

## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

## One Small Step For Man

WE ALL HAVE HEARD THE EXPRESSION, "ACTIONS speak louder than words." The *Chafetz Chaim* teaches that this is especially true in our relationship with Hashem and that which we ask Hashem to help us with. After the *sh'moneh esrei* prayer, said three times a day, there is an additional paragraph that is a prayer for personal needs. We begin by asking: "G-d close my lips from saying evil." Hashem is ready, willing, and able to help. . . but Hashem waits for one more thing: You. He wants to see your effort in improving your speech. In the same manner, we ask Hashem, "Open my heart to understand Your Torah." Hashem wants to see us sitting down and attempting to learn Torah. This also means then, that if we don't, we're wasting our breath and our prayer.

This is really a principle from our *parasha*. The

Torah describes a situation where the beast of burden of another Jew has fallen down and needs help. The Torah tells us that we may not ignore the fallen animal, and we must work with the owner to stand the animal back up. Our sages expound on this verse, as Rashi says, "You shall stand the animal with him [the owner]. However, if he [the owner] says to him since this is your *mitzvah* I will sit here and you can do it yourself, he is absolved [of the obligation to perform the *mitzvah*]." One is obligated by a cry for help if the person who asks for it is not apathetic to his own plight. *Chafetz Chaim* teaches us that G-d deals with us in this same manner. Help from heaven comes when we make that first step. We must show we mean what we say by putting in our own effort.

With the beginning of a new year coming steadily toward us, this idea is even more meaningful. We want to ask Hashem for another year because we want to improve on the person we've been this past year. We also beseech Hashem to help us become that person we've been hoping to be. Hashem is ready, willing, and able, but He waits for one thing: You. Let's take that step. 🕊

RABBI  
MOSHE TZVI  
CRYSTAL

## A HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

There is a *mitzvah* introduced in this week's *parasha* known as *shiluach ha-kan*, which is the sending away of a mother bird nesting on her eggs or her young. The sages tell us that this *mitzvah* is a *chok*, a *mitzvah* for which the rationale was not shared with us by the Torah, similar to the prohibition of mixing meat and milk.

The *mitzvah* of *shiluach ha-kan* can only be performed with a kosher female bird that is not domestically raised (such as a pigeon or sparrow) and does not have an owner that cares for it. There is a *halachic* principle that a person's property can acquire objects as a proxy for the owner. There is a discussion in the *poskim* regarding whether a nest that is found on your property is automatically acquired for you or, since you generally have no interest in acquiring such birds on your property, the property would not acquire the birds for you. If a nest would be acquired for the property owner, then it would no longer be possible for anyone to fulfill the *mitzvah* with this nest. The solution would be to declare the nest *hefker* (ownerless) while having in mind that you do not want your property to acquire the nest for you.

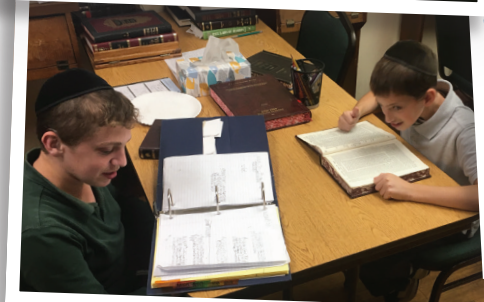
— CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE —

## A RIDDLE FOR YOU

What word in Hebrew does not have a plural form?

(Hint: It is also used as a name.) 🕊

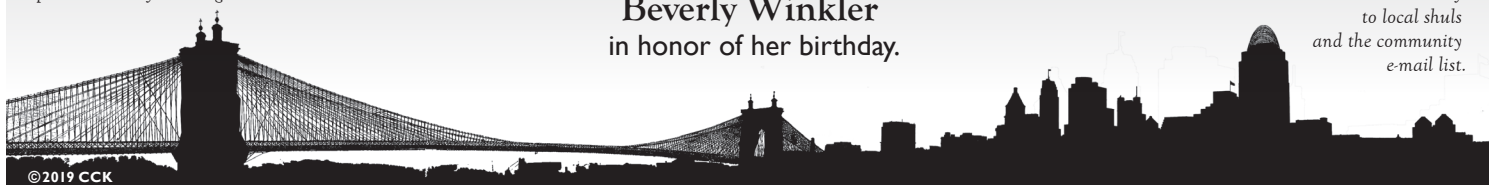
See reverse side for the answer



Sponsorship & feedback:  
[parasha@cincykollel.org](mailto:parasha@cincykollel.org)

Sponsored by  
**Beverly Winkler**  
in honor of her birthday.

Cincinnati Torah  
is distributed weekly  
to local shuls  
and the community  
e-mail list.



## A HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

CONTINUED

In general, the father bird is the one roosting over the eggs or young during daylight hours and, therefore, *shiluach ha-kan* should be done when it is dark to be sure it is the mother bird roosting in the nest. Besides sending away the mother bird, included in this *mitzvah* is the acquisition of the eggs or young after the mother has been sent away. Therefore, one should be gentle in how one sends away the bird, for if she breaks the eggs in her panic, the *mitzvah* cannot be fulfilled. After the mother bird is sent away one should pick up the eggs with one's hand, thereby acquiring the eggs. If the mother returns before the eggs are acquired, then the mother must continually be sent away until the *mitzvah* is completed.

Although most *poskim* say that the *mitzvah* is not obligatory, the reward of one who performs it is quite significant. The Torah itself says that one who performs *shiluach ha-kan* will merit long life. The *midrash* mentions other rewards, such as children, finding a wife or husband, financial success, and bringing the coming of *Mashiach* closer. 🕒

## GLIMPSES OF THE KOLLEL



the man could not tell immediately if he had been paid or not, they began lifting some of his goods and hurrying away, leaving him with nothing gained for his time outside braving the elements. When Rabbi Yeshaya Muskat saw for the first time what people were doing to the poor blind man, he began coming early in the morning every day to buy all of the pastries that the man had to offer saying that he loved them so much he wanted all he had to sell. Rabbi Muskat, not needing all the pastry, would then offer to people he passed by in the street on his way home until it was all gone. This practice continued for a while, until one day a man who saw this

transaction take place every morning asked the rabbi, "Why do you play this game of charades with that blind man? Why pretend you want his cake when you don't? Why don't you just give him the money straight so he doesn't have to come sell anything in the marketplace?" Rabbi Muskat eyed the man quizzically and answered, "Is it not enough that the man is blind? Must I rob him of the satisfaction of selling out his product and the self-esteem that comes with it as well?!" 🕒

## A LESSON LEARNED

IN THE CITY OF PRAGUE, THERE WAS A BLIND MAN that attempted to make a living by selling pastries on the street to the passersby. When certain unscrupulous individuals noticed that

## REW2NA ANSWER

msbA

## BEYOND ELLIS ISLAND

### THE TRAILBLAZERS, TRIALS, & TRIUMPHS OF AMERICAN JEWRY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

In their efforts to maintain standards of Torah-observant life in America in the late 1800s and onwards, Orthodox rabbis were challenged by a lack of authority which had previously been a fact of *shtetl* life in Eastern Europe. Rabbis Asher Lipman Zarchy of Des Moines and Yehuda Leib Levin of Detroit met in 1901 to discuss what could be done to strengthen rabbinic influence in the Orthodox world. Their idea was to create a union of Orthodox rabbis. This would allow rabbis everywhere to work together to confront issues, give the Orthodox rabbi a stronger voice, and enable rabbis to set policy and standards in such areas as *kashrus*, the writing of *gittin*, and marriage ceremonies. The idea was positively received and fifty-nine members were admitted to the new *Agudas Harabanim*, known in English as the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada. There were thirteen rabbis from New York City, and the remainder came from cities like Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Portland, New Haven, Denver, Cincinnati, Bangor, Omaha, and Minneapolis, to name a few. Rabbi Avraham Yaakov Gershon Lesser of Cincinnati was elected as the first chairman of the executive committee. 🕒

SOURCE: Rakeffet-Rothkoff, Aaron. *The Silver Era*. Feldheim Publishers. 1981. pp. 31-34.

## Cincinnati Community Kollel

2241 Losantiville Avenue, Cincinnati OH 45237 • 513-631-1118 • kollel@shul.net • cincykollel.org

Please remember the Kollel with a gift in your will, trust, retirement account, or life insurance policy.

