

HAMA'YAN

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Summaries of Articles

The journal opens with a brief message from the editor, Harav Yoel Catane, dedicated to the memory of Professor Mordechai Breuer z"l, the founder and first editor of *HaMa'yan*. He was the son of Dr. Yitzchak Breuer, one of the leaders of Agudat Yisrael, and the grandson of Rav Shelomo Zalman Breuer, son-in-law and successor to Rav Shimshon Rephael Hirsch. He spent his entire life engaged in education, published many works, and served as professor of history at Bar Ilan University. He received rabbinical ordination from his illustrious uncle, Rabbi Dr. Joseph Breuer, Rav of Kehal Adath Yeshurun in New York. He corrected versions of his father's and grandfather's writings. Just recently he participated in a gathering marking the publication of his new edition of *Horev*, the magnum opus of Rav Shimshon Rephael Hirsch. He was very involved in the affairs of *HaMa'yan* as a distinguished member of its editorial board. תנצב"ה

Rav Shelomo Fisher: The Impact of an Action in Mizvot and Issurim

Hagaon Rav Shelomo Fisher shlit"a, a well known *dayan* and *ra"m* in Yerushalayim, writes an essay about *bishul achar tzliya*, "cooking after roasting", in his book *Beit Yishai*. Inter alia Rav Fisher proves that the act of roasting of the *korban pesach* leaves its impact on the roasted meat throughout the night of Pesach, and discusses the significance of this status. In this article, he brings other examples of this phenomenon in halacha, i.e. the mitzva of rending one's garments when in mourning. The mitzva is not only that one's garment, worn during mourning, be torn. There are specific requirements regarding the actual act of Kria. We see, therefore, that the act of Kria and the wearing of the Kria garment are intertwined. Were the mitzva to be only the act of Kria then one should be permitted to sew it up immediately. Were the mitzva to be only the wearing of torn garments then there should be no restrictions and regulations regarding the act of Kria. Thus, the act of Kria impacts upon the fulfillment of the mitzva throughout the shiva mourning period. The significance of this phenomenon is discussed in his article.

Gavriel Yitzchak Ravena: Allusions to Rasag in Ramchal's Mesillat Yesharim

Mesillat Yesharim, by Rav Moshe Chaim Luzatto zt"l, is one of the most well known mussar works. In this article, the author proves that some of Ramchal's

ideas may be found in Rav Saadia Gaon's *Emunot Vedeot*. For example, Rasag emphasizes the centrality of man as the purpose of creation. Ramchal, as well, bases himself on this philosophical concept. Many of his proofs regarding the existence of the world to come, in his *Messilat Yesharim*, are taken from Rasag. It is unlikely that a man as erudite as the Ramchal was not knowledgeable of and influenced by *Emunot Vedeot*. Apparently Ramchal adapted certain philosophical ideas from *Emunot Vedeot* for his work on ethics and mussar. This serves as an excellent example of the evolution of ideas from the philosophical realm to the world of mussar.

Rav Ari Yitchak Schwat: Rav Kook's Perspective on the Founding of Hebrew University – new evidence

There has been much speculation about Rav Kook's true feelings regarding the opening of Hebrew University. Some have wondered whether his expressed hopes were sincere, and some have even gone so far as to imply that his remarks were forced upon him. Newly released documents, some of them in English, reveal that Rav Kook was not blinded to the dangers and challenges, but had hoped they would be relatively manageable. He saw in the opening of the university a major step towards national renaissance. At the same time Rav Kook encouraged Torah observing academics to teach at the university. In addition, one may learn from these documents that Rav Kook saw a definite need for the establishment of a real Israeli university without "pitfalls" and "dangers". This would be an even greater step forward in the renaissance of Israel, in the spirit of Torah and Derech-Eretz-Yisrael. This ideal, as is pronounced in these newly released documents, will undoubtedly be fulfilled, with the help of Hashem, in our time.

Rav Shelomo Kushelevski: The Prophecies regarding Tyre according to the Abarbanel

There are numerous textual difficulties in the prophets regarding the fate of Tyre. Yechezkel foretold the permanent destruction of Tyre, while Yishayahu prophesied that it would be destroyed for only 70 years, and in Zecharya it is stated that Tyre would exist at the coming of Mashiach and that it would subject itself to his rule. The Abarbanel resolves the contradictions, aided by the writings of ancient historians. He posits that Tyre was initially captured by the Assyrians, however, its inhabitants were not exiled. Subsequently, Nevuchadnetzar conquered it and destroyed its walls. Tyre was rebuilt in another location, on the

sea, like Venice. After a few hundred years Alexander the Great declared war on Tyre, destroyed the artificial island and sunk it into the sea.

The author attempts to clarify the various events described in the prophecies in comparing them with recent archeological findings. Tyre of Yechezkel's prophecy does not refer to the Tyre of today, which is built on a natural rocky island, as are many other cities. 2001 underwater archeologists and Lebanese historians reported the discovery of remnants of a city in the depths of the sea, near the Zaharani coast, north of ancient Tyre. The city stretches over an area of four square kilometers and includes paved roads, three meters wide and tens of meters long, amazingly preserved, at a depth of five meters. Perhaps this is the Tyre, sunk in the sea, referred to by Abarbanel, and this is the Tyre of Yechezkel's prophecy.

Rav Yaakov Kopel Reinitz: "Reflect upon the Past, of Generation after Generation"

The generation gap is felt significantly in our times. The younger generation prides itself on its stronger commitment to Torah. Unfortunately, however, we also witness an increased emphasis on externals. At the same time there is a departure from time honored customs, held dear by previous generations.

Yedael Waldman: The Significance of *Birchat Kohanim* according to the Rambam

What is the power of *Birchat Kohanim*? Does the recitation of the verses by the Kohanim result in a blessing? The Rambam clearly suggests otherwise. He stresses that Hashem alone bestows the bracha. The Kohanim rather pray to Hashem on the nation's behalf. It is significant that Rambam places the laws of the Priestly Blessings at the end of *Hilchot Tefilla* in the *sefer Ahava*. It is the task of the Kohanim to inspire the people to love Hashem, and, thus, make them worthy of His blessings.

Yitzchak Ronnes: A Burglar Who Tries to Flee – what is the Torah law regarding self defence?

When an robber *Haba Bamachteret* decides to flee to avoid being caught, may one still kill him? According to the Rambam, when he leaves behind the stolen property and runs away he is no longer considered a *rodef*.

Memorials

Rav Meir Schlesinger, the founder and first Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Sha'alvim, writes about his friend, Rav Yosef Buxbaum z"l, founder of Machon Yerushalayim; and Dr. Yosef Ofer tells us about Rav Mordechai Breuer z"l (the cousin of Prof. Mordechai Breuer z"l), one of the great Biblical scholars of our times, Lover of Torah, the Nation and the Land.

Responses and Comments

Hagaon Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl shlit"א provides a novel explanation for the significance of the statement "Naaseh VeNishma" – the Jewish nation testified to their willingness to observe the mitzvot on their own, as did our forefathers before the Torah was given. This is the significance of "Naaseh". However, fearful that they may not be wise enough to fully understand the will of G-D, they obligate themselves to hear and learn from Moshe Rabeinu what Hashem truly demands – "VeNishmah".

Ran bin Nun wrote in HaMa'yan Tamuz 5766 that according to Rabbeinu Tam, the time for *tzet hakochavim* was in fact much closer to the opinion of the Geonim. Rav Freiman rejects this suggestion, and supports the traditional understanding, that the two opinions are in fact significantly distinct.

Rav Avraham Yaakov Goldmuntz supports the thesis presented by Rav Moshe Yehuda Rosenwasser in an earlier article, that the Ramban wrote his commentary to Torah with a focus on the needs of his generation. A particular need was to attack the beliefs of Christianity, which was a pressing challenge for the people of Spain. But, Rav Goldmuntz objects to the inclusion of sources from Christian texts in Rav Rosenwasser's article. Rav Rosenwasser defends their inclusion for many reasons.

Rav Dr. Natan David Rabinovich responds to a letter that challenges some of the facts in his writings concerning the history of the Chatam Sofer's family (HaMa'yan Nissan 5767).

Books and Authors

Rav Moshe David Chechick discusses the merits of the new siddur "Ezor Eliyahu," which attempts to provide the most correct *nusach* according to the Gra. The article points out that this siddur is excellent, but there is still room for a more accurate and systematic edition.

The journal concludes with a review, written by Rav Yoel Catane, of twenty recent publications received by the editorial board.