

## Missing Names

By Akiva Thalheim, 12th Grade

We don't make havdalah after Purim because we don't want to separate from Purim and want to be able to connect it to any day of the year, so the following Dvar Torah will be connected to Purim as well. In this week's parsha we have the infamous episode of the Chet Haegel (which the Nefesh Hachaim says we are still suffering from today). At Har Sinai before the Chet we were on the highest of levels and closest to Hashem, but then we sinned and Hashem was upset at us. Even though Moshe wasn't involved, he went and pleaded to Hashem with his entire heart (in perek 32, posuk 32, and the gematria of "lev" is 32, signifying that he pleaded with his entire heart) that Hashem should forgive us, and if not, Moshe told Hashem to "erase me from your Sefer." He was saying that he doesn't want to be part of Hashem's Torah if He didn't forgive Klal Yisrael as he felt an achriyus as he was our leader. Ultimately, Hashem does forgive us on some level, but because of those words, Hashem did not include him in last week's parsha. From the time of Moshe's birth to his death, he's mentioned in every parsha except last week's. (Side point: last week's parsha speaks about the kihuna and the garments of the Cohen Gadol, and we know Moshe was

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## Correcting Our Mistakes

By Aaron Nassir, 9th Grade

This week's parsha, Ki Tisa, is a very interesting and eventful parsha. One of the most well known things which happen in this parsha is the sin of the golden calf. In this scenario, Moshe came down from the mountain after the Jewish people had made the golden calf and were celebrating around it. Then, as the pasuk says, "...he saw the calf and the dances..." (Ex. 32,19). Because of what he saw, Moshe became angry and hurled the Tablets of stone to the ground, shattering them. A question you can have on this is; Why was Moshe surprised when he saw the golden calf? Hashem had already told him that the Jewish people had made it. You can also ask, that if Moshe knew that the calf was there, why did he bring the tablets down or why didn't he shatter them before?

The Sforno answers this question. He says that when Moshe was told that the Jewish people had made the calf, he thought he would come down to them and they would see him with the tablets. As a result the Jewish people would see their mistake and repent for their sins. But when Moshe came down and saw that they were dancing with such joy with the calf, he realized that they would not repent so easily. He came to the

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**Torah Teasers***By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe***Parshas Ki Sisa****Questions**

1. Which two people appear in the Torah for the first time in this parsha?
2. In what context is the "the finger of God" (Etzbah Elokim) mentioned? Where else in the Torah is the "the finger of God" mentioned? Which items, spelled with two letters, have only one unique letter in its name? (2 answers)
3. In this parsha, what is explicitly referred to as made of gold? Where in the Torah is the first time these items mentioned? What had hands (yadot) but no fingers?
4. In this parsha, what item is destroyed in four different ways, and how?

**Answers**

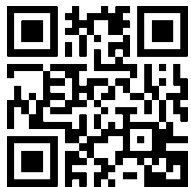
1. Betzalel ben Uri, the artisan in charge of building the Tabernacle, and his assistant, Aholiav ben Achisamech, appear in this parsha for the first time (Exodus 31:2, 6). The Holy Ark is two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits high, and one and a half cubits wide (Exodus 25:10).
2. The tablets of the Ten Commandments were written "with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18). In parshas Va'era, the magicians of Egypt declare that the plague of lice displays "the finger of God" (Exodus 8:15). In parshas Beraishis, Hashem guards the path to the Tree of Life with two cherubs (keruvim).
3. The earrings donated to fashion the Golden Calf are referred to as "golden earrings" (Exodus 32:2-3). The Golden Calf itself is called a "molten calf" (Exodus 32:4). In parshas Chayei Sarah when Eliezer meets Rivka, he gives her earrings (Genesis 24:22). The Torah states that the cherubs must face each other as "a man to his brother" (Exodus 25:20).
4. The Golden Calf is burned, finely ground up, scattered on water, and then drunk by the nation (Exodus 32:20).

**The Haftorah Corner***Written By Adam Zahler*

This week we have Parshat Parah and therefore read the unique haftorah that goes with it. In it, Yechezkel states, "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will place in you; I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." (Yechezkel 36:26).

It is very difficult to understand what exactly he is saying when he starts talking about changing the heart of stone into that of flesh. I think a heart of stone may represent galut. As we live in a world of galut it is hard to trust others, and we become more bottled up with our emotions. We are more anxious and defensive. We say in Pirkei Avos, "You should greet every person with a pleasant countenance." (Avot 1: 15)

It is our job to put on a smile for everyone and greet them in a pleasant manner. "You should greet every person with joy." (Avot 3:12) This is very different as this seems to be encompassing our actual feelings and not just the way in which we appear on the exterior. We therefore must be filled with a genuine kindness and happiness when greeting others. This seeps down to the heart and brings about a "heart of flesh." This is something that is very difficult to do. We can look at Zechariah to help show us how to accomplish this. In this chapter, Zechariah speaks about the transition from Galut to Redemption. He says, "This is what you must do: speak truth to each other. Judge with truth and justice in your courts. Do not plan evil to each other in your hearts." (Zechariah 8:16) Everything now makes sense. When we go from a state of Galut to redemption, we are going from a state of distrust to trust, uncertainty to the clarity of truth, and from ill will to good will. We now can feel joy in our body at the sight of another Jew. We now understand what it means when Yechezkel says in the name of Hashem, "I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will

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# 10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Transcribed by  
Mayer Adelman

## March Madness: Betting on Basketball

### Source for the potential אסור to gamble:

I. פסול in (דף כד:): One who rolls dice is פסול for עדות.

### Reason for why one who rolls dice is פסול for עדות:

I. גמרא in (דף כד:):

A. רמי בר חמא: Rolling dice falls under the definition of אסמכתא.

1. The general idea of “אסמכתא” is that when one gambles he isn’t fully committing to paying the money if the outcome isn’t in his favor. Therefore, the one who collects the money is considered to be stealing the money (on a מחלוקת level). (See below for a specific definition of אסמכתא according to each שיטה in the גמרא.)

B. רב ששת: One who rolls dice doesn’t have a proper concern for the value of money and therefore won’t take the עדות seriously enough.

1. Most understand that according to רב ששת there is no אסור to roll dice.  
2. רמב”ם (פירוש המשניות): Even according to רב ששת rolling dice is an אסור.

### Defining “אסמכתא”:

1. רמי בר חמא: רש”י holds that all cases of gambling fall under the definition of אסמכתא. רב ששת holds that only cases where one feels the outcome is in his control are included in the rule of אסמכתא.

A. The סברא for רב ששת is that when you believe that you’re in control of the outcome, you are only agreeing to possibly losing money pay thinking that it won’t actually come to that. However, a case of pure chance would not be included in the rule of אסמכתא.

B. According to this שיטה, most forms of

gambling (which are some mixture between skill and chance) would be included in the rule of אסמכתא according to all שיטות in the גמרא.

2. רמי בר חמא: רש”י holds that all cases of gambling are included in the rule of אסמכתא. רב ששת holds that only cases which can only possibly benefit one party are included in the rule of אסמכתא; however, cases that can possibly benefit either party involved are not included in the rule of אסמכתא.

A. According to this שיטה, all forms of gambling should be מותר according to the שיטה of רב ששת.

### Other criteria for “מותר gambling”:

I. רמ”א: In order for a case of gambling to possibly be מותר the money has to be given up-front.

### פסק הלכה:

I. רמי בר חמא: The הלכה is like רמי בר חמא. Therefore, for ספרדים the question doesn’t even start, and every case of gambling is אסור.

II. רב ששת: רמ”א holds that the הלכה is like רב ששת.

I. According to the רמ”א, in order for a case of gambling to be מותר, the following two criteria would have to be met:

A. The case is where the gambling is purely a game of chance and everyone involved acknowledges it (to accommodate the שיטות of רש”י and the רש”י).

B. The money must be given up-front.

### Practical applications (according to the רמ”א):

I. Slot Machines:

A. Meets criterion number one.

B. Doesn’t meet criterion number two.

II. Poker:

A. Doesn’t meet criterion number one.

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# 1 OBJECT, 2 OUTCOMES

By Dovid Gelbtuch, 12th Grade

Parshas Ki Sisa is best known for one of the most infamous stories of the Jewish people: the construction of the golden calf. Bnei Yisrael at the time, were eager to give their gold to build this idol, and when it was built, they started worshipping it. After seeing what they have done with their gold, Hashem was furious and threatened to destroy Bnei Yisrael.

Although gold was the fuel for the terrible sin, we learn later on that gold is actually used for the mitzvah of building the Mishkan. The Jewish people used many materials, including gold, to create the Mishkan so that Hashem may reside among the nation. As we see from here, gold was used to do a great mitzvah. In both cases, gold was used to construct something; however, it brought out two opposite outcomes. By the golden calf, they were punished and by the building of the mishkan, they were rewarded. From this we see that everything can be used for either good or bad, and that we should try to serve Hashem in the right way with all that we are given. We also see that we should be careful with how we use our money and that we should not squander it on wasteful things that can be detrimental to ourselves and the way we serve Hashem.

(Ten Minute Halacha—Continued from page 3)

B. Meets criterion number two.

### III. March Madness:

A. Possibly meets criterion number one.

1. One would have to make sure that everyone in the March Madness pool acknowledges that the game is one of pure chance. It would be אסור to participate in a pool in which even one person *thinks* he knows the game better than others (i.e. that it's somewhat in his control).

B. Possibly meets criterion number two.

1. One would have to collect all the money from the people in the pool before the winner is determined.

### Doing a bracket for Fun (no money):

I. סנהדרין in גמרא: One who previously had a gambling issue does תשובה for it by not even gambling for free.

A. Accordingly, one must examine whether he has ever had a gambling problem before taking part in a free March Madness pool.



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## Dvarim Hayotzim Min Halev

*(Aaron Nassir—Continued from page 1)*

conclusion that they were not ready for the tablets of the Ten Commandments and shattered them.

We can learn a very powerful lesson from the way Moshe reacted to what the Jewish people did. We as human beings, can often make mistakes. However in order to correct ourselves, we must realize that we made the mistake, only then can we do the right thing. If we do not see that we did anything wrong, like the Jewish people with the golden calf. There is no way we can correct ourselves, because in our eyes we did nothing wrong. To truly be able to live up to our fullest potential, we must be able to recognize our wrong doing. Only then will we be able to correct our faults and do what is right.

Shabbat Shalom!

*Adapted from Torahportion.Wordpress.com*

*(Haftorah Corner — Continued from page 2)*

give you a heart of flesh.” We will transition to a better time. We will all live together in the harmony that will come with the final redemption bimheira byameinu.

Good Shabbos!

*(Akiva Thalheim—Continued from page 1)*

supposed to be the Cohen Gadol but he lost it).

So Moshe's name was left out of last week's parsha, which is read the week before Purim. And we know that in the entire megillah, Hashem's name is also left out. So there must be some connection between the two, as in the same week we have someone's name noticeably left out twice, but what is the connection? Moshe's name being missing, was on some level, a salvation for Klal Yisroel a yeshua after Hashem said He was going to destroy us and Moshe davened on our behalf. So it could be that so too, Hashem's name not being in the megillah is a yeshua as well. How so? Because, for generations, to the time going back to Mitzrayim there were revealed miracles constantly, revelations upon revelations, such as the urim vetumim and the choshen lighting up telling us things. Because of this, it was so much easier to serve Hashem.

Nowadays, the biggest complaint people have is that they don't see Hashem in their life. So, if Hashem's name would have been in the megillah, it would have been clear it was the hand of Hashem. When you read through it, it may seem like everything is pure coincidence, but by the time you get to the end you see it was all orchestrated by Hashem. So too, we can always look at that sefer and see that just like Hashem was hidden under the surface saving us the whole time, Hashem is always in our lives playing a role as well. We can always look at the megillah and find a spiritual salvation, and this is the chizuk we have to have in our lives after Purim. The Vilna Gaon says that whenever he needed chizuk in his connection to Hashem, he'd pull out a megillah and start reading it. (The one sefer that Hashem is not in, that was exactly the sefer he used to remind himself Hashem is in his life). So to summarize, Moshe's name was left out of last week's parsha to signify the physical salvation he had a role in, while Hashem's name was left out of the megillah to serve as a spiritual salvation whenever we need it.

*Adapted from a shiur by Rabbi Aryeh Cohen*



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*By Josh Beer, 12th Grade*

## *The Shabbos Sign*

“And the Children of Israel shall keep the Shabbos – to make it a day of rest for (all) of their generations as an eternal covenant. Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that G-d made the heaven and the earth in six days, and on the seventh day He ceased working and rested” (Exodus 31:16-17).

We see in this week’s parsha that Shabbos is a sign between us and Hashem showing Hashem created the world in six days and then rested on the seventh. The obvious question is what is the purpose and function of this sign of Shabbos? Why do we need a sign between us and Hashem?

The Chofetz Chaim answers this question by using an analogy to a man and his business. The man opens his business and hangs up a sign for everyone to see. Everyone can assume the business is still open as long as the sign is still up and hanging. If the sign has been removed then it means the business is closed. This is true to Hashem and the covenant between us and Hashem. If Shabbos is still on the calendar, even though we sin and Hashem “closes the store for a little”, our relationship is still strong. But if we would not have Shabbos anymore, it would mean our relationship has diminished.

Shabbos also shows our belief that Hashem created the world. We are showing that we are witnesses to that and that we believe Hashem can support us even on a day we can’t work for ourselves. Not only do we keep Shabbos, but Shabbos also keeps us. It gives us the reinforcing and recharging of spirituality into us and gives us the ability to take it throughout the whole week in everything we do. It gives us a reminder that we are spiritual people with spiritual aspirations and need to act like it at all times. Shabbos is our greatest gift and we should take this lesson to appreciate it more and take advantage of it for the spiritual growth of all of us.

Have a great Shabbos!

*(Stories of Greatness—Continued from page 8)*

son had reported, and the rebbe said, “That’s it. How can a Jew allow himself to forget the holiness of Shabbat, under any circumstances? There are two primary obligations toward the Shabbat: to ‘remember’ it (Exodus 20:8) and to ‘safeguard’ it (Deuteronomy 5:12), both of which, our sages tell us, were declared by the Almighty ‘in a single utterance.’ ‘Remember’ is accomplished through speech, by expressing the holiness of Shabbat in the words of the kiddush. ‘Safeguard’ is for the mind and heart, to be continually aware of Shabbat’s holiness throughout the entire day, that it not be transgressed. But you failed to ‘safeguard’ the Shabbat, so you have forfeited the right to ‘remember’ her.”

“Please, Rebbe,” sobbed the man, “tell me how to repent. Give me a remedy. Save me from this unbearable affliction!” “There is nothing I can do for you. The only ‘remedy’ there is for you is if you are challenged by a test in Shabbat observance, and you stand up to it. Then the Shabbat will be appeased of your insult.” These final words made the chassid feel a little better. He trusted the rebbe, and resolved to stand up to the trial, no matter what it might be.

Shortly thereafter a summons came from his poritz, the nobleman from whom he leased his mill in exchange for an annual rent and a percentage of its income. The latter informed him that he planned to greatly expand the flour mill’s capacity, and that in order to recoup the large amount of money that he would have to invest, it would be necessary for the mill to operate on Saturdays as well, starting now. “That’s impossible,” the Jew declared firmly. “I only work six days, never on Shabbat.”

“Oh, come on,” said the nobleman, “I know you Jews. You can get around it if you want to. I heard that a rabbi can make some kind of contract where you can stay home, but the mill stays open and I don’t lose

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*(Stories of Greatness—Continued from page 6)*

the income.” “I’ve never employed such a leniency in relation to Shabbat, and I never will,” the miller firmly declared. The nobleman raised his voice. “Stubborn fool! I’ll give you the two months it will take to complete the renovations to start to operate the mill on Saturday. If you don’t, I’ll throw you out.”

The poritz carried out his threat, and evicted the miller. Bereft of his income, he and his family soon fell on to hard times. Even basic food for the children became hard to supply. What’s more, his “Shabbat disease” still afflicted him. But the chassid persisted in his determination not to fail the Shabbat again. Meanwhile, the mill’s owner had completed the expansion of the mill, and had found a manager who was willing to work a seven-day week. But right from the start it didn’t work out. Unusual accidents kept occurring, and all sorts of problems arose. Huge losses piled up. The situation was bizarre, and everyone realized it.

The nobleman was forced to admit to himself that his problems must be connected to his having ruined the livelihood of the Jewish miller. So he sent for his former tenant and, after revealing the mill’s desperate situation, offered to lease it to him as before.

“And what about my Shabbat?” the chassid asked. “Look,” he answered, “after all the unusual problems and sharp losses, I realize that G-d is with you. Do however you see fit.” So the Jew returned to the mill, and was soon blessed with more success than he had ever had. Also, his affliction disappeared at the same time, just as the rebbe had said. But even with his new wealth, reciting kiddush on Shabbat night remained his greatest pleasure.

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## STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: NETANEL YOMTOV

Shalom Aleichem and Eishet Chayil had already been sung. The candle flames reflected a yellow sun in the ruby wine of the decanter. A hush settled over the room as all edged closer to the Shabbat table to hear Father recite the kiddush. Father took a deep breath and . . . fell asleep in his seat!

"Tatteh! Tatteh! Father! Father!" the family called. No response. Mother put her hand on his shoulder and shook him, but that didn't help either. "Wake up! Wake up!" the children screamed frantically. Deciding he had fainted, the adults also began to worry, and someone ran to get the doctor. He came, but he too found it impossible to either arouse him from his deep slumber or to understand what had happened to him. He suggested to let him sleep it off. Someone else would have to make kiddush.

The head of the family, a miller by trade, didn't wake up till morning. He was astounded and embarrassed to hear what had happened. But the next Friday night it happened again. And again. And . . . "Oh, no! Not again!" cried out the miller in frustration. He rose from his chair, where he had fallen asleep over the Shabbat table, and stretched his stiff limbs. "What is happening? Nothing helps! I can't go on like this. Tomorrow I'm going to the rebbe!"

The next day he went to Zichlin, to his rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel Abba, and told him the whole story. Bursting into tears, he

begged to be cured from this bizarre affliction. "It seems," said the rebbe, "that you have somehow violated the Shabbat, which is why you are being prevented from honoring her."

The chassid became even more upset. "I don't understand. I'm so careful with the laws of Shabbat. Violating the Shabbat? I can't imagine how that ever might have happened." Brokenhearted, the Jew returned home. When he told his family all the rebbe had said, they were astonished. Everyone knew how careful he was about keeping Shabbat. But then, one of his older sons spoke up. "Father, I have to tell you that the rebbe's words revealed genuine divine inspiration because, unfortunately, they are true. One Friday night, when I was up late, I saw you get up in the middle of the night. You were obviously still half asleep. I saw you light a candle so you could see your way to get a drink of water, and then you extinguished it when you were finished. The next morning it was clear that you had no recollection of what had happened, and not wanting to shame you or show disrespect, I never said anything. But now that the rebbe himself has referred to it, I realize I am obligated to divulge what I saw."

The man immediately set forth for Zichlin again. He told the rebbe what his

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