

Ki Teitze Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

In this week's Parsha Moshe continued to teach mitzvot to the Jewish people. This parsha contains more mitzvot than any other parsha. In total there are 74 mitzvot. Some of the mitzvot he taught are:

The mitzvah of hashavat aveida, returning a lost object. If you find something it is a mitzvah to return it to the owner.

The mitzvah of tzaar baalei chaim, not to make an animal suffer. If you see an animal struggling with heavy packages you must lighten its load.

The mitzvah of shiluach hakian, to send the mother bird away from the nest before taking the eggs. God gives us a great reward for this mitzvah. He tells us that we will have a long life.

A person who owns a house has an obligation to put a fence around his roof or high porch so that no one will

accidentally fall from it and get injured.

A Jew may not wear shatnez, linen and wool sewn together in the same garment.

The mitzvah of tzitzit. A four cornered garment needs to have tzitzit strings tied on the corners.

A Jew may not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

Remember the terrible thing that Amalek did to the Jewish people when they were leaving

A Jew may not graft or plant two different types of food together.

A Jew may not lend money to another Jew with interest.

The mitzvah to remember the sin of Miriam, who spoke negatively about her brother Moshe and received tzaras, a type of leprosy, as a punishment. When we remember this we will be careful not to speak loшон hara, negative speech about another person, even if it is true.

Remember the terrible thing that Amalek did to the Jews when they were leaving Egypt. Amalek was the first nation who dared to try to fight the Jewish people after we left Egypt. For this terrible sin we have a mitzvah to remember their deed and to destroy them.

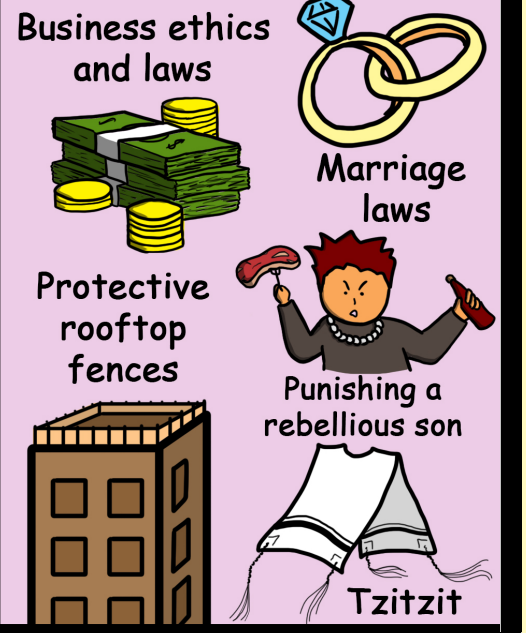
A first-born son is called a bechor. When a man dies, the bichor receives a double inheritance from his father's

estate.

A son who is very rebellious is called a ben sorer umoreh. In order to qualify as a ben sorer umoreh, the son must steal money from his parents and use it to buy meat and wine. The punishment for him is death. The reason he has such a severe punishment is because we are afraid that, in the future, he will kill people while trying to steal in order to pay for the things he desires.

TORAH COMICS

Seventy-four of the 613 mitzvot are given.



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Rocks on the Road

That you should not bring blood upon your house (22:8)

A farmer was once clearing his field of rocks to prepare it for plowing. He cast the rocks out onto the road, scattering them all about, instead of placing them in a pile, so that people might not trip over them.

A good man happened to be passing by. This inconsiderate act irked him and he remarked, "What are you doing? Why are you removing rocks from property that does not belong to you and placing them on property that does belong to you?"

The farmer burst into laughter. What a joke! "Did you hear what you just said?" he asked the man. "You must have meant that I am casting out rocks

from my own property onto property that is not mine, the public road."

The good man shrugged his shoulders and walked on.

Time passed, and the owner of the field became impoverished. He fell deeply into debt and was forced to sell all his belongings.

Once, he happened to be walking along a public road, when he tumbled over some rocks, fell and bruised himself badly. Moaning and groaning, he felt himself all over to determine the extent of his injuries. How he ached! Looking about him, he suddenly recognized the spot; it was familiar. The field to the side of the road had once belonged to him! The rocks over which he had stumbled were the very ones

that he had cast out from his field many years ago . . .

That strange remark from the past leaped to mind. He recalled what the passerby had said, that he was throwing rocks from property that did not belong to him to property that was his. Now he understood the statement perfectly; he had been scattering rocks from a field which would not always be his to a public road which he would always be free to use, which belonged to everyone. He had been indifferent and careless, then, and that careless act had brought him pain and injury. Now, alas, he understood and regretted his thoughtlessness.

(Adapted from Tractate Bava Kamma 50b)

TALES OF TZADIKIM

The Dance in the Snow

You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey (22:10)

The Chasam Sofer told the following story about his teacher, R' Nasan Adler:

It was almost nightfall when a delegation of distraught Jews reached R' Nasan's door.

"We come from the Jewish community of Adenwald," they managed to gasp. "An edict of banishment has just been passed against us; all Jews are to leave the city shortly, abandoning homes and businesses. Rebbe, only you can save us. Only you have influence upon the Baron of Delburg, who deeply respects and admires you. Adenwald lies in his domain. If you intercede for us, the Baron will surely put pressure on the city council to abolish the decree. Please, Rebbe, time is of the essence; every minute counts!"

As soon as Shabbos was over, R' Nasan ordered his carriage prepared. Since he had no horses of his own, he

wished to rent a pair from the local stables. No one, however, was willing to rent out horses for such a long distance, what with the wintry frosts and high snow drifts.

R' Nasan would have gone in an open sleigh, disregarding the risk to his own health. "I cannot possibly postpone my trip, even until morning," he said. "Lives are at stake. I would be transgressing the commandment of 'Do not stand by, while your brother is in danger.' Besides, if the opportunity to do a mitzvah arises, one should not postpone it, but leap to do it with alacrity." There was no dissuading R' Nasan; he had made up his mind.

R' Moshe, the Chasam Sofer-to-be, could not bear to see his Rebbe set forth on such a perilous journey. He scoured the city for a closed carriage, to at least minimize his teacher's exposure to the harsh winds and freezing temperatures. He paid dearly for its hire, but was gratified when R' Nasan agreed to use it and to allow R' Moshe

to accompany him in this life-saving mission. Later in life, R' Moshe was to be very thankful, for he learned to really appreciate his teacher's sublime greatness, then.

Throughout the journey, R' Nasan continued to learn from memory, since the dark night rendered any written text useless. He said the words of the Rishonim and Acharonim, almost as if he were actually reading them!

Suddenly, with a lurch, the wagon sank into a deep snowdrift. The horses strained to extricate it, but it was beyond their strength.

R' Moshe turned to the driver and said, "Perhaps you can unhitch one of the horses and ride to the nearest farm, to fetch some fresh horses and help us free the wagon." When R' Moshe suggested a goodly sum as an inducement, the driver agreed and was soon on his way.

The two men sat in the wagon for a full three hours until their driver re-

PARSHA STORIES

turned, leading two strong oxen.

The driver was about to hitch the two oxen to the wagon alongside the two horses when R' Nasan jumped

out, losing his boots in the process, and began dancing up and down in the snow in his stockinged feet.

R' Moshe, in his concern, jumped out of the wagon, as well, and tried to pull R' Nasan back in before he caught pneumonia, but R' Nasan fought him off with all his strength.

"Look there! Can't you see what he's doing?" asked R' Nasan.

R' Moshe suddenly understood. He called out to the driver, "Johann! You cannot tie the oxen together with the horses. Our religion forbids it. Take them back to the village and bring us a pair of horses!" Expecting a heated argument, he thrust a fistful of money at him and Johann readily consented.

Off went Johann with the oxen and R' Nasan and his pupil reentered the coach to again await his return. It was

then that R' Moshe learned the cause of his Rebbe's rejoicing and dancing.

"From the day I was born," said R' Nasan, "I never had the chance to fulfill this particular commandment, that is, to avoid harnessing an ox together with a horse. And, now, think of all the arguments that were proposed to dissuade us from this trip. How glad I am that disregarded them all. For the mitzvah of saving lives led to this other wonderful mitzvah. Does this not give cause to sing and dance?"

TALES OF TZADIKIM

About Face to Radin

In the same day shall you give him his wages (24:15)

The day when the Chafetz Chaim had to take the long trip to Warsaw was a day of snow.

As he put on his fur-lined overcoat, it caught on the table's edge and tore. The rebbetzin, quickly, sent the coat to the local tailor with one of the children and asked that he make the repair at once, since the Chafetz Chaim needed it immediately; he had a train to catch, shortly.

The child soon returned with the coat mended. The Chafetz Chaim put it on, wound a warm scarf around his neck and was ready to go. A carriage was summoned, everyone wished him a safe trip and saw him off.

The driver picked his way along the country roads that led out of the village of Radin and to the closest train station in a nearby town. The horses plowed through snow-filled roads until, after some time, the railway station

loomed up ahead.

"We made very good time, despite the difficult roads," said the driver, congratulating himself aloud. "You still have plenty of time to catch the train to Warsaw."

He jumped down to help the elderly man out, when, suddenly, the Chafetz Chaim cried out, "Oh, I forgot! We must turn around and go back to Radin. I forgot something important."

"What did you forget? Perhaps I can take care of it for you? If we return now, you will miss your train! Is it really so important?"

"Yes!" the Chafetz Chaim nodded emphatically. "I forgot to pay the tailor who repaired my coat. I must pay him before the sun sets. The Torah commands us to pay a day laborer on the very day that he worked for you. I must not put this off."

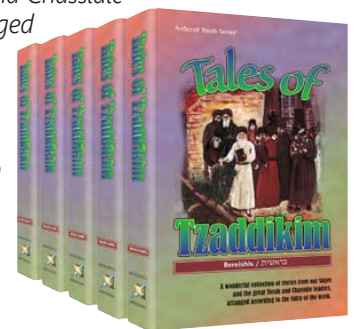
"But that is certainly something that I can do for you! Give me the money and make me your proxy, your shali-

ach. I promise to go and pay him right away."

But no! The Chafetz Chaim would not hear of it. He was determined to take care of that pressing matter at once. His trip to Warsaw could wait, but not his payment to the tailor who had mended his coat that day and had not yet received recompense. The commandment was, "On his day shall you give him his pay." This was the most important thing at the time and must not be postponed.

And so the carriage headed back to Radin with its passenger still within.

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. What must one put on a roof that people might walk on?
2. What should you do if you see an animal carrying a load that is too heavy for it?
3. What sin can we learn from this?
4. On what type of garment is one required to add tzitzit strings?
5. Which two materials can one not mix in clothing?
6. What mitzvah can one do with a bird's nest?
7. What must you always remember

about the nation of Amalek?

8. What are you not allowed to do if you find something that belongs to another Jew?

MEDIUM Qs

9. What is Loshon Harah?
10. Which 3 mixtures are prohibited?
11. What two events are we required to remember?
12. What may a Jew not do when lending to another Jew?

HARD Qs

13. What is the punishment for a ben sorer umoreh?
14. What is the first-born son called?
15. Why is the punishment so severe?

PARSHA STORIES

TALES OF TZADIKIM

One Sin Is Bad Enough

And you shall avoid every evil thing (23:10)

When the Lubavitcher Rebbe, R' Shalom Ber, was a youngster of four, he happened to be present when a tailor delivered a dress for the rebbetzin. While his mother was inspecting her dress, the little boy went over to the tailor and pulled out a large swatch of material from the man's pocket, identical to the fabric of the dress.

The child held it up. The tailor turned brick-red in embarrassment as he

stammered his apologies, "Emmm, ahhh, I forgot all about this remnant of material which, rightfully, belongs to you."

After the tailor left the house, the boy's mother rebuked him. "Why did you embarrass the tailor?" The lad burst into tears.

Some time later, he crept into his father's study and asked the Rebbe, "How does one do teshuvah for having embarrassed someone?"

The Rebbe's curiosity was aroused. "Why do you want to know?" he asked

the child.

"I just want to know . . ."

When the rebbetzin later found out that her son had spoken to the Rebbe, she asked him, "Why didn't you tell Tante what happened?"

"What?" he asked. "And be guilty of both evil gossip and ruining someone's reputation, in addition to shaming him?"

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. a Y T is a W captured in W, which the Torah sometimes lets a Jew M
2. a B S U is a S over 13 Y O who S from his P and B M and W
3. a F B S gets a D portion in his I when his F dies
4. if you F a L O belonging to a J, there is a M to R it
5. if you F B in your F, you must L them for the P
6. a M cannot W the C of a W, and a W cannot W the C of a M
7. it is a M to S away the mother B before taking her E or C
8. you must B a F on your R, so no one will F off
9. you cannot M 2 different P or A, or wear W and L mixed together
10. when L M to another J, you cannot C him I
11. if a M D his W, he cannot M her again, once she M another man
12. when B D gives someone L, they cannot W him more than 39 times
13. it is a M to D the N of A

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PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7

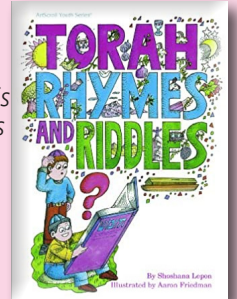
1. Please do not ignore us
For we have run away
Return us to our master
So we won't go astray

2. I have fallen on the road
Weighed down by my heavy load.
Help me if you're passing by,
Do not turn away your eye.
A fellow -----
3. Men may not wear women's clothes
This is Hashem's command.

- And a woman also may not use
The clothing of a ___
4. Do not be so very quick
To take an egg or tiny chick.
Then take my young ones and be
blessed. The -----
 5. Don't tie us side by side to plow.
This Hashem does not allow.
An __ and a -----
 6. You were coming out of Egypt,
Exhausted, weary men
But we attacked you anyway
We did not fear Hashem

You must wipe out our memory
We're bad make no mistake
Do not forget what we have done.
Our name is -----

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PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Long-Lost Brush

"You shall surely return them to your brother." (Devarim 22:1)

R'Yosef Yoizel Hurwitz, known as the Alter of Novaradok, once stayed at an inn where a man from Moscow happened to be a guest at the same time. On erev Shabbos, R' Yosef Yoizel asked that man if he could borrow a brush with which to clean his clothes in honor of the Shabbos. Before he had the chance to return the brush, the man from Moscow had already left for shul.

On Motza'ei Shabbos, when R' Yosef Yoizel returned to the inn after shul, he was told that the other man had already departed. The brush remained in R' Yosef Yoizel's possession. He was very distressed about this, and was always trying to figure out ways to locate its owner.

Seven years later, R' Yosef Yoizel was traveling on a train when he fell into conversation with a fellow passenger.

"Where are you from?" R' Yosef Yoizel

asked.

"I am from Moscow," the other man replied.

R' Yosef Yoizel mentioned the name of the brush's owner and asked if his fellow passenger knew him. It turned out that the two men lived in the same neighborhood! R' Yosef Yoizel rejoiced greatly — and gave the man the brush so that it might be restored to its rightful owner.

Once, when visiting the Beis HaTalmud in Kelm, a man accidentally left behind his walking stick. Thirteen years later he returned for another visit — to find the stick hanging in the exact spot where he had left it all those years before!

Similarly, a man once placed a coin on a windowsill in the Beis HaTalmud. The coin remained in the same spot for many years. No one moved it an inch!

A red handkerchief belonging to R' Eliezer Shulevitz was once mistakenly exchanged for a similar hand-

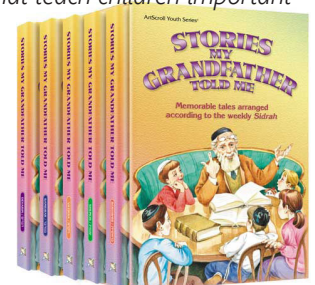
kerchief that belonged to R' Naftali Zilberberg of Warsaw. R' Eliezer intended to return R' Naftali's handkerchief to him, but World War I broke out unexpectedly and he was unable to do so.

When he left Poland, R' Eliezer took the handkerchief with him. He kept it through all his wanderings during the years of the war.

Seven years later, when he at last returned to Poland, he brought along the handkerchief — and sent it at once to R' Naftali in Warsaw.

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life

lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

R'Meir Michel Rabinowitz, the Rav of Shat and author of the HaMeir LaOlam, once stayed in the city of Liboi. One day, he was seen standing in his room vigorously shaking out an old sefer Tehillim and a tallis katan.

Twenty years earlier, during a fire in his town, the Tehillim and tallis katan were found in the street with no sign of their owner. The finder handed them to R' Meir Michel, the town's Rav, to keep until the owner came to claim them.

According to Jewish law, a sefer or article of clothing that is found must be shaken out every thirty days. R' Meir Michel had brought the things with him to Liboi in order to shake them out, as his visit there fell on the thirtieth day.

TORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Even for a Year

"You shall keep what emerges from your lips and do [it]" (Devarim 23:24)

As a young man, some time after his engagement, R' Isser Zalman Meltzer fell ill with tuberculosis. His life was in danger. He was forced to leave yeshivah and return to his parents' home in the city of Mir.

A fire broke out in Mir and many houses were consumed. R' Isser Zalman had to leave his home. Some compassionate people rented a room for him in a farmer's house in the woodlands outside Mir, and made sure that he had milk to drink every day.

The fresh air of the woods was healthful, as was the milk he drank daily. His illness, which had been growing worse until then, began to stabilize. His relative, R' Yom Tov Lipman HaCohen Boslavski, the Rav of Mir, sent Mirrer Yeshivah boys to visit R' Isser Zalman. They spoke words of encouragement and discussed Torah with him.

When the young chasan realized how serious his illness was, it went against his conscience to ask his kallah to remain engaged to him. He wrote to her family, informing them of his condition and making it clear that they were free to break off the match. If they did so, he would have no hard feelings against them.

When the girl's family received the letter, they wrote back at once asking him to rent a wagon and come to stay with them in Kovno, a city that boasted renowned doctors. Maybe these doctors would be able to find a cure for his serious and dangerous illness.

After examining him, the doctors ordered complete rest and various medical treatments for R' Isser Zalman. The kallah's family, the Franks, sent him, at their own expense, to a health spa in the forest. At the same time, they began to try to persuade the kallah, Baila Hinda, to break off the shidduch. But Baila Hinda was a wise young woman who had inherited her father's love of Torah and respect for Torah scholars. She refused to break the engagement.

The pressure increased. The family tried in every way they could to impress upon Baila Hinda that they thought she was making a grave mistake. Finally, she went to the doctor and asked him about her chasan's prospects for recovery.

"In light of his condition," the doctor replied, "he won't live more than a year."

"To live with such a talmid chacham — a man of such fine character who is already among the top students in the Volozhin Yeshivah — is a special privilege, even if only for a year," Baila Hinda thought to herself. "I will not

break off the match. Besides, with my devoted care he will live, please G-d, for many years!"

As her family continued to pressure her to break the engagement, Baila Hinda went to see the Chofetz Chaim to ask his advice.

"What do the doctors say?" he asked.

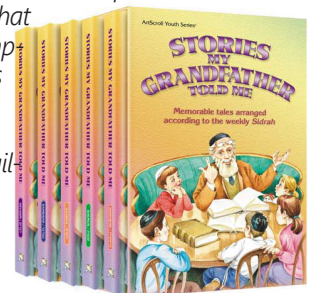
"They tell me he can live only another year, at most," she answered.

The Chofetz Chaim thought a moment, then said, "There are healthy people, and there are people who live long lives."

Hearing this answer from the holy tzaddik and Torah leader, Baila Hinda returned home more resolved than ever to marry R' Isser Zalman despite her family's objections.

True to the Chofetz Chaim's prediction, R' Isser Zalman went on to live for many long years. He passed from this world in Jerusalem in the year 5714 (1954), at the age of 84.

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Rivka Ravitz

born in 1976

Rivka Ravitz is an Israeli Haredi political administrator. Since 1999, she has worked for Israeli politician Reuven Rivlin, first as his bureau chief and campaign adviser, and, since his election as President of Israel in 2014, as his chief of staff. She has received extensive media coverage for being a Haredi mother of 12 in a high-profile political position.

She was born in Israel in 1976 to American immigrant parents. She is the second of 10 siblings. She attended the Beis Yaakov school system for elementary and high school, graduating with an English teaching certificate.

Later, after several years of working for Reuven Rivlin in the Knesset, she pursued a degree in management and computer science at the Open University of Israel. She then earned an MBA at that institution, and, as of 2017, is working on a PhD in public policy at the University of Haifa.

After marrying at age 18, Ravitz began working part-time as a teacher.

However, the pay was low – 700 shekels per month – so when her father-in-law, Rabbi Avraham Ravitz, head of the Knesset Finance Committee, needed a parliamentary assistant, she applied for the job. Three years later, she was forced to leave Ravitz's employ due to a new law prohibiting government officials from hiring family members. She then began working as a parliamentary assistant to Reuven Rivlin, another member of the Finance Committee, at a salary of 4,500 shekels per month. She went on to serve as his bureau chief, and managed many of his campaigns, including his successful campaigns for Speaker of the Knesset in 2003 and 2009, and his election as President of Israel in 2014, whereupon she became his chief of staff.

Ravitz considers her high-profile position an opportunity to display her religious commitment and make a Kidush Hashem (sanctification of God's name). She wears modest clothing, and covers her hair with a wig. She does not fraternize with male colleagues or participate in "staff-consolidation days",

and refrains from shaking hands when greeting men, in keeping with halakha. During Rivlin's 2015 visit to the Vatican, a photograph showing Pope Francis bowing to Ravitz while she remained erect led to media reports that the Haredi woman had refused to bow in greeting because Francis was wearing a cross. Later news reports clarified that Ravitz had bowed to Francis first, in lieu of shaking hands, and he had responded with his own bow, having been informed beforehand of her religious sensitivities. In 2023, she clarified the story, saying the ambassador had forgotten to tell the Pope's office that she would not be able to shake hands and bow beforehand and indeed, when she was forced to explain this herself to the pope, despite it being a high profile visit, the Pope had bowed to her in respect of her religious resilience.

During Rivlin's visit to the United States towards the end of his term, President Biden knelt before Ravitz upon hearing that she is a mother of 12 children.

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. a YIFAS TO'AR is a WOMAN captured in WAR, which the Torah sometimes lets a Jew MARRY
2. a BEN SORER U'MOREH is a SON over 13 YEARS OLD who STEALS from his PARENTS and BUYS MEAT and WINE
3. a FIRST BORN SON gets a DOUBLE portion in his INHERITANCE when his FATHER dies
4. if you FIND a LOST OBJECT belonging to a JEW, there is a MITZVAH to RETURN it
5. if you FORGET BUNDLES in your FIELD, you must LEAVE them for the POOR
6. a MAN cannot WEAR the CLOTHING of a WOMAN, and a WOMAN cannot WEAR the CLOTHING of a MAN
7. it is a MITZVAH to SEND away the mother BIRD before taking her EGGS or CHILDREN
8. you must BUILD a FENCE on your ROOF, so no one will FALL off
9. you cannot MIX 2 different PLANTS or ANIMALS, or wear WOOL and LINEN mixed together
10. when LENDING MONEY to another JEW,

- you cannot CHARGE him INTEREST
11. if a MAN DIVORCES his WIFE, he cannot MARRY her again, once she MARRIES another man
12. when BAIS DIN gives someone LASHES, they cannot WHIP him more than 39 times
13. it is a MITZVAH to DESTROY the NATION of AMALEK

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. A fence
2. Help unload the animal
3. It is prohibited to cause pain to animals
4. On one with four corners.
5. wool and linen
6. He or she can send the mother bird before taking the baby birds or the eggs]
7. How they attacked us after we left Egypt]
8. You are not allowed to keep it for yourself. You must return it to its owner]

9. Talking negatively about others even if it is true
10. Wool and linen in clothing, plowing with two different animals, planting two foods together
11. Amalek attacking the Jewish people when we left Egypt and Miriam speaking negatively about her brother
12. Charge interest
13. A rebellious son who steals money from his parents to buy meat and wine
14. the bichor]
15. We are afraid his bad habits will lead to him killing people to satisfy his desires]

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Lost animals.
2. (A fellow) Jew's donkey.
3. Man.
4. The mother bird.
5. An ox and a donkey.
6. Amalek.

PARSHA RIDDLE

The reward for the mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan, to send the mother bird away from the nest before taking the eggs, is a long life. What other mitzvah also has a reward of a long life? How many times is one string of the tzitzit wrapped around the others? Why does this number represent?

HALACHA OF THE WEEK

Shaatznez

It is forbidden to wear an article of clothing, like a shirt, suit or sweater that is made of a mixture of wool and linen. This mixture is called shaatznez. Even if there is one thread of linen in a wool garment or one thread of wool in a linen garment, one cannot wear those clothes. Sometimes, even if the wool and linen are

in two separate garments they cannot be worn together. If the lower garment cannot be removed without removing the upper one, (like a tight wool sweater on top of a linen shirt), they cannot be worn together.

FOCUS OF THE MONTH

Teshuva

Discussion Questions

1. How can we motivate ourselves to do teshuva?
2. What are some of the benefits of doing teshuva?

3. Why do we have to listen to God in the first place?

LEADER TIP:

Discuss with the children how everything we have in our lives comes from God. Our health, family and community are all gifts from Him. If we think about how much thanks we owe Him, we will feel bad about our sins, and want to do teshuva. When we do teshuva, we grow closer to God and can start to repay the tremendous debt of gratitude we owe to Him. Use this story to illustrate that everything we have is a gift from God.

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