**Oktzim, Chapter Three, Mishnah Twelve**

**Introduction**

The last mishnah in the entire Mishnah is actually not originally a mishnah! It was a late addition to the Mishnah so that the book could end with a word of peace.

**Mishnah Twelve**

1. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: In the world to come the Holy One, Blessed be He, will make each righteous person inherit three hundred and ten worlds, for it is written: "That I may cause those that love me to inherit *yesh* (numerical value of 310); and that I may fill their treasuries" (Proverbs 8:21).
2. Rabbi Shimon ben Halafta said: the Holy One, Blessed be He, found no vessel that could contain blessing for Israel save that of peace, as it is written: "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."

***Explanation***

**Section one:** The first derashah is based on the word "yesh" which in Hebrew has the gematria (numerical) value of 310 (yod is 10, shin is 300). Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi understands the word "yesh" to mean that tzadikim, the righteous, will inherit 310 worlds. I hope they're good ones!

**Section two**: Shalom, peace, wellbeing, or perhaps completeness, is the vehicle by which God brings berakhah into the world. It is the reason that the last berakhah of the Amidah is "peace" and it is the reason that the Mishnah, which has been one of the greatest berakhot the Jews have ever created or received, ends with the same word. Completeness is also an appropriate way of completing the Mishnah, which after more than 12 years, you and I have now done.

**Congratulations! We have completed Tractate Oktzim, Seder Toharot and the Entire Mishnah!!**

Usually I write, "It is a tradition at this point to thank God for helping us finish learning the tractate and to commit ourselves to going back and relearning it, so that we may not forget it and so that its lessons will stay with us for all of our lives."

But today, I think I might need to write a bit more. For the past 12 years I have been writing my commentary on the Mishnah and you have been reading and studying it. And now, we've actually reached that moment. We've finished learning the whole Mishnah. So grab yourself a beer, a glass of wine, a shot of whiskey, raise a l'haim, say a berakhah (shehakol over beer and whiskey, hagafen over wine) and drink up. It's been a true privilege to serve as your teacher and it's been an amazing opportunity for me as well.

I should say that my feeling is one of utter humility. My commentary was based on the work of others, whose work was based on their predecessors, going all the way back to the Talmud. I hope I have brought to you just a small taste of the amazing rabbinic tradition. The Mishnah is, after all, one of the shortest of rabbinic works. There is much learning to be done, and shortly we will begin Daf Shevui.

But for now, one moment of congratulations is in order. I will be reciting the Hebrew siyyum (words of completion) on Sunday at the Conservative Yeshiva. Hopefully, it will be on the internet so that you can see it as well. Congratulations on an amazing amount of learning.

And finally thank you to all of the people who've made this possible. Thanks to all of you who have donated money to subsidize the project. Thanks to the many people at USCJ in New York, Dr. Morton Siegel and Rabbi Paul Drazen, and others over the years who've made sure the Mishnah was properly sent out. Thanks to the people at the Conservative Yeshiva, including Rabbi Gail Diamond, who took over the project in recent years.

And "*aharon aharon haviv*" I want to extend my warmest gratitude to Rabbi Jerome Epstein who approached me about 12 years ago and asked whether I would be interested and willing to start this project. Without Rabbi Epstein's commitment Mishnah Yomit would never have begun and it would not have been completed. For twelve years he has been my most consistent learner, and without his careful eye, the text would have been full of even more typos than there probably are. I have benefited tremendously from his dedication and I hope it continues for many years.