

Ki Tavo Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

The Jewish people were commanded that when they enter into the Land of Israel, they should bring the first fruits of their crops to the Temple in Jerusalem and give it to the cohen. The farmers would mark the first fruits with a red string so they would later know which fruits to bring. The mitzvah applies to the seven special foods that the land of Israel is praised for, wheat, barley, pomegranate, figs, grapes, olives and dates. The farmers would put the fruits in fancy baskets and carry them on oxen that would be decorated with gold and silver. There was a great celebration when they reached Jerusalem. The farmers of Jerusalem would come out to greet them and play music. The Levites would accompany them all the way to the Temple and sing Psalms along the way.

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Moshe, again, advised the Jewish people about how important it was to keep all the mitzvot in the Torah. To remind them of this, he commanded them that when they enter into the Land of Israel they should take large stones and carve the whole Torah onto them. Additionally, he told them to go to a place in Israel where there were two special mountains. The names of these mountains were Har Grizim and Har Eivel. Six tribes would stand on one mountain and six would stand on the other mountain. The tribe of Levi would stand with the Holy Ark in the middle. They declared that all the

people who kept the Torah would be blessed. All the people answered "Amen." They were then warned that all the people who did not keep the Torah would be cursed. To this, too, the people responded, "Amen."

Moshe described to the people how great their lives would be if they keep the Torah. They will have peace in their land and they would all be healthy and strong. They will have rain

when they need it and their crops will grow well. They will have many animals to do all their work for them. However, if they do not keep the Torah, there will be lots of wars and their enemies will defeat them. There will be a lot of sickness and many people will die. They will be very poor and their animals will die. Their fields will not grow food.

The parsha concludes by Moshe describing all the miracles that God did for the Jewish people. For this they owe God much thanks, and there is no better way to say thank you than to keep all the mitzvot of His Torah.

TORAH COMICS

Give your first fruits to the Kohanim to show gratitude.



Excerpt from ANDiDREW Torah Comics. Get the book or draw your own at TorahComics.com

Once Upon a Donkey

May Hashem open up for you His good treasure, the heaven, to give the rain of your land in its season (28:12)

The earth was parched. The people of Eretz Yisrael looked longingly for the winter rains.

But, day after day, there was not a single cloud in the sky. It was already mid-winter by the calendar, yet not a drop of rain had fallen.

There was fear that the coming year would bring famine.

Then, one night it was revealed to the Sages in a dream that, if a certain donkey-driver was to pray for his people — Hashem would heed his cry and send rain.

The following morning, the Sages met and sent for him. He came and stood before them, a simple and humble man who earned his living by transporting goods or, occasionally, people, on his donkeys.

"How do you earn your bread?" they

asked. He told them what he did.

"Tell us," they inquired further, "have you ever done any especially worthy deed?"

He bowed his head in simple modesty and after a moment's hesitation, said, "Perhaps, yes. Some time ago, a woman came to me, asking that I transport her to a certain city. She was bent over and had covered her face with a handkerchief. I guessed that she had been weeping. 'Is anything wrong?' I asked her. At first, she was reluctant to speak to a stranger, but upon my insistence, she said that her husband had been imprisoned by the Romans for not paying his taxes. He would languish in jail, perhaps, even die from the ill treatment, if she did not help him. That is why she wished to go to the city; she might find help there.

"I felt very sorry for her. But how could I help her? I did not possess such a large sum myself. I lived by what I earned, day by day. But, suddenly, an

idea struck me. I owned several donkeys, one of which was an excellent pack animal and worth a lot of money. An acquaintance of mine had long had his eye on the beast and had offered me a huge sum for it. I told the woman to wait until I returned. I sold the donkey and brought her the money. She was overjoyed, to be sure, for this was enough to free her husband."

He fell silent, having concluded his story. Is this what they had wanted to hear? he looked at them questioningly. The Sages said, "Truly that is a worthy deed! We want you to pray for rain, for it has been revealed to us that your prayers will be answered."

The donkey-driver began praying and lo! The heavens opened up and blessed rains fell on the earth, quenching the parched fields and filling the water cisterns with enough water for a long time to come.

(Adapted from Yerushalmi Taanis, Perek 1, Halachah 4)

Two Brothers and Two Sons

And nations shall walk by your light and kings by the brilliance of your rising (Haftorah Parashas Ki Savo, Yeshaya 60:3)

The entire district hailed the joyous event. A son had been born to the local landowner, Count Czertorinaski. Even the Jews were genuinely happy at the good news, for the Count was well liked by all. Unlike his friends and peers of the aristocracy, who despised, degraded and took advantage of their Jewish tenants, the Count respected his Jewish tenants, hired Jewish managers for all of his estates and gave Jewish lumber merchants franchises to cut down trees in his forests. He even sought the financial advice of these Jewish merchants, befriending many of them and treating them on an al-

most equal basis.

There was a special joy, for the Count had been childless for many years.

All of the nobility was invited to share his happiness in a lavish feast which he held. The guests drank to his good fortune. The Count basked in the blessings and cheers of his friends. At one point, when the good wine had raised the spirits of all assembled, he was heard to remark, "I have a Jew to thank for my good fortune, you know. My son was born because of the blessing of a Jewish saint."

A pall seemed to fall upon the visitors at this pronouncement. The guests resented their host's high regard for Jews. The fact that he attributed the birth of his son to a Jew was more than

they could bear!

"How did you discover such a Jewish treasure?" one nobleman asked in a jeering tone.

The Count replied in all innocence, "Many of my Jewish tenants have long praised the powers of the saintly rabbi of Koznitz. They claim that he is a wonderworker and cite examples of the miracles he has wrought."

"Old wives' tales!" scoffed another, interrupting the Count. But the latter held up his hand for attention and continued, "Then let me tell an authentic tale, for which I myself can vouch. It happened several years ago during the war between France and Prussia. A Prussian general was encamped with his division in a field near

PARSHA STORIES

Koznitz, which is in my district. When he learned that a holy man lived nearby, he summoned him in order to consult with him on military strategy. His messenger returned without the rabbi, but with an apology. Being old and feeble, the rabbi said, he was unable to leave his home, but he would welcome the general if he deigned to visit him.

"The general felt that he was being put off and was incensed. He sent his aide with a second message. If the rabbi did not come at once, he threatened to accuse him of treason and would try him and several other important Jews. There was no need to add that the outcome of any such a trial was already a foregone conclusion. The sentence would be carried out immediately.

"The aide returned some time later, again without the rabbi. He bore a letter which the general snatched, ripped open and read angrily. As he read, however, his expression changed from anger to astonishment. The contents were as follows: 'The traitors are not we, the Jews, but one of your own generals.' (He spelled out the name of a high-ranking officer.)

"This general, it was soon learned, had collaborated with the enemy. He had written out a report detailing military secrets and sent it to the French. At the same time, he sent a letter with instructions to his own forces at the front. By an act of Providence, these letters were interchanged, so that the information intended for the French reached Prussian hands. When the

general discovered his fatal error, he hanged himself that very same day."

"I gather that it was this same rabbi in Koznitz who blessed you with your son," a guest remarked skeptically.

"Oh no! He sent me to a different one, to Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak Horowitz of Lublin. His Jewish followers call him the 'Chozeh' or Seer of Lublin. He is the one who blessed me."

"Some more of your fairy tales!" a voice rang out. It was the Count's younger brother who had aspired to the title and fortune of his older brother. The birth of an heir had dealt him a terrible blow. "I'll show you what kind of a miracle-worker that rabbi is. I must travel to Lublin next week on business. I intend to visit that rabbi and ask him for a blessing which makes absolutely no sense. We will see what happens."

"You are free to do as you like. I cannot stop you. But I must warn you not to play with fire. Do not do anything that you may regret."

Some time later the young nobleman went to visit the Chozeh. He was shown in. Pulling a long face, he pretended a tale of woe, "You must help me, Rabbi. My only son is critically ill; his doctors have lost all hope for his life. My brother, Count Czertorinaski, told me to come to you, for only you could help me now. Please, pray for my ailing son. Save me!"

The Chozeh seemed sunken in thought. Soon he looked up and said, "I see that your son is truly very ill. But

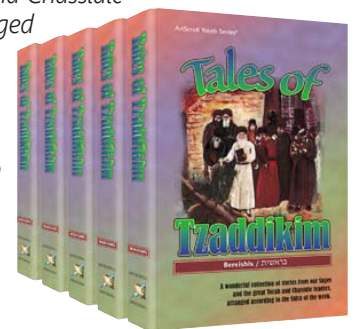
it is not in my power to help you. Go home at once. Perhaps, you will still be able to see him alive before he dies."

The young aristocrat sighed deeply and left the room. What a wonderful story this would make for his friends. He would show his brother! Not only had the rabbi believed him, he had even admitted his helplessness. Now who would put stock in Jewish rabbis? His brother would be ridiculed by one and all.

In excellent spirits, he spent the rest of the day in drinking houses, laughing among friends. He did not return home until the following day. But, then, a terrible shock awaited him.

His only son, a sturdy lad whom he had left in excellent health, lay dead. He had died the previous afternoon. Had the Count's brother rushed home, as the Chozeh had warned, he would have been in time to see his son alive. The young Count tore his hair in his sorrow, but there was nothing he could do. And, then, he remembered his brother's words of caution, "Do not do anything that you may regret." Oh, how he regretted it.

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 did the Jewish people do with the first fruits of their crops?
2. What are these fruits called?
3. When the Jews came into the Land of Israel they had to set up stones. What was written on them?
4. How many tribes stood on Har Grizim and how many on Har Eivel?
5. Who stood in the middle?
6. What did the tribe of Levi say?
7. What will happen to the Jewish people if they keep the Torah?
8. What will happen if The Jewish people do not keep the Torah?
9. What should the Jews remember to remind them to follow Hashem?
10. What are the seven special fruits that the Land of Israel is praised for?

MEDIUM Qs

11. In how many languages was the Torah written?

12. What is one reason that Moshe tells the Jewish people to always follow the Torah?

HARD Qs

13. How did the farmers mark which was the first fruit?
14. When must the Bikurim be brought?
15. When else during the year is this paragraph of Vidoy said?
16. What is this Vidoy about?
17. Where else do we find the concept of Vidoy?
18. Which mountain, Har Gerizim or Har Eval, represents blessings, and which represents curses?
19. Which tribes will stand on Har Gerizim?
20. Which tribes will stand of Har Eval?
21. Which two nations did the Jewish people defeat and take their lands?
22. What happened to the clothing of the Jewish people in the dessert?
23. What is the final things Moshe lists as a punishment?

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. B are the F F brought to Y and it was eaten by a K
2. Every 3 Y's, we say V M, telling H how we kept all the L's of T and M
3. M set up 12 S's and W the T on them in 70 L's
4. When entering E Y, B Y stood on H G and H E and A'ed A when they heard the 11 B's and C's.
5. The T C's someone who speaks L H about another J
6. B Y will R over the other N's if they K the M's.
7. The T is a list of the P's that B Y will get, if they don't F the T.
8. E's will D B Y, and there will be F in the L
9. M R'ed B Y how their C's grew with them in the M, and never wore out
10. The S of R, G, and 1/2 of M, got their L on the other side of the Y

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DISCUSSION Qs

24. Why are the tribes split up the way they are? Is there significance to it?
25. What is the significance of doing this ceremony near Shechem?
26. What is the significance of this final punishment, that the people will return to Egypt?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7

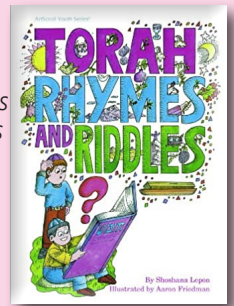
1. We six stand for the blessing
On top of Mt. Gerizim:
Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar,
Yosef and _____
2. Standing for the curse on Mt. Eval
We six it shall be: Reuvain, Gad,
Asher, Zevulun, Dan and _____
3. Said Moshe: "Listen to Hashem;

It will be for the best.
Your enemies shall run away
And your land shall be blessed.
Keep all the commandments,
For then you cannot fail.
Hashem will put you at the head
And never at the _____

4. The people will repeat this word
Every time again.
They'll hear the Levites speak a

course And they shall say _____

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PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

No Effort Spared

"Hashem will confirm you for Himself as a holy people" (Devarim 28:9)

A great fire broke out in Radin in the year 5687 (1927). Nearly every house was burned to the ground. The fire was finally stopped very near the Chofetz Chaim's home and the yeshivah buildings, which survived along with about twenty other houses farther up the street.

Most of the townspeople lost everything. The situation was terrible. The Chofetz Chaim stopped learning and threw himself into the task of helping the victims of the fire. First of all, he secured a loan to help them survive the first few weeks after the inferno. Then he picked up his stick and began to make the rounds of all the large cities nearby: Vilna, Kovno, Minsk, and others. He succeeded in collecting large sums of money for the victims of Radin's fire. In addition, he wrote hundreds of letters asking for help, which he sent to all the Jewish communities in the world.

Everyone who received the Chofetz Chaim's request for help responded generously. Some 10,000 rubles were collected, in addition to clothing, food, and other necessities. He also turned

to the government for assistance, basing his request on a special law that had been in effect since the days of Czar Nikolai the First. About a year later, he received 25,000 rubles from this source, which he divided among the fire's victims.

Aiding R' Yisrael Meir in his campaign were his entire household and all the city's other Rabbis. In an amazingly short period of time, the city was rebuilt and its citizens restored to their homes.

Not long afterwards, another fire broke out in the city. This time, it was the twenty homes that had been spared in the first blaze — including that of the Chofetz Chaim — that were burned to the ground. The Chofetz Chaim's concern for himself and his family who were left homeless did not deter him from caring about the other victims. He persuaded the victims of the first fire to separate one-tenth of the government money that they had received, and use it to help the victims of the second fire. In this way, the Chofetz Chaim made it possible for the new victims, too, to rebuild the homes they had lost in the flames.

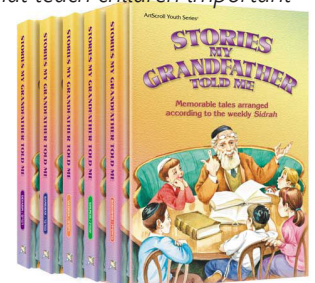
Word of the Chofetz Chaim's remark-

able efforts on behalf of all the victims spread throughout the countryside. Everyone spoke of his love for his fellow man and the good he did for others. Even the non-Jews of Radin who had lost their homes in the fire, and who had received money from the government thanks to the Chofetz Chaim's efforts, were lavish in their praise of him. As a sign of their appreciation, some of them offered to let him use their land for free to plant his crops. They also offered to give R' Yisrael Meir and his family a public parcel of land on which to build a new home.

The treasury minister who brought the government money to Radin to help the victims of the fire also expressed his admiration for R' Yisrael

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

Meir, who had struggled valiantly to help others even while he himself was

in distress. His own difficult personal situation did not deter him for a single

moment from reaching out a helping hand to his fellow townsmen.

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Short Shabbos Meal

"Accursed is one who perverts a judgment of a convert, orphan, or widow." (Devarim 27:19)

A disciple of R' Yisrael of Salant once invited his rebbe to spend Shabbos in his home. Knowing how careful R' Yisrael Salanter was in every detail, and how reluctant he was to stay as a guest in just any home, the disciple described the way he ran his household.

He bought his meat, he said, from a G-d-fearing butcher. His cook was the widow of a Torah scholar who observed every stringency. And the Shabbos meals in his home were conducted properly, with divrei Torah said at each course and Shabbos zemiros lending an atmosphere of holiness. It was no wonder, the disciple concluded, that the Friday night meal at his home ended at a very late hour of the night.

"I accept your invitation," R' Yisrael said, "but only on the condition that you shorten the length of the Friday night meal by two hours."

Eager to host his rebbe, the disciple quickly agreed.

That Friday night, the Shabbos meal was rushed. The courses followed each other rapidly, without the usual lengthy break in between. It was not so very long after they had washed their hands for the meal that the mayim acharonim was already being brought to the table.

Just before they bentched, the disci-

ple turned to R' Yisrael and said, "Forgive me, Rebbe, but I must ask a question. What fault did the Rebbe find in the way I conduct my Shabbos table, that led him to shorten the meal time by two hours?"

Instead of answering, R' Yisrael asked his host to invite the cook into the room. When she entered, he told her, "Please forgive me for making you tired this evening, and causing the courses to be served so quickly tonight."

To everyone's surprise, the cook exclaimed, "May the Rebbe be blessed with every blessing! If only he was a guest here every Shabbos! The meal always lasts far into the night, after a day I've spent working very hard to prepare everything. By the time the meal is over, I can hardly lift my feet from exhaustion. But tonight, because you finished the meal early, I can go home and rest!"

R' Yisrael turned to his disciple and said, "Here is the answer to your question. Indeed, the way you conduct your Shabbos table is very nice. But when it harms another person, it becomes something not so nice at all!"

R' Yisrael Salanter was very careful about the quality of his shemurah matzos for Pesach. His students undertook to do the job for him. Before setting out for the bakery, they asked, "Rebbe, to what should we pay special attention?"

"Be especially careful," R' Yisrael

replied, "not to distress the woman who kneads the dough. She is a widow, and if you pressure her while she works you will be doing the sin of lo sa'anun!"

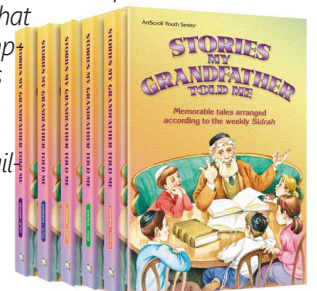
R' Yehoshua Leib (the "Maharil") Diskin used to leave the special flour for his Pesach matzos with his loyal student, R' Eliezer Dan Ralbag.

When R' Eliezer Dan passed away, the Maharil Diskin decided to send another student, R' Tzvi Michel Shapiro, to fetch the flour from R' Eliezer Dan's widow. The Maharil Diskin was afraid that she might not guard the flour properly.

R' Tzvi Michel had an objection. "It's possible that the widow will be distressed if the flour is taken away from her during the year. She may feel that her own worth has become diminished since her husband died. This has the ring of 'Do not distress a widow or an orphan!'"

R' Yehoshua Leib Diskin realized that his student was right. The flour stayed with the widow until it was time to bake the matzos for Pesach.

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Beatie Deutsch

born August 29, 1989

Bracha "Beatie" Deutsch (שטייד הכרב; née Rabin; born August 29, 1989) is a Haredi American-Israeli marathon runner. She has won the Tiberias Marathon and the Jerusalem Marathon, as well as the Israeli half-marathon and marathon national championships.

Deutsch was born in the United States, the oldest of five siblings, grew up in Passaic, New Jersey, and emigrated to Israel in 2008. Her father is a doctor. She has a master's degree in school counseling from Northeastern University ('12), as well as a black belt in taekwondo.

A Haredi woman, Deutsch lives in

Har Nof, Jerusalem, with her husband Michael, a yeshiva teacher and computer science student whom she married in 2009, and their five children. Before she put all her time into running, Deutsch worked full-time as a communication officer for an Olami international Jewish organization, which brings college students closer to religion and helps professionals get in touch with their roots by com-



ing to Israel.

Deutsch began running in 2016 at the age of 25. She runs in a long-

sleeved top, below-the-knee skirt, and head scarf, and dedicates her runs to charitable causes.

She ran her first marathon at the Tel Aviv Marathon in 2016 after taking up running only four months earlier. Deutsch finished sixth, with a time of 3:27:26.

At the 2017 Tel Aviv Marathon, while seven months pregnant, Deutsch finished with a time of 4:08:16.

Deutsch won the women's category of the Tiberias Marathon for the fourth consecutive time in December 2022 with a time of 2:41:20

In June 2021, Deutsch was included by the sports clothing manufacturer Adidas along with the Russian figure skater Alexandra Trusova, the Indian short distance runner Hima Das, the South African rugby player Siya Kolisi and the NBA star Damian Lillard, in a campaign entitled "Impossible is Nothing."

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. BIKKURIM are the FIRST FRUIT brought to YERUSHALAYIM and it was eaten by a KOHEN
2. Every 3 YEARS, we say VIDUY MA'ASER, telling HASHEM how we kept all the LAWS of TERUMAH and MA'ASER
3. MOSHE set up 12 STONES and WROTE the TORAH on them in 70 LANGUAGES
4. When entering ERETZ YISROEL, BNEI YISROEL stood on HAR GERIZIM and HAR EIVAL and ANSWERED AMEN when they heard the 11 BLESSINGS (BRACHOS) and CURSES (C'ALLOS).
5. The TORAH CURSES someone who speaks LASHON HARA about another JEW
6. BNEI YISROEL will RULE over the other NATIONS if they KEEP the MITZVOS.
7. The TOCHACHA is a list of the PUNISHMENTS that BNEI YISROEL will get, if they don't FOLLOW the TORAH.
8. ENEMIES will DESTROY BNEI YISROEL, and there will be FAMINE in the LAND
9. MOSHE REMINDED BNEI YISROEL how their CLOTHES grew with them in the MIDBAR, and never wore out
10. The SHEVET of REUVEN, GAD, and 1/2 of

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. Brought them to Jerusalem and gave them to the Cohen
2. Bikurim
3. The Torah
4. 6 tribes stood on each mountain
5. The tribe of Levi with the Holy Ark
6. The blessed the people who kept the Torah and cursed the people who do not keep the Torah
7. They will have peace, health and be successful in everything they do
8. There will be war, sickness and poverty
9. The miracles and wonders Hashem made for them since Mitzrayim
10. Wheat, barley, pomegranate, figs, grapes, olives and dates
11. 70
12. They owe God a big debt of thanks for all the miracles he performed for them
13. By tying a red string around it
14. Between Shavout and Sukkah. They can even be brought until Chanukah without the Viydou
15. On Pesach at the Seder
16. The farmer admits he did everything correctly.
17. We say it during Selichos and during Yom Kippur!
18. Har Gerizim= Blessings & Har Eval= Curses.
19. Shimon, Levi, Yehuda, Yisachar, Yosef, and Benjamin.
20. Reuven, Gad, Asher, Zevulun, Dan, and Naphtali.
21. Heshbon and Bashan
22. They didn't get worn out and they grew as the people grew
23. That the People will be shipped to Egypt as slaves and there will be no buyers.

PARSHA CODE continued...
MENASHE, got their LAND on the other side of the YARDEN

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Binyamin.
2. Naftali.
3. Tail.
4. Amen.

PARSHA GAMES

Tzedakah Toss

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: Use this to demonstrate that the only money we keep is the money that we give to tzedakah. That money will bring us eternal reward. The money we “keep” for ourselves is- here to-day gone tomorrow!.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE: A hat or small basket to be your “tzedakah box” AND A bunch of “coins” (checker pieces or bottle caps)- 5 per child.

HOW TO PLAY: Divide the children into two teams. Give each

child 5 “coins.” Place the “tzedakah box” on the floor and designate a tossing line several feet away. Have a child from each team come up to the line. Each child will have a turn to throw all their “coins” into the box. The “coins” that go in are put in the team’s bank. The ones that miss go to the player on the other team, and he/she will have a chance to throw them on their next turn. When both players have thrown, they go to the back of the line and the next player on each team comes to the throwing line. Play continues until all the money is in the banks. The team with the most “coins,” wins.

HALACHA OF THE WEEK

Rosh Hashanah Simanim

On Rosh Hashanah many people have a custom to eat special foods so that they will have a good year. Some of these include:

- 1) Apple and honey- to have a year that is sweet like honey
- 2) A pomegranate- to have a year that is filled with many merits like the many seeds of a pomegranate
- 3) Fish- so we will be fruitful and multiply like fish
- 4) A head of a fish or a lamb- so we will be on top like heads and not on the bottom like tails

When we eat these foods we say special prayers to remind us why we are eating these foods.

In addition many people have custom to eat foods whose Hebrew or Yiddish names are similar to names of things that signify a good year. For example, beets are called *selek* in Hebrew, so we pray “*sheyistalku oyveinu*” – that our enemies should be removed. This works in English as well – May we beat our enemies!

The real reason for eating these foods is not that eating foods with good names will give us a good year. Rather, when we eat these foods we will think of all these things that we need to pray to God for. For this reason, when we eat these foods we say special prayers to remind us why we are eating these foods.



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