HAMA`YAN

Table of Contents:

Survey of This Issue

This new issue includes within it a wide variety of articles. The editor presents two letters from two important talmudic scholars in the matter of the correct relationship, in their opinion, to Israeli Independence Day. On almost the same subject, the martyred Rav Eitam Henkin *h.y.d*. casts in bold relief the character of the author of *Arukh haShulhan* in his nuanced relationship to Zionism and Zionists, making clear that this relationship was not as oversimplified as is often portrayed by spokesmen for the extremist public.

Rav Zecharia Holzer of the Torat haRishonim Institute succeeds in clarifying a conundrum that arises time and again among earlier sources, which refer in a number of places to the sixteen instances of the word *dever* [plague] in the Book of Jeremiah, when in fact the term appears seventeen times.

The use of the 'new' crop of grain is prohibited until it is offered in the Temple. This '*chadash'* prohibition was of major agricultural and economic significance during the time of the Second Temple. Upon the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai extended the *chadash* prohibition to the end of the 16th of Nissan, the day during which it had once been offered. Prof. Eliezer E. Goldschmidt discusses the purpose of this regulation and its implications, on the basis of the Talmudic discourse in *Menachot* 68.

Dr. Nevo presents the midrashic sources of the familiar *piyut "Az Rov Nissim"* which the poet Yannai composed one thousand years ago and which is recited to this day on the *seder* evening.

Rav Sabato shows us instances in which a Jew can become a non-Jew, and Rav Harel Devir of Yad Binyamin revisits the question of conversion in which there is no real intention to become observant, principally the conversion of minors, which presents legal and ethical dilemmas. In Menachem Av 5775 [August 2015] the establishment was announced of an independent Rabbinical Court for matters of conversion under the leadership of Rav Nahum Rabinovitch *shlita*. Rav Rabinovitch reasons that it is possible to convert minors even without commitment to observance, based on *zachin* ["we obtain a privilege for a person in his absence" *Kiddushin* 23a]. It is clear that

in the opinion of many authorities, not only should such a conversion not be performed, but it may be problematic even after the fact. Along with the review of the various opinions, matters will be examined in comparison with their sources in the Talmud and early authorities.

The opening sentence of the first Mishna in *Shas* [the six orders of Mishna] creates an unexpected connection between the laws of ritual purity of *cohanim* [priests] and the time for reciting *shema* in the evening. Rav Yonathan Rabinovitch of Talmon examines Maimonides' rulings, shedding light on the realities of day to day life in a society that observes the laws of ritual purity, and showing how a central theme that preoccupied the *cohanim* provides not only the background to the Mishna, but also a possible remedy for one of the most horrific phenomena of modern society: children forgotten in vehicles.

Rav Prof. Weyler expands the scope of an interesting 'litmus test': in resolving contradictory statements, Rashi comments when the Talmud explains two statements in the order in which they are presented: however, when the second statement is dealt with first – chiastically – Rashi remains silent. The phenomenon was first noted when the text uses the terms *ha* [that/this] and *kan* [there/here]. In this article, Prof. Weyler shows that this same rule applies as well to the phrase *mar savar* [one master reasons]. These characteristics help to verify the authenticity of the text as having been authored by Rashi.

Rav Weitman, the Rav of the Tenuva Cooperative and now also the Rav of Alon Shevut in the Etzion Bloc, raises many important points on the book about *kashrut* published by the Kosharot institute in Elon Moreh, and Rav Kotler proposes an ethical code for publishing *Torani* articles . "The written word", Maimonides stated, "should be edited a *thousand times* before publication". Therefore, before publishing an article, one should examine the positive and negative effects of the publication. As usual we have important rejoinders and comments and reviews of new *Torani* books.

פסח כשר ושמח!

Yoel Catane, Editor