adults should also kiss the Torah when it passes. Some *Poskim* [R' Henkin (*Eidus L'yisrael* 63) and R' Elyashiv (*Ashrei Ha'ish*, vol. 1, pg. 133)], suggest that instead of kissing the Torah itself, one is better off only touching or pointing at the Torah and then kissing that hand.

The practice in some congregations is that while carrying the Torah to the *bimah*, they detour or bend down to allow those who are not within reach of the Torah to kiss it or touch it.

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## A RIDDLE FOR YOU

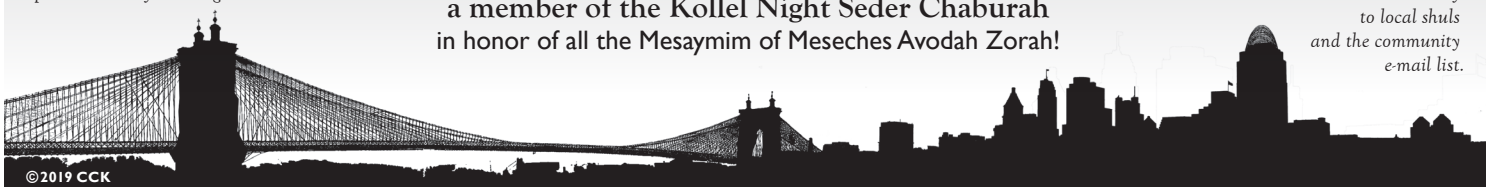
In the *parasha* of Tzav, the number of *passukim* in the *parasha* matches the numerical value of the word Tzav which is 92. Which *parasha* would it be absolutely impossible for the number of *passukim* to match the numerical value of the name of that *parasha*? 

See reverse side for the answer

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## IT HAD TO BE HASHEM

IN 1940, RAV ELIE MUNK, WHO WAS THE CHIEF RABBI of Paris, and his family were fleeing from the Nazis. As a rabbi, Rav Munk was in an especially dangerous situation. The first people the Nazis targeted were the rabbinic leaders. They had made it to the town of Aix-le-Bains, which was near the border with Switzerland. In Aix-le-Bains they managed to contact members of the Maquis, which were the members of the French underground, to ask their aid in crossing the border. The Maquis agreed, and on the night set for their attempt the youngest of the Munk children, their twin sons who were one and a half years old, were carried on the shoulders of the two members of the Maquis who were their guides. Absolute silence was essential, and several times the guides thought they heard suspicious sounds and the Munk family had to throw themselves on the ground and wait while their hearts beat wildly in their chests. When they neared the fence, the guides cut a hole, but before they could go through, their guides threatened them with their weapons and robbed them of everything they owned, down to the book of matches Rabbi Munk had in his pocket. Trembling with fright, the Munks snuck through the hole in the fence. Stumbling along in the dark they reached a clump of trees. As they walked on, they came to what appeared to be a river. Now they were stuck! They could not see how deep the water was and could not see in the dark night if there was somewhere to cross. Now, after the whole night of silence, one of the babies began to wail and would not be comforted. Sure enough, not long later they saw the light of a flashlight coming closer until it was right on top of them. "Come quickly, you are safe with me. I'm a member of the Swiss army. I heard your child cry and followed the sound. This is no-man's land and you are still in danger. I will lead you to safety." After the soldier lead the Munks into Switzerland, he told them, "I was on patrol and I heard faintly the voice of a child crying. I was reminded of my children at home and I asked my superior if I could investigate. You are lucky your child cried at exactly the right time, otherwise I am certain if you stayed where you were through the night a German patrol would have found you!" 🕊

## RIDDLE ANSWER

Partners go with only a numerical value of three!

## GLIMPSES OF THE KOLLEL

## Sunday Brunch

The monthly "Sunday Brunch", initiated by Rabbi Chaim Heinemann, has been hosted by the JCC, CHDS, local parks, and most recently Shaarei Torah. Special note of two recent subs, Rabbis Zeffren and Soroka.



## A HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

CONTINUED

Most *Poskim* do not feel that this is a degradation and permit it (R' Doniel Neustadt).

When two or more *sifrei* Torah are taken out of the *Aron*, the ones that are not currently being used are entrusted to responsible individuals to hold until they are to be used. It is improper to allow a child to hold the Torah (MB 147:29), and according to R' Moshe Feinstein it is prohibited to leave a Torah unattended even if it is left in a safe place (*Igros Moshe* 1:38).

One is not allowed to turn one's back to a Torah (Y.D. 282:1). Accordingly, those who sit in front of the shul would need to turn around while the Torah makes its way to the *bimah*. When, however,

the Torah is read from a *bimah* (M.B. 140:14) [or from a table which is over forty inches high (*Taz*, Y.D. 242:13)], this prohibition does not apply.

Often, those holding a second or a third *sefer* Torah (e.g., on Yom Tov) sit behind the Torah reader or the person being called to the Torah, who are then turning their backs towards those *sifrei* Torah. the custom to do so is widely accepted (*Halichos Shlomo* 1:12, note 21). However, because of the above-mentioned concern, you will find that while reciting *Yekum Purkan*, *Av Harachamim*, or *Ashrei* the *sheliach tzibbur* is normally careful to move to the side of the *bimah* so that his back does not face the *sifrei* Torah. 🕊

## BEYOND ELLIS ISLAND THE TRAILBLAZERS, TRIALS, & TRIUMPHS OF AMERICAN JEWRY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

The invention and subsequent mass sales of refrigerators with automated temperature control in the early 1920's in America created a new question for Rabbonim: Was it permissible to open the new refrigerator on Shabbos? The activation of the compressor's motor by the thermostat meant that the introduction of warm air into the refrigerator when opened would lead to the motor's activation. Was opening the refrigerator door, then, considered the same as flipping an appliance switch to turn it on? Many Rabbonim in America weighed in on the question, with one of the earliest *responsa* coming from Rabbi Chaim Fishel Epstein, a former Cincinnati Rabbi. Other Rabbonim who offered early opinions on the matter were Rabbi Avraham Krieger of Boston, Massachusetts, Rabbi Binyamin Fleischer of Colchester, Connecticut, and Rav Yaakov Kantrowitz of Trenton, New Jersey. This discussion has never stopped, and there remains a myriad of opinions regarding this issue. 🕊

SOURCE: Schwartz, Rabbi Gedalia Dov. "Shaarei Gedulah." pp.154-156. Chicago Rabbinical Council, 2007.

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