



### How Many Roads Must A Man Stumble Down?

I take no responsibility for the consequences of my assertion that by far the funniest books ever written (in English) are "The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy" series.

In the first of five books in the trilogy (sic) we are introduced to the concept that the answer to "Life, the Universe and Everything" is: 42.

The answer is easy; it's The Question they spend so long ascertaining.

In the end, we discover the question: "How Many Roads Must A Man Walk Down?"

The Author, Douglas Adams, must have been a Bible Scholar. I'll go even further, a student of Chassidic explanations to the Torah. This week we read in the Torah about the forty-two Massaot – journeys — that the Children of Israel undertook in their peregrinations through the desert. The Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidism, equated these journeys to the various stages of life. Over a lifetime of experience, we each undertake forty-two journeys, forty-two self- transformations, before (hopefully) ending up in our promised land.

To stand still is to stagnate. Life has to be a constant voyage of discovery. Resting is for year 121+.

The Torah recounts of 42 journeys. It doesn't describe 42 arrivals, 42 outcomes. That's significant, but not as important as the way we travel.

Every tumble is a precursor for a boost. Been bumped? Next flight, expect an upgrade.

(by Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum from [www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org))

### Kosher Extraction

THE LAWS OF *kashering* are many and confusing, and learned from this week's *parsha*. Thanks to Midian, we're still in exile. Bilaam sent them in, and their impact went far beyond Shittim, causing the tribes of Reuven, Gad, and half of Menashe to choose the land east of the Jordan river. And unfortunately and clearly unbeknownst to them at the time, it cost them and every Jew since then, the final stage of redemption.

Because, by choosing not to settle in *Eretz Yisroel*, they reduced the magical number of 600,000 necessary to annihilate the *Sitra Achra* and begin the Messianic Era. Had that many men between the ages of twenty and sixty settled on the west side of the Jordan, evil would have been destroyed forever, and *Yemos HaMoshiach* would have begun at that time.

Revenge against Midian in this week's *parsha* therefore was more historic than it might seem. And unlike with respect to the annihilation of Amalek, we were allowed to take spoils of war, which we did. Among the many things taken were cooking implements, and that created the need to talk *kashrus*, specifically the *kashering* of *treif* pots, pans, dishes, etc.

Obviously, everything had to be thoroughly washed and cleaned. That took care of all the *mamashos*, the traces of food that stuck to the vessels. For the average person, that would have seemed like enough. What else *could* there be to worry about?

*Bliyos*. Absorptions. Molecules of food that can, under the right conditions, become absorbed into the walls of a pot, a roasting spit, or a knife, etc. And even though such vessels may seem impervious to everything, especially today given the materials and methods used to make them, *halachically*, nothing is. With enough heat, *bliyos* of what is being cooked will split away from the main food and become absorbed in the walls of the cooking instrument.

That's how a pot, etc., can become *milchig* (dairy) or *fleishig* (meat) and remain that way even after the food has been removed and the pot has been cleaned. It's the *bliyos* that were absorbed that do that, and they will remain in the walls of the pot until one of two things happen. Either the pot remains unused for 24 hours, or something is done, like *kashering*, to draw out the *bliyos* and make the pot *pareve* again.

Why 24 hours? Because Tradition teaches that *bliyos* can only remain detached from their source for 24 hours before they lose their taste, and *kashrus* is a large part about taste. This works in two ways, because *bliyos* are something the rest of the world would not consider to be something to worry about in terms of *kashrus*. On the other hand, they would call something food even though it has lost all taste. *Kashrus* does not.

(continued on the other side)

This means, technically-speaking, that any pot that sits a full 24 hours without being used and clean of all food automatically becomes *pareve* once again and, indeed, that is the Torah law. The rabbis however have declared that such a pot remains *milchig* or *fleishig* forever until properly *kashered*. People make mistakes, especially with *kashrus*, so many halachic fences have been put in place to keep people a safe distance from breaking Torah law.

However because many laws of *kashrus* are rabbinic in origin, it leaves room for leniencies in emergency situations. No one can pick and choose which rabbinic laws to keep or ignore, but a competent *halachic* authority can decide in what situations they may or may not apply. This is usually based upon precedents from earlier generations.

The other way to *kasher* something is prescribed in this week's *parsha*. Since heat is usually the main culprit in causing *bliyos* to enter vessels, heat has to be used to rectify the situation as well. How much heat is used to *kasher* will depend upon how it was used to make something *treif* in the first place, or to make it *milchig* or *fleishig*. The stronger the heat, the deeper the *bliyos* enter the vessel and likewise, leave it.

That is part of the technical laws of *Kashrus*. There is *mussar* in this as well because, like *bliyos* of food, we get absorbed into the "walls" of exile as well. Depending upon the heat (passion) that was used to cause this, that is how deep a Jew can be absorbed into exile, and that is how much heat (anti-Semitism) will be needed to extract the *bliyos*.

When Moshe *Rabbeinu* went down to Egypt, he did not convince everyone of his mission right away. Only a few people joined him, the rest holding out until they too became convinced of his G-dly mission. After a few more plagues, some more joined the group, and then a few more.

But even still, after all of that and eight plagues, four-fifths of the Jewish people in Egypt at that time were still not onboard, and died in the Plague of Darkness instead of going out. That was twelve million Jews altogether who had become absorbed into the Egyptian lifestyle and refused to be extracted! "Rava says: It will be likewise in the Messianic Era" (*Sanhedrin* 111a.). No wonder Heaven is turning up the heat, and the Diaspora is becoming less and less hospitable.

(by Rabbi Pinchas Winston from Project Genesis at [www.torah.org](http://www.torah.org))

**Mr. Shmuel and Mrs. Mirra Siegel** are co-sponsoring Kiddush after davening this Shabbat in memory of the **yahrzeit** of Shmuel's mother, **Renee Siegel**, whose *yahrzeit* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Av.



**Dr. Shimon and Mrs. Chaya Deutsch** are co-sponsoring Kiddush after davening this Shabbat in memory of the **yahrzeit** of Shimon's mother, **Rivkah bas Meir**, whose *yahrzeit* is the 6<sup>th</sup> of Av.

#### Yahrzeits This Week:

Bluma Lewin	2 Av - Saturday night / Sunday	for mother	Anyah Dansah bas Yosef
Shmuel Siegel	2 Av - Saturday night / Sunday	for mother	Riklah Shleimshah bas Avrom Mottel haKohen
Dr. Steven Deutsch	6 Av - Wednesday night / Thursday	for mother	Rivkah bas Meyer
Binyomin Gutman	6 Av - Wednesday night / Thursday	for mother	Ahuva bas Mordechai haLevi

#### DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

##### Friday, 7/25 — 29 Tammuz

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

##### Shabbat — Rosh Chodesh Av, 7/26 — 1 Av

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:35 a.m.  
Minchah — 7:55 p.m.  
Shiur — after Minchah  
Shkiah — 8:24 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 9:10 p.m.

##### Sunday, 7/27 — 2 Av

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.

##### Monday, 7/28 — 3 Av

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.

##### Tuesday, 7/29 — 4 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.

##### Wednesday, 7/30 — 5 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.  
Tanya Shiur: 2<sup>nd</sup> part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud  
V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation  
and the unity of Hashem — 8:45 p.m.

##### Thursday, 7/31 — 6 Av

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.

##### Friday, 8/1 — 7 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Shabbat Candles — 8:00 p.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.