

O H R N E T

SHABBAT PARSHAT YITRO · FOR THE WEEK ENDING 22 SHVAT 5760 · JAN. 29, 2000 · VOL. 7 NO. 17

PARSHA INSIGHTS

THE SIGHT OF SOUND

*“And all the people saw the thunder (lit. the voices.)” (20:15)*

Twice a day, the Jewish People cover their eyes, meditate on the ineffable Unity of the Creator and intone, “*Shema Yisrael — Hear! O Israel, Hashem our G-d, Hashem is One!*”

The *Shema* is the basic credo of the Jew, his first declaration of G-d’s Unity and the last words to leave his mouth when he passes from this world.

Why is it that we say “*Hear! O Israel!*” Why don’t we say “*Look! O Israel!*”

When the Jewish People stood at Sinai to receive the Torah, they underwent an experience which was literally out of this world. When G-d spoke, the Torah writes that the Jewish People “saw the voices.” There was a dislocation of the natural perception of the senses. Kinesthesia. Seeing sound. What does it mean to see sound?

Sight and sound are very different. Sight operates instantaneously. We see through the medium of light. Light is the fastest thing in the universe. It travels at 186,000 miles per second. Sound is relatively slow, moving at about 800 miles an hour.

The difference between the speeds of light and sound symbolizes a fundamental difference between the two senses. With sight, we perceive a complete whole instantaneous. After this first sight, we may analyze what we are looking at in more detail, focusing on one element and then another, but the essence of vision is an instant whole.

Sound, on the other hand, is assimilated as a collage of different elements. We order these separate pieces of information, giving them substance and definition, and in the process, we understand what it is we are hearing. This process of assembly is not instantaneous. Our brain takes time to balance and evaluate what it is hearing.

When you listen to a lecture on a tape recorder, it’s amazing how much distracting ambient noise there seems to be on the tape. You think to yourself: “That’s not the way it sounded!” When you listen to a lecturer in person, you aren’t aware of the constant drone of the traffic in the background, the noise of the fans and the air-conditioner. However, when you listen to a tape, those extraneous sounds vie for your attention. The tape recorder is not the human ear. The tape recorder is an indiscriminate “vacuum cleaner” of reality. The human ear, however, takes the

elements of what is available and it “hears” — it discriminates and balances.

This world is like an assembly line. The Hebrew word for “world” is *olam* which means “hidden.” You don’t see G-d in this world. He is hidden behind the facade of the world. You can’t see G-d in this world — *but you can hear Him*. If you tune your ears carefully, you can hear an unmistakable pattern in events. If you listen carefully to the un-historical history of the Jewish People, and weigh it in the balance of probability, you will hear G-d’s Voice. If you listen to all the seemingly coincidental events in your life, you will hear Him.

The reason we say “*Hear! O Israel!*” is that, in this world, you cannot see G-d. You have to “hear” Him. You have to take the disparate, seemingly random elements of this world, and assemble them into a cogent whole.

There was only one time in history that you didn’t have to “hear” G-d’s Unity; one moment when you could actually see it. At Mount Sinai. There the Jewish People “saw” the voices. They saw with an incontrovertible clarity those things that usually need to be “heard.” Seeing is more than believing. When you see, you don’t have to believe. It’s in front of your eyes.

*In Honor of the Bar Mitzvah of*

SHLOMO WOLFSON

*Parshas Yisro*

*Special Mazel Tov to the Wolfson - Levinson Family*

## PARSHA OVERVIEW

Hearing of the miracles Hashem performed for *Bnei Yisrael*, Moshe's father-in-law Yitro arrives with Moshe's wife and sons, reuniting the family in the wilderness. Yitro is so impressed by Moshe's detailing of the Exodus from Egypt that he converts to Judaism. Seeing that the only judicial authority for the entire Jewish nation is Moshe himself, Yitro suggests that subsidiary judges be appointed to adjudicate the smaller matters, leaving Moshe free to attend to larger issues. Moshe accepts his advice. *Bnei Yisrael* arrive at Mt. Sinai where Hashem offers them the Torah. After they accept, Hashem charges Moshe to instruct the people not to approach the mountain, and to prepare for three days. On the

third day, amidst thunder and lightning, Hashem's voice emanates from the smoke-enshrouded mountain and He speaks to the Jewish People, giving them the Ten Commandments: 1. Believe in Hashem 2. Don't worship other "gods" 3. Don't use Hashem's name in vain 4. Observe Shabbat 5. Honor your parents 6. Don't murder 7. Don't commit adultery 8. Don't kidnap 9. Don't testify falsely 10. Don't covet. After receiving the first two commandments, the Jewish People, overwhelmed by this experience of the Divine, request that Moshe relay Hashem's word to them. Hashem instructs Moshe to caution the Jewish People regarding their responsibility to be faithful to the One who spoke to them.

## HAFTARAH

### LEST WE FORGET

Yeshaya envisions G-d sitting on a Heavenly throne which stretches down and fills the Temple below. Administering angels surround this throne, calling to each other with those familiar words which we echo in our twice-daily "kedusha" prayer: "Holy, holy, holy is G-d, Master of Legions, the

whole world is filled with His glory." The pillars shook at their cry and the whole place filled with smoke.

G-d tells Yeshaya to say to the people: "Surely you hear, but you fail to comprehend; and surely you see, but you fail to know." This is Yeshaya's message to the nation that once stood at Sinai, that witnessed a revelation of G-d's presence akin to that described by Yeshaya. But G-d gave us the power to forget. The power to forget is the power of free will. How can we keep

### YESHAYA 6:1 - 7:6, 9:5-6

the experience of Sinai alive? How can we stop ourselves from forgetting?

When we recite the "kedusha" prayer twice daily, we are to picture the Divine presence, to imagine the administering angels constant proclamation of G-d's glory. When we recite the blessings on the Torah every morning, we are to think of Sinai, to think back to when G-d "chose us from all the nations and gave us His Torah."

Without a strong reminder, we are bound to forget.

## LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

### EIN DOR

Following the death of the Prophet Shmuel, King Saul found himself facing a mighty force of Philistine invaders. When his efforts to gain Divine communication on how to proceed proved fruitless, he desperately sought to make contact with



the spirit of Shmuel through a woman medium who lived in Ein Dor. The unhappy prophecy he received from this contact was that his army would be vanquished and that he and his sons would die in battle. (*Shmuel I 28:3-19*)

Near this spot opposite Mount Tabor in the north of Israel is the modern kibbutz of Ein Dor.

## I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

**"Zachor et Yom HaShabbat L'kadsho — Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it."** This verse, which commands us to honor the 7th day, is the 7th verse of the Ten Commandments. It begins with the letter *zayin*, the 7th letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the following verses, 7 entities are commanded to rest: "You, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your animal, and the sojourner within your city gates." Corresponding to these 7 are the 7 expressions of *menucha*, tranquility, in the "atah echad" paragraph of the Shabbat afternoon prayer.

## OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

Published by  
**OHR SOMAYACH**  
TANENBAUM COLLEGE  
POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel • 02-581-0315

General Editor:  
**Rabbi Moshe Newman**  
Editorial & Web Advisor:  
**Rabbi Reuven Lauffer**  
Associate Editors:  
**Rabbi Mordechai Becher,**  
**Rabbi Reuven Subar**  
Contributing Writers:  
*Weekly Daf, Love of the Land:*  
**Rav Mendel Weinbach**  
*Insights, Overview:*  
**Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair**

Web Production: **Eli Ballon, Michael Treblow**

Produced and Designed by the Office of Communications  
**Rabbi Eliezer Shapiro, Director**

© 2000 OHR SOMAYACH INSTITUTIONS - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

\* THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS WORDS OF TORAH. PLEASE TREAT IT WITH DUE RESPECT.

The OHR SOMAYACH WEB SITE is Hosted by VIRTUAL JERUSALEM  
[www.virtualjerusalem.com](http://www.virtualjerusalem.com)

OHRNET is available from the following sources:  
• E-MAIL VIA INTERNET: Write to [info@ohr.org.il](mailto:info@ohr.org.il) for information.  
• World Wide Web: Our address is: [www.ohr.org.il](http://www.ohr.org.il)

• Submit your questions to ASK THE RABBI at [www.asktherabbi.com](http://www.asktherabbi.com) or E-Mail [info@ohr.org.il](mailto:info@ohr.org.il) — set subject to "ASK THE RABBI."

## WHO COMMITTED BIGAMY?

**A** *kohen gadol*, because of his sacred status, is severely restricted in regard to whom he may marry. A widow, a non-virgin and even a virgin *bogeret* (a girl half-year past puberty which usually takes place at age 12) are all forbidden to him, in addition to the divorcee and other women forbidden even to regular *kohanim*.

How about bigamy? May a *kohen gadol*, according to Torah law, have more than one wife just like every other Jew? (The ban on polygamy was instituted by rabbinic decree almost a thousand years ago.)

In Mesechta Yoma (13a) we find that he may not be married to two women while performing the *Beit Hamikdash* service on Yom Kippur. “He shall atone for himself and for his household,” says the Torah (*Vayikra 16:11*) which implies, through the use of the singular term, that he can have only one wife, not two households. Although this seems limited to Yom Kippur, Rambam (*Laws of Forbidden Relations 17:13*) rules that a *kohen gadol* may never be married to two women at the same time. Ravid challenges this extension, arguing that the prohibition was intended to prevent a situation in which the *kohen gadol* should be the victim of a contaminating nocturnal emission as a result of thoughts about two women, and thus be disqualified for the Yom Kippur service. Although he concludes that it would make sense for the *kohen gadol* to avoid marrying two women so that he will not be forced to divorce one of them just before Yom Kippur, Ravid cites the following historical example from Tanach to challenge Rambam’s ruling.

Yehoyada was *kohen gadol* during the reign of King Yoash. “And Yoash did what was proper in the eyes of Hashem all the days of the *kohen Yehoyada*, and he took for him two wives and begot sons and daughters.” (*Divrei Hayamim II, 24:2-3*)

Regarding the Talmudic source for a prohibition on bigamy, the Maggid Mishneh, in his commentary on Rambam, points out that it is not the *gemara* cited by Ravid. Rather, it is our *gemara*, which derives from the passage (*Vayikra 21:14*) “Only a virgin shall he take as a wife” that he is restricted to one wife. This approach requires an understanding of our *gemara* radically different from the one conveyed by Rashi, but it provides us with a source not limited to Yom Kippur alone. But what about the challenge from the bigamy of the righteous *kohen gadol* Yehoyada?

A fascinating solution to this problem is provided by Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Chayot in the name of Rabbi Zalman of Volozhin. In contrast to Rashi’s explanation that it was Yehoyada who married two woman, Rambam will read the passage as reporting that Yehoyada, who was the mentor of the king who ascended the throne at the age of seven, married Yoash, who was not a *kohen*, to two women. The historical example is no longer a problem and Rambam’s ruling stands unchallenged.

• *Yevamot 59a*

## WHO IS A “MAN?”

**“Y**ou (the Jewish people) are called “Adam” (Man), and the other nations are not called “Adam” (Man).” This Talmudic statement explaining why there is a distinction between the laws of *tumah* (ritual impurity) regarding the graves of Jews and non-Jews has often been exploited throughout history by anti-Semites as a weapon of incitement against the Jews. They deviously portrayed this as a putdown of non-Jews as being less than human. This is, of course, a patent distortion obvious to anyone familiar with Torah and Talmudic sources. We here offer explanations from three great Torah scholars in regard to this statement:

The simplest approach is supplied by Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Chayot. In the literature of any religion, the reader bound by the laws of that religion is addressed as “Man” because it is to him that these laws apply. When the word “Adam” appears anywhere in our Tanach it therefore refers only to the Jewish nation bound by the rules of the Torah. This is not a comment on the humanity of non-Jews, only an exclusion of them as not being subject to those laws.

A more sophisticated explanation is offered by Rabbi Yisrael Lipschitz, in his “Tiferet Yisrael” commentary on Mesechta Avot (3:14). The spiritual development of the Jews is the result of the Torah which Hashem gave them at Sinai and not the product of their own intellectual search. In this they are similar to Adam, the first man, who was endowed by his Creator with a supreme understanding. The non-Jew who has developed spiritually — and both past and present are replete with sufficient examples of righteous gentiles — are self-made men who achieved what they did through their own intellectual efforts. When the phrase “the man” is found in our Scripture, it refers to *all* of mankind, as Tosefot points out, because this is a term of humanity, rather than of similarity to Adam. All nations are also called “*bnei Adam*” (sons of Man) because they are biologically the offspring of the first man, even if they are not similar to him in being endowed with knowledge rather than having to make it on their own.

A third explanation, in a different vein, was put forth by the initiator of the Daf Hayomi which is the framework of this column. When Mendel Beiles was on trial in Czarist Russia on trumped-up charges of murdering a gentile neighbor, the rabbi of the Polish community of Lublin, Rabbi Meir Shapiro, was asked to explain this statement in a brief to the court which seemed to be trying all of Jewry and not just a single person. He called attention to the singular term “Man” used to describe a nation of millions. This, he explained, could only refer to the Jewish nation which is accused in its entirety, as one man, for the alleged crime of a single individual. It is also an expression of the responsibility each Jew feels for his fellow Jew, a sense which indeed makes them unique in combining an entire nation into one “Man.”

• *Yevamot 61a*

## PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Yitro had 7 names. Why was one of his names *Yeter*?
2. News of which two events motivated Yitro to come join the Jewish People?
3. What name of Yitro indicates his love for Torah?
4. Why was Tzipora with her father, Yitro, and not with Moshe when *Bnei Yisrael* left Egypt?
5. Why does verse 18:5 say that Yitro came to the desert — don't we already know that the *Bnei Yisrael* were in the desert?
6. Why did Moshe tell Yitro all that Hashem had done for the Jewish People?
7. According to the *Midrash* quoted by Rashi, how did Yitro respond when he was told about the destruction of Egypt?
8. Who is considered as if he enjoys the splendor of the *Shechina*?
9. On what day did Moshe sit to judge the Jewish People?
10. Who is considered a co-partner in Creation?
11. "Moshe sat to judge the people, and the people stood before Moshe...." What bothered Yitro about this arrangement?
12. Why did Yitro return to his own land?
13. How did the encampment at Sinai differ from the other encampments?
14. To whom does the Torah refer when it uses the term "*Beit Yaakov*"?
15. How is Hashem's protection of the Jewish People similar to an eagle's protection of its young?
16. What was Hashem's original plan for *Matan Torah*? What was the response of the Jewish People?
17. How many times greater is the "measure of reward" than the "measure of punishment"?
18. How is it derived that "Don't steal" refers to kidnapping?
19. In response to hearing the Torah given at Sinai, how far backwards did the Jewish people retreat in fear?
20. Why does the use of iron tools profane the altar?

## PARSHA Q&A!

### Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 18:1 - Because he caused a Parsha to be added to the Torah. *Yeter* means addition.
2. 18:1 - The splitting of the sea and the war against Amalek.
3. 18:1 - Chovav.
4. 18:3 - When Aharon met Moshe with his family on their way down to Egypt, Aharon said to Moshe: "We're pained over the Jews already in Egypt, and you're bringing more Jews to Egypt?" Moshe, hearing this, sent his wife and children back to Midian.
5. 18:5 - To show Yitro's greatness. He was living in a luxurious place, yet he went to the desert in order to study the Torah.
6. 18:8 - To draw Yitro closer to the Torah way of life.
7. 18:9 - He grieved.
8. 18:12 - One who dines with Torah scholars.
9. 18:13 - The day after *Yom Kippur*.
10. 18:13 - A judge who renders a correct decision.
11. 18:14 - Yitro felt that the people weren't being treated with the proper respect.
12. 18:27 - To convert the members of his family to Judaism.
13. 19:2 - The Jewish People were united.
14. 19:3 - The Jewish women.
15. 19:4 - An eagle carries its young on top of its wings to protect them from human arrows. So too, Hashem's cloud of glory separated between the Egyptians and the Jewish camp in order to absorb Egyptian missiles and arrows fired at the Jewish People.
16. 19:9 - Hashem offered to appear to Moshe and to give the Torah through him. The Jewish People responded that they wished to hear the Torah directly from Hashem.
17. 20:6 - 500 times.
18. 20:13 - Because it is written immediately after "Don't murder" and "Don't commit adultery," it is derived that "Don't steal" refers to a crime carrying the same penalty as the first two, namely, the death penalty.
19. 20:15 - They backed away from the mountain twelve *mil* (one *mil* is 2000 cubits).
20. 20:22 - The altar was created to extend life; iron is sometimes used to make weapons which shorten life.

## RECOMMENDED READING LIST

<b>RAMBAN</b>	20:8	Remembering Shabbat	32	Shabbat Rest
18:6,10	20:17	The "Test" of <i>Matan Torah</i>	33	Gratitude to Parents
	19:3, 8:9, 20:15, 24:1	The Chronology of <i>Matan Torah</i>	35	Promiscuity
18:11	<b>SEFER HACHINUCH</b>		<b>MALBIM</b>	
18:15	25	Faith	20:2	The Essence of Belief in Hashem
18:22	30	Respect for Divine Name	<b>IBN EZRA</b>	
20:2	31	<i>Kiddush</i> on Wine	20:14	Discipline of Desire
20:6				

## LET'S BE FRANK

**From: Name@Withheld**

*Dear Rabbi,  
My stepdaughter, a Jewish girl, is marrying a very fine Catholic man. My wife and I are looking for a Rabbi in the (withheld) area who will perform the ceremony for them. The groom wishes the actual ceremony to be held jointly with a Catholic priest. The wedding ceremony and the reception are to be held in a hotel so there is no "religious property" involved "i.e. not in a church".*

Dear Name@Withheld,

I can see that you are sincerely concerned with your step daughter's best interests, and that you want to do the right thing Jewishly, seeing as you want a rabbi to perform the ceremony.

But let me tell you a joke: It was right before Yom Kippur and the Rabbi sees one of his congregants entering a non-kosher restaurant. He could not believe his eyes! As he peers into the window, he sees the man talk to a waiter and sit down. He watches while the man orders lobster and pork and eats it with relish. Unable to contain himself, the Rabbi rushes in and confronts his congregant: "What is the meaning of this?" The man answers, "Rabbi, were you watching the whole time I was eating the unkosher food?" "I saw every bite," says the Rabbi. "Well, then," says the man, "what's the problem? It was under rabbinical supervision!"

While you and I may have differing views regarding intermarriage, I'm sure we agree on the basic principles of honesty and integrity. We both agree that it's wrong and dishonest to create and foster false impressions.

In your search for a Rabbi for this ceremony, you have no doubt discovered that Judaism forbids intermarriage. Therefore, I feel that having a Rabbi at the ceremony fosters the false impression that Judaism allows intermarriage. It's like a type of fraud and a breach of common sincerity. The right thing, the honest thing, is that no Rabbi be at the ceremony.

I have no doubt that your stepdaughter has indeed met a very fine man; but this does not change the Jewish position on the subject. This is not to say that Judaism in any way deprecates or looks down on non-Jews, G-d forbid. Just that G-d has commanded us to be a separate people in order to fulfill our role to be a light to the nations. For our essay regarding intermarriage, go to: <http://www.ohrnet.org/ask/ask191.htm> #Q1

## I DO DECLARE

**From: Name@Withheld, South Africa**

*Dear Rabbi,  
I have read about the results of a process called "Affirmations." The technicalities are that you set yourself a goal, and you write down that goal 15 times on a piece of paper every day. For example, "I, Joe Smith, will become a famous soccer player." (Not that I really want to, but that's an example of how you'd do it). According to the person who told me about it, he has had spectacular success with this technique. And it's not just that it makes you more focused — almost every affirmation he did was realized through some strange "co-incidences" ... events that would have been totally out of his control just started happening until his previously unlikely goal was made a reality.*

*He himself is not a religious person, but he acknowledges that it may have effects similar to prayer — for example, he says that research shows that sick people who are prayed for are much more likely to recover than those who aren't, even if the sick people themselves are unaware that others are praying for them...*

*So here's my dilemma: If Hashem created a mechanism such as affirmations, is it wrong to use it? It seems somehow to be circumventing the "natural" order of things. Or maybe it is a natural force that just wasn't documented for the last 5760 years? I am very confused...part of me says "Go on!" while another part says "Wait, this might not be good." Many thanks for your wonderful Ask the Rabbi service.*

Dear Name@Withheld,

No problem with affirmations. Simply using the "natural" power of mind over matter. It may seem supernatural because we usually only use a fraction of our brains.

There are two explanations for the "supernatural coincidences" you might encounter while using "affirmations." One is that, with your mind focused on the goal, you notice opportunities you would have otherwise missed. (It's like when I bought my first used car, I suddenly noticed a lot of cars with "for sale" signs. "What a coincidence," I thought. "A lot of people are selling their cars just now when I happen to want to buy one.")

Another explanation is indeed a "supernatural" one. As the Talmud says "A person is directed (by Heaven) in the way he wishes to go."

The Mishneh Berura says to say "In honor of the Holy Shabbat" every time you buy something for Shabbat, since "speech has a powerful effect in (matters of ) holiness."

So, pick a good goal, and then use "affirmations" to achieve it. And remember: You WILL succeed, you WILL succeed....

## TRANSFUSION CONFUSION

**From: Daniel**  
<danielaztil@hotmail.com>

Dear Rabbi,

*I know that it is strictly forbidden to drink or eat blood, but is it permitted to replace by transfusion precious lost blood in the event of an accident?*

Dear Daniel,

It is definitely permitted to replace lost blood by transfusion; and this does not fall under the prohibition of eating blood. The Torah commands us (Deuteronomy 4:15) "You shall greatly guard your souls." Therefore it is a mitzvah and an obligation to replace lost blood.

## WHAT'S BOTHERING RASHI

**“Therefore G-d blessed the Shabbat day and sanctified it.” (Exodus 20:11)**

On the above verse Rashi comments: “He blessed it through the manna by giving a double portion on the sixth day, and He sanctified it through the manna in that on Shabbat none fell.” A simple *drash* (commentary) with a deeper meaning.

Why doesn't Rashi accept the simple meaning of the verse, that the day was blessed and sanctified? Why does Rashi reduce the blessing and the sanctity to the one issue of the manna? Certainly we don't think the Shabbat is holy *only* because of the manna! What's bothering Rashi?

An answer: The blessing and sanctity of the Shabbat cannot be seen; it is an abstraction, it has no objective manifestation. Rashi sought a meaning to these abstract words in concrete terms. When Hashem spoke to the Israelites about the special nature of the Shabbat, He wanted to tell them something they could understand from personal experience. Hashem had already given the Israelites the manna (Exodus 16:14-36). By means of the manna they saw concretely the reality of the Shabbat, as no other generation has.

But as you think more deeply about the double portion that fell on Friday, which is supposed to be the blessing for the Shabbat, what question would you ask?

A question: Granted that two portions of manna fell on Friday, but one was for Friday and one — *only one* — was for Shabbat. So what was special about the Shabbat, and what

kind of a blessing is this, since it too had only one portion allotted to it?

An answer: The manna fell each day with enough food for that day. None was left over for the next day. And if someone tried to save some for the morrow, it turned wormy and rotten (Exodus 16:20). But the “double bread” left from Friday to the Shabbat morning did not turn rotten. So while the Shabbat had no more manna allotted to it than any other day, it was nevertheless blessed. The blessing was that a person went to bed Friday evening with no worry for the morrow, he was guaranteed provision for his next day's meal. This was not so for any other day of the week.

### A NOTE TO OUR READERS:

The “Institute for the Study of Rashi” which produces these works is preparing for publication the Vayikra volume of “What's Bothering Rashi?” It will add another dimension to the study of Rashi — this time Rashi's creative use of the midrash. We are looking for sponsors of this volume to enable us to publish it. Contributions can be made in Memory of or in Honor of close ones. This volume will IY”H be ready for this year's reading of sefer Vayikra. The previous volumes of “What's Bothering Rashi?” have been adopted for use in many schools and entered into many Jewish homes. Your sponsorship will make it possible to continue and enlarge this project. Those interested can write [msbonch@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msbonch@mscc.huji.ac.il) Contributions are tax exempt.

## YIDDLE RIDDLE

**Last week we asked:** What two Friday nights of the year is there no *shalom zachor*? (*Shalom zachor* is the Friday night celebration held in honor of the birth of a boy.)

**Answer:** Pesach and Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is a fast day, and therefore all eating and drinking is forbidden. And on the night of Passover, it is forbidden to eat anything after eating the *afikomen* — the piece of *matzah* eaten at the end of the Passover seder. Therefore, the *shalom zachor*, which is usually held after the Friday evening meal, is not held on these two nights.

## PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous “Ohrnet” features

### RHODES TO ZIMBABWE

We are a Sephardic congregation, and our forefathers came from the Island of Rhodes where they settled after the expulsion from Spain in 1492. I saw copies of your publication at the Ohr Somayach Synagogue in Gallo Manor, Johannesburg. Please may we receive Torah Weekly, which is very interesting. We would like to publish extracts of it in our newsletter.

Benny Leon, Zimbabwe, Africa  
<[vleon@mango.zw](mailto:vleon@mango.zw)>

### VIRT-SHUL

I go to your website when I am feeling down, and it cheers me up. We do not belong to a *shul*, as my husband is not very religious, and I do not have anyone else to discuss Jewish issues with. I have a relative who always jokes about what she would do if she won the lottery. She says she would have a live-in cook

and a live-in nurse. I say I would want a rabbi on call to answer questions and discuss things with. Your service is the next best thing. Thank you very much for providing this service!!

Name@Withheld

### Re: ADD MUCH? (Ohrnet Bo):

I asked your recent Yiddle Riddle — “How can you subtract 30 from 30 you get 60?” — to the Youth Minyan in Bnai Torah of Toronto. I received two responses, one the same as your answer and a new one, submitted by Moriah Ellen: Thirty minus thirty equals zero, which is written the same as the Hebrew script letter *samech*; *samech* has the numerical value (*gematria*) 60. Quite good! Keep 'em coming!

David Woolf on behalf of the Bnai Torah Youth Minyan, Toronto  
<[wolfman@ican.net](mailto:wolfman@ican.net)>