



Dvar Torah

BY: RABBI DOV GREER

Lush vegetation blossomed around Har Sinai as Hash-m prepared to give the Torah to Moshe to transmit to the Jewish nation. Bnei Yisroel had been commanded to purify themselves and refrain from approaching the mountain during the three days prior to receiving the Torah. On the third day, Har Sinai was cloaked in a cloud as the mighty sound of the Shofar was heard throughout the encampment of Bnei Yisroel. All trembled as Hash-m began to transmit the Holy Torah to Klal Yisroel. Moshe alone ascended the mountain to receive the Torah, while Klal Yisroel waited at the base of Har Sinai to hear the Aseres Hadibros.

The Pasuk states, "And the sound of the Shofar continued and was mighty, Moshe spoke and Hash-m answered through a voice." משה ידבר והאלקים יענו בקול. Rashi attempts to explain the sequence of the final phrase of this Pasuk. Hash-m spoke first and then Moshe transmitted the Torah to Bnei Yisroel. Why, then, does the Pasuk invert the order and record that Moshe talked and then Hash-m responded? Rashi understands that this Pasuk refers to the way Moshe relayed the Aseres Hadibros to Klal Yisroel after receiving them from Hash-m. Although the entire nation heard the first two of the Aseres Hadibros directly

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Community News

The Hilchos Shabbos Shiur for mothers and children on Tuesday mornings at 9:45 am will meet next week at 249 Ellsworth Ave, and the following week at 243 Ellsworth Ave.

Join us on Thursday evenings for Mishmor at 765 Elm St. from 8:30-9:30 PM. Learning is followed by a delicious cholent.

Explore Navi! Don't miss Rabbi Greer's Navi shiur for men on Shmuel I. Join us on Monday nights at 8:15 pm at 765 Elm St.

Join Rebbetzin Sarah Greer on Wednesday evenings from 8:00-9:00 pm at 765 Elm St to learn The Book of Daniel: The Wondrous Story of Daniel in the Palace of Nevuchadnezer. Hope to see you there!

Davening Times

Shabbos Parshas Yisro

Mincha Erev Shabbos5:00 pm

Candle Lighting.....5:01 pm

Shacharis 8:00 am

Mincha.....4:50 pm

Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim

Mincha Erev Shabbos5:10 pm

Candle Lighting.....5:10 pm

Shacharis 8:00 am

Mincha.....4:55 pm

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis (Sunday)..... 8:00 am

(M-F)..... 7:00 am

Mincha (Feb 12-16)5:05 pm

(Feb 19-23).....5:15 pm

Halachah Corner

BY: RABBI AVI HACK

One of the halachic significances of Tu B'Shevat is in regard to the laws of ערלה. The Torah mandates that any fruit which forms during the first three years after a tree is planted is considered ערלה and all benefit from it is prohibited. Let us examine some of the halachos of ערלה.

How are the years of ערלה calculated?

When a seed is planted, it has the halachic status of a sapling, not a tree. Hence, its new year begins on 1 Tishre (Rosh HaShana) and not Tu

B'Shevat. If the seed is planted more than 44 or 45 days prior to Rosh HaShana, the time until Rosh HaShana is deemed to be the first year of the sapling's life and the second year commences on Rosh HaShana. If there are fewer than 44 or 45 days until Rosh HaShana, the second year will not start until the following Rosh HaShana. For example, if a seed is planted on 1 Tammuz 5772, two months before Rosh HaShana, the second year of the sapling's life begins on 1 Tishre 5773. However, if planting took place on 1 Elul 5772, only 29 days before Rosh HaShana, the second year will not

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from Hash-m, only Moshe heard the remaining eight commandments directly from the heavenly voice. Moshe then announced those commandments to the entire nation; Moshe spoke and Hash-m assisted his voice so that it would be heard simultaneously by the entire encampment of Klal Yisroel. Moshe spoke, and Hash-m assisted him with His voice.

Perhaps we can derive an additional meaning from the fascinating sequence of this last phrase. Rashi, in the opening verse of the Torah, understands that the word **בראשית** can be a contraction for **בשביל ראשית**, because of the Jewish nation, the “first” nation, Hash-m created the world. The Medrash Rabbah in Parshas Vayera quotes the Pasuk from Tehillim “And Your humility overcame me.” Hash-m utilized the attribute of humility to subsume Himself in the activities of the Jewish nation. The control that Hash-m exerts over the universe and all its inhabitants was transmitted at the giving of the Torah to the Jewish nation. Now, our actions and deeds determine the events of the world, as Hash-m instilled within us the ability to decide how He should govern His actions. This is a fulfillment of that first Pasuk in the Torah, “Because of the Jewish nation, Hash-m formed the world.”

Although G-d first gave the Torah to Moshe, and then Moshe taught the Torah to the Jewish people, the Pasuk inverts the sequence, indicating that when the Torah was given to Klal Yisroel, the events and

history of the world became contingent upon our decisions and conduct to keep the Torah and its Mitzvos. The Jewish people, through our observance of the Torah, hold the reigns of control over the universe. We now have the ability to determine our destiny through adherence to the Mitzvos encapsulated in the Aseres Hadibros that we heard on Har Sinai. Moshe and the Jewish people now speak, and G-d responds accordingly.

Torah Tidbit

BY: RABBI NOACH MUROFF

The tenth and final Mitzva of the **עשרת הדברות** is the Mitzva of **לא תחמוד** – not coveting your friend’s possessions. One is not permitted to think of ways of getting an object that belongs to his friend. However, one has not completed the **איסור** until he does an action of taking the item. One violates the prohibition even if he pays money to the person who feels forced to “sell” him the item. However, even if one violates the Mitzva with an action, he does not get lashes, since he is able simply to return the object (**ספר החינוך מצוה לח**).

The reason for the prohibition of coveting is that it could lead one to go to great lengths, and commit many aveiros, in order to get the desired item. For instance, if the owner refuses to sell the item, one may be tempted to kill the owner, as in the story of **נבות** who was killed by **אחאב** for the sake of the former’s vineyard (**מלכים א פרק כג**).

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commence until 1 Tishre 5774. At the end of the three years, the sapling changes status to a tree. As such, its new year now begins on Tu B’Shevat. Thus, in our first example, where the second year began on 1 Tishre 5773 and the third on 1 Tishre 5774 the fourth would not begin on 1 Tishre 5775. Instead, the fourth year would start on 15 Shevat 5775. Thus, any fruit that formed before that date would be prohibited from benefit.

What happens in the fourth year?

During the fourth year (in our case, from 15 Shevat 5775 to 15 Shevat 5776), the fruit is referred to as **רבעי**. In former times, it needed to be brought to Yerushalayim and eaten there or redeemed with money and those funds used to purchase food in Yerushalayim. Nowadays, the fruit is redeemed on a token coin. The coin, which retains sanctity, is then thrown into the sea or otherwise destroyed.

Do the laws of ערלה apply to trees owned by a non-Jew?

Absolutely. These laws relate to the trees; it makes no difference who owns them.

Do the laws of ערלה apply outside of Eretz Yisroel?

Yes. However, outside of Eretz Yisroel, **ערלה** is not from the Torah. It is a **הלכה למשה מסיני**. Thus, if one were in doubt regarding the **ערלה** status of a fruit that grew outside of Eretz Yisroel, one would be able to be lenient and eat the item.