

## Can You Sell Above Market Value?

# THE ULTIMATE DWELLING

## Not Even Himself

By Rabbi Shaul Wertheimer


The Talmud (Bava Basra 67a) discusses how to deal with sales of property that do not stipulate exactly what is included. For example, if someone says, "I am selling you my courtyard," does that also include the adjacent houses? What about a well? Or a bathhouse?

Rashbam (Rabbi Shmuel ben Meir; France, c.1085 - c.1158) asks: Why can't we just determine what was included in the sale based on the price? It should be fairly obvious, based on market value, what the seller intended to include.

This suggestion is rejected, because of the concept that while the Torah forbids selling movable items at overly inflated prices, this prohibition does not apply to land. The Sefer HaChinuch (anonymous; Spain, 13th cent.) explains that the reason is that people are willing to pay exorbitant prices for land (did someone say New York?), because they know that land is permanent.

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In fact, the prohibition of not cheating someone is found in this week's Torah portion, Behar: "You should not cheat one another" (Lev. 25:14).

Rabbi Simcha Bunem of Psishchah (Poland, 1765-1827) would say: The Torah warns us not to cheat another person; a Chassid is careful to not even cheat himself... 



## Everlasting Season


By Mendel Wertheimer

Parshas Behar begins with the mitzvah of *Shemita*, the Sabbatical year, which was given at Mt. Sinai. Rashi asks: *Why does the Torah state that Shemita was given at Mt. Sinai? Weren't all the mitzvos said at Sinai?*

Rashi answers that it is in order "to teach us that just like *Shemita* was given with all its rules and details at Sinai, so too all the mitzvos were given with all their rules and details at Sinai." Specific details of a mitzvah aren't secondary, rather they are equally significant to the mitzvah itself.

Why is this important lesson conveyed through the mitzvah of *Shemita* which is only applicable once every seven years, in the land of Israel and only in the fields? Perhaps a more common mitzvah -- one which applies at all times and in all places -- would be a more appropriate example.

Torah and mitzvos are built on the foundation that they are eternal and will never be changed because they were given by the Eternal G-d. *Shemita* is thus the perfect mitzvah to demonstrate this concept, because it's a mitzvah that lasts for an entire year, throughout all four seasons.

Throughout a year there are all the different seasons and times, yet the mitzvos don't change. It is as if we just received them from Mt. Sinai. This is clearly evident by the mitzvah of *Shemita* which doesn't change for an entire year. 

## Torah Q&A for Your Shabbos Table

**Q: Why doesn't the obligation to get married not start at 13 like all other Mitzvos?**

A: In fact, it says in Shulchan Aruch that 13 is the preferable age to get married. However, it says in Pirkei Avos that a person gets married at 18, in order to allow for more time to study Torah before marriage. Nowadays, we typically get married older than 18, however it is a good idea to get married relatively young, in keeping with your community standards.

שו"ע אה"ע סי' אונ"ב

**Q: Can I do my laundry before davening Shacharis? What about take out the trash?**

A: In general, one is not permitted to busy oneself with one's needs before davening in the morning. However, poskim write that this refers specifically to things which require one's focus and attention. It is permitted to put one's laundry in the machine or take out the trash before davening.

שו"ע אורח חיים פ"ט, ד, הליכות שלמה ב, ה

## Friends or Family?

By Mishael Sionov

Throughout the city in the 1980's, billboards claimed, "You have a friend at the Chase Manhattan Bank." An Israeli scribbled beneath: "But in Bank Leumi, you have *mishpacha* [family]."


Rabbi Jonathan Sacks referred to the Jewish Nation as more than an ethnicity - but as a large, extended family. Behar has many pesukim about social interactions: "When you sell property to your neighbor... do not wrong your brother" (25:14). "If your brother becomes impoverished and his hand falters in your proximity... let your brother live with you" (25:35-36). "If your brother is sold to you... do not work him with slave labor" (25:39). "With your brethren, the Children of Israel - a man with his brother - you shall not subjugate him through hard labor" (25:46).

Torah calls Israel "brothers." We aren't just fellow citizens or adherents of the same faith - we are a large family.

Hashem Himself defines His relationship with us in terms of family - as that of a parent to His children. The entire book of Bereshit - the Torah's starting point - isn't about Jewish law, but rather revolves around husbands and wives, parents and children, and brothers and sisters.



We are all intertwined by connections that reach deep into our collective being. How else is it possible to explain the bond that Jews worldwide share today after centuries of separation?

In the words of Rabbi Sacks, "we may be divided and argumentative as a nation, but that will never extricate us of our bond as a family....Argue with your friend, and tomorrow, he may no longer be your friend. But argue with your brother, and tomorrow, he is still your brother." 

## HAYOM YOM

26 Iyar

The command "You shall rebuke" is preceded by the words "You shall not hate your brother," for this is a precondition for the rebuke. The Torah continues, "...and you shall not ascribe sin to him," for if the rebuke was ineffectual, you are certainly the one responsible, for yours were not words coming from the heart.

*Compiled by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson obm, Hayom Yom is an anthology of Chasidic aphorisms and customs arranged according to the days of the year.*

## Torah Q&A for Your Shabbos Table

**Q: Why was the Torah given on Shabbos?**

A: If The Torah had been given on a weekday, some may have thought that since Shabbos is a day of rest, they should have a rest from Torah learning as well. By giving us the Torah on Shabbos, Hashem showed us that not only are we permitted to learn on Shabbos, but in fact we should devote the day to learning and serving Hashem.

**Q: Who wrote Tehillim?**

A: While the book of Tehillim is attributed to King David, he did not write all of them. King David composed many chapters and collected some from Adam Harishon, Malki Tzedek, Shem, Avraham Avinu, & Moshe Rabbeinu, Heman, Jeduthun, Asaph, & the three of the sons of Korach (Bava Basra 14b).

**Q: When did King David rule & when did he pass away?**

A: King David passed away on Shabbos, Shavuot 2924 (837 BCE). His reign lasted 40 years. His first seven years were in Chevron, over the tribe of Yehuda, and the next 33 years were in Yerushalayim over all of Israel. For 6 of those months King David was in exile during the rule of Avshalom.

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7:55pm Candle Lighting  
8:00pm Mincha  
Followed by Kabbalas Shabbos  
8:00am Tehillim  
9:00am Chassidus Shiur  
10:00am Davening  
6:40 Gemora Shiur (Sotah daf 41)  
7:45pm Mincha  
9:03pm Maariv / Shabbos Ends