



# Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

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15 January 2000

Issue #263

Parshat Bo

### JEW SPEAK

From: Chica Brown from San Jose State University  
<chicab@pacbell.net>

Dear Rabbi,

information on the Jewish community for a language, meaning and culture working with those in the Jewish community. How does the Jewish community communicate? Verbal, non-verbal? What language is used?

Dear Chica Brown,

Jews usually talk with their hands (just kidding). We communicate in all languages, since there are Jews all over the world. Jews speak a variety of languages, including English, Spanish, French, Arabic, German, Russian, even Chinese and Japanese. In Israel, the main language is Hebrew.

Jews in Europe and Spain developed their own language. In Europe the Jews spoke Yiddish, which is based on German, and in Spain they developed Ladino, which is based on Spanish.

**Chica Brown responds:** *Thank you so much, I gave my*

s

### BEN BAG BAG

From: Benny Leon from Zimbabwe, Africa  
<vleon@mango.zw>

Dear Rabbi,

publication each week and distribute them in the synagogue. We are a small community of about two hundred souls and we hold Shabbat services every Friday night and Saturday morning. We have the sister Ashkenazi Congregation of about 400 souls.

*I have a query and this refers to the Sayings of the Fathers, as printed in our prayer books. There is a reference to Ben Bag Bag and Ben Heh Heh. Please inform us who are these gentlemen? Thank you again for your wonderful email.*

Dear Benny Leon,

Bag. Both he and Ben Heh Heh were descendants of converts; their names were disguised to protect them from informers who would have turned them over to the Romans.  
*ben ger, ben giyoret*

and Sarah, to each of whose names G-d added the letter *Heh* Abram became Abraham, and Sarai became Sarah.

### COMMON ERROR

From: Viviane Prager <prager8@yahoo.com>

Dear Rabbi:

*much appreciate if you could help me answer their objections. Thanks for your wonderful work.*

Dear Viviane Prager,

When I was a school boy I thought that CE stood for

Now, 25 years and a number of common errors

know, so I asked your question to a professor of European

Is there a reader out there with more insight into this?  
Write to <info@ohr.org.il>

If you have E-Mail and a question, you can submit it to Ask The Rabbi for possible inclusion in a future edition. Just write your question using your E-Mail program, set the subject info@ohr.org.il

everyone.

Ask The Rabbi is written by Rabbi Moshe Lazerus, Rabbi Reuven Lauffer, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz, Rabbi Mordechai Becher and other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel. **General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman** **Production Design: Eli Ballon**

Ask The Rabbi is available from • World Wide Web: Our address is <http://www.ohrnet.org>

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# Yiddle Riddle

**Last week we asked:** In Hebrew, if you subtract 30 from 30 you get 60. How is this?

**Answer:** The numerical value of the letter *lamed* is 30 (each Hebrew letter has a numerical value). The Hebrew  
*shloshim,* *shin lamed shin yud mem*

So, if you take the letter *lamed* *shloshim*  
*shin shin yud mem* *shishim,*

## THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

*Comments, quibbles, and reactions*  
*-the-*

**hrnet Vayechi):**

of the Jews went into effect in Spain. Any Jews who chose to leave had to leave behind all of their property and estates. Of the approximately one million Jews living in Spain at the time, half left and left everything behind. Everything left behind was forfeit to the Spanish crown. The following day

Jews. (It is probably true that there were several Jews aboard fleeing Spain.) The remaining 500,000 Jews were forced to convert to Catholicism, most of whom secretly practiced Judaism. Those Jews who were not sincere in their baptisms were referred to by the Christians as

*Havah <havah@netvision.net.il>*

**Re: Words from the Heart (Ohrnet Vayechi):**

regarding the source

*Chazal*

Sages) cited in Sefer Hayashar by Rabeinu Tam,

*Gershon Sabol <gsabol5244@aol.com>*

the heart will be recognized as truth and enter the next heart.

*Rabbi Eisenman <rye613@aol.com>*

**Re: Ohr Somayach Internet Publications:**

The Ohrnet is just fantastic! I virtually wait for it to arrive in my e-mail box each week!

*J. W. from Des Moines, Iowa <jw613@aol.com>*

**Re: Hip Hip Hurras (Ohrnet Shemot):**

I liked the historically-  
and read Psalms 137 anew. I know so little.  
Great!

*Yuri A. Klimenko, Ukraine <tdtana@zfs.lg.ua>*

**Where is Yossi?**

Ohrnet received the following regarding the (h parsha cartoon series for youth:

Dear Yossi,

Are you all right? Please come back, I miss you extremely.

Your friend, Mendy

*Mendy Singer, England <bsinger@bury2.demon.co.uk>*

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