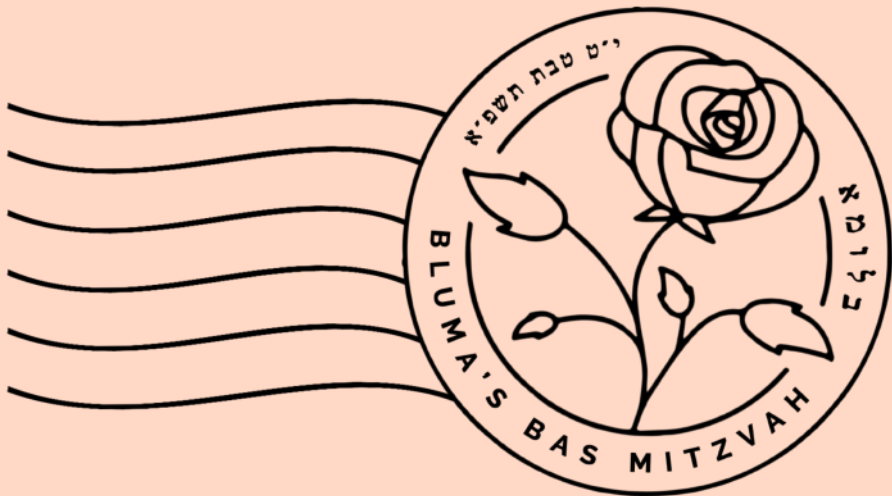


# Postcards from the 14 Books of Rambam's Mishneh Torah

by Bluma Rubin





Bluma Rubin is named for her great-grandmother Bubbe Bluma (Maskalik) Galperin who passed away on the 11th of Cheshvan (same yartzeit as Rochel Imenu) in 5770/2009 just two months before Bluma was born. Bluma Rubin is the first to be named for her!

She was born in the town of Zhlobin in 1911. Her father was the beloved and respected Chassid, Reb Yankel Maskalik-Zuravitzer, who as a Yeshiva student was nicknamed "The Mama of (the original) Tomchei Temimim" because of his devotion and care to the physical and spiritual needs of his fellows. During the 1920's & 1930's, at great personal sacrifice, he crisscrossed the breadth & length of Russia on many missions to scout out and strengthen underground Judaism on behalf of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe who said of him: "Had I 20 such Yankels we would have conquered all of Russia!" He was arrested several times, the final time in 1937 and never seen again.

Bluma's mother Miriam Rochel passed away when she was young, and her father's arrest left Bluma, the oldest of the children, with added responsibilities in her early teens. She later married R' Shimon Galperin, son of the Chassid & Shochet, R' Shmuel Galperin of Pleshnitz, and during WWII and the Nazi onslaught in Russia they ended up in Tashkent where she and her husband Shimon (with lots of help from her mother-in-law Bubbe Reiza Galperin, especially

during the years of her husband's imprisonment) raised her two sons R' Ruvain and R' Shlomo Galperin, may they live and be well! and a daughter Miriam Rochel Lipsch obm. Bubbe Bluma raised her family with great devotion to Judaism in Soviet Russia, even as members of her family were imprisoned and her father paid the ultimate price.

In 1971 she emigrated with her husband and children to Israel and settled in Nachlat Har Chabad, in Kiryat Malachi. She was known for how she lovingly cooked & baked for Simchas in the community. One of her specialties was "Chvorost" a fried dough twisted into rose-shapes and sprinkled with powdered sugar. It is especially fitting because the name "Bluma" is Yiddish for flower. This is why flowers are the logo and décor theme for our Bluma's Bas-Mitzvah.

When she heard that the town's school-children were given the same usual breakfast on Rosh Chodesh she began a tradition to buy them all sweet yogurts so they should realize the day was special. Like her father, she was especially sensitive to people's needs, and did all she could to help, and had a special touch for the physical enmeshed with a mitzvah. Making a date special was also something dear to her. There's a family story about her concern to the Rebbe about the date chosen for her father's yartzeit - 24th of Teves, same as the Alter Rebbe - (see "Why Alter Rebbe's Yartzeit on shabboshouse.org) Making Simchas extra-special and finding meaningful significance and connection in the timing is very Bubbe Bluma-esque!

## ABOUT THIS “RAMBAM POSTCARD” PROJECT

My Hebrew birthday and Bas-Mitzvah is on the 19th of Tevet, one day before the Rambam's (aka Maimonides) yartzeit on the 20th of Tevet. My school is named Maimonides for his wonderful blend and balance of Torah and worldly experience. And for the past four years I have been studying the Yahadus Curriculum which is based on Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot and Mishneh Torah on all the 613 Mitzvot. So it just seemed right for me to do my Bas-Mitzvah project on Rambam!

The Rebbe encouraged the daily study of Rambam because it is both the most comprehensive and most accessible Halachic work. In fact, it is the only work of Halacha to include all the mitzvot of the Torah, even those (like the laws of the Temple for example) which are not practically observed nowadays. The Rambam was super organized (I also like when things are organized) and he lined up all the Halachos by themes and categories. And Rambam made special effort to make his work as simple and clear as possible so anyone can learn it, even as it hides tremendous depth and scholarship within.

Maimonides was born in Spain, lived in Egypt and was buried in Tiberias Israel. There's a beautiful modern monument that leads up to his gravesite: Fourteen columns (each bearing the name of one of the 14 books of his major work Mishneh Torah) flank the walkway with a canopy of interconnected steel beams linking the pillars together. Indeed, all of Torah (& Mishneh Torah) is very intertwined.

Nowadays most people send emails, texts andWhatsapps, but my Bubbe Rubin still loves to send postcards! There are vintage postcards from each state that have a landmark or capitol building or state flower and that's what we did with this project - my parents and I took one or two basic ideas from each of the Rambam's 14 Mishneh Torah books and created a “postcard” with “regards” from symbols of that book. My father helped me with the concepts, my mother helped me a lot with crafting each piece, it was fun to work together. My sister Chani designed my logo and “postmark” and my sister Sara orchestrated the floral backdrop you'll see on Zoom. Bassie did a lot of the baking and even attempted to replicate Bubbe Bluma's floral “Chvorost” fried dough treats.

But what's a postcard without stamps? Luckily, my Zeide Rubin has a small collection of Rambam stamps published around the world from Maimonides School's 2005 Rambam-themed dinner commemorating 800 years since Rambam's passing in 1204. You'll see them on the backs of each “postcard” inside this booklet.

A big thank you to my teachers & friends at the Maimonides School, who make Maimonides and Jewish learning come alive for me each day right here in Albany NY! Special thanks to my two younger sisters Esther Miriam and Rivka for all their love and fun times, to all my family close by and far away, and to all the students and alumni at Shabbos House, our extended family! You all help me grow...

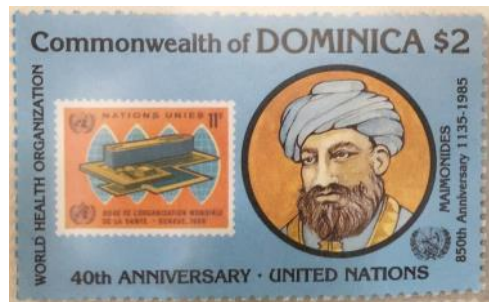
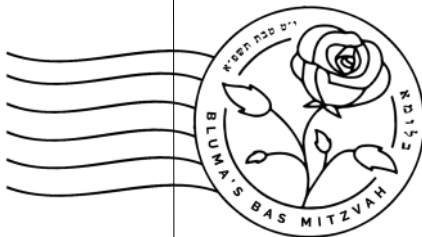
Love, Bluma Rubin



---

---

---



SEFER HAMADDAH, the Book of Knowledge, is the first of the fourteen books in Rambam's Mishneh Torah. Its five sections discuss basic Jewish belief; moral character and values; all about Torah study; the laws of idol worship; and about Teshuvah repentance. Rambam's Hilchot Teshuva is itself a stand-alone classic. Sefer Ahava includes pieces of philosophy, history, astronomy and inspiration. It even has recommendations for healthy eating, exercise and lifestyle choices.

Sefer HaMaddah has the basics of belief in G-d's Creation of the world and Giving of the Torah, which is why this postcard depicts a globe with the Bereishit verse, and the Luchot tablets atop Mt Sinai and the "Anochi" verse. They are both inside the scroll of Torah, the lens from which Rambam sees everything in life.

---

---

---





---



---



---

SEFER AHAVA, the Book of Love, is the second in the series. This book has 6 sections: The mitzvah of twice daily Shema; the laws of Prayer and Birkat Kohanim; all about Sefer Torah, Tefillin and Mezuzah; Tzitzit; all types of blessings including food blessings and Grace after Meals; and Brit-Milah. The Rambam ends this book with a Siddur skeleton, a basic outline of all the prayers of the year. It is interesting how the Rambam titles this section of daily everyday observances as love, as they are ways which both symbolize and express our connection to G-d.

This postcard has a felt Tallit background, the Siddur is opened to both the opening words of the Shema and the opening formula for all types of blessings, and there's a Mezuzah case representing the Mezuzah and other mitzvot involving handwritten scribal art such as Tefillin and Sefer Torah.




---



---



---

<p>7 1 Tishrei Rosh Hashanah</p>  <p>Candle Lighting: 6:01 PM</p>	<p>8 2 Tishrei Rosh Hashanah</p>  <p>F</p>	<p>9 3 Tishrei Fast of Gedaliah</p> <p>Yartzeit Emanuel Granovetter Fast: 4:57 AM - 7:44 PM</p>	<p>10 4 Tishrei</p> <p>Candle Lighting: 6:55 PM</p>	<p>11 5 Tishrei Shabbat Shuva</p>  <p>Vayrilec</p> <p>Shabbat Ends: 7:28 PM</p>
<p>14 8 Tishrei</p>	<p>15 9 Tishrei Yom Kippur Eve</p> 	<p>16 10 Tishrei Yom Kippur Yizkor</p>  <p>B</p> <p>Shabbat Ends: 7:45 PM</p>	<p>17 11 Tishrei</p> <p>Candle Lighting: 6:43 PM</p>	<p>18 12 Tishrei</p>  <p>Ha'</p> <p>Shabbat Ends: 7:41 PM</p>
<p>21 15 Tishrei Sukkot</p>  <p>Candle Lighting: after 7:36 PM</p>	<p>22 16 Tishrei Sukkot</p>  <p>day</p>	<p>23 17 Tishrei Sukkot 1<sup>st</sup> Intermediate Day</p>  <p>Candle Lighting: 6:30 PM</p>	<p>24 18 Tishrei Sukkot Intermediate Day</p> <p>Candle Lighting: 6:30 PM</p>	<p>25 19 Tishrei Sukkot 3<sup>rd</sup> Intermediate Day</p> <p>Shabbat Ends: 7:28 PM</p>

GREETINGS FROM SEFER  
**ZEMANIM**



---

---

---

SEFER ZEMANIM, the Book of Times, is the third book, Jewish calendar-themed, all-around-the-year, including the many laws of Shabbat and all the Jewish holidays. This extra large book has the laws of Shofar, Lulav and Sukkah, Matzah, Chanukah's Menorah and the Purim Megillah and all Jewish holiday mitzvot in between, all the do's and don'ts of Shabbat, Yom Kippur and the various holidays, the ways they are the same and different. In addition, this section includes the laws of the biblical half-Shekel coin donation, the laws of the fast-days and how the Rosh Chodesh new month is established, which includes lots of astronomy.

This postcard features a busy section of the Tishrei month which is filled with holidays. Mitzvot made of clay are positioned on each of the featured holidays, including Shabbat which happens every week. Of course, at Shabbos House, Friday night dinner is our main event for students and the Jewish holidays are big highlights here with lots of special foods, traditions, activities and great memories.



---

---

---





SEFER NASHIM, the Book of Women, is the fourth book in Rambam's Mishneh Torah. It has five sections: the details of the happy laws of marriage; a divorce when it is sadly necessary; the rare situation of Yibum or Chalitzah with a brother-in-law; the big problems that can occur when men don't respect women's privacy and space; and the laws of a Sotah in Temple times.

This postcard was a Chuppah canopy set against a dark night, with a bride's veil and flowers, her rings and her Ketubah. Across the front of the Chuppah are printed the joyous song-filled words of: "Siman Tov uMazal Tov"! May we celebrate many Simchas!

DAIRY



חלב ישראל

PAREVE



פת ישראל

MEAT

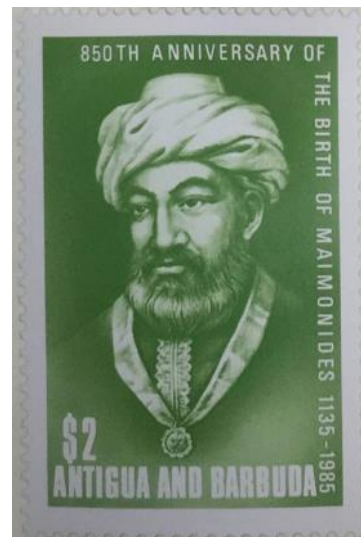


גלאט כשר



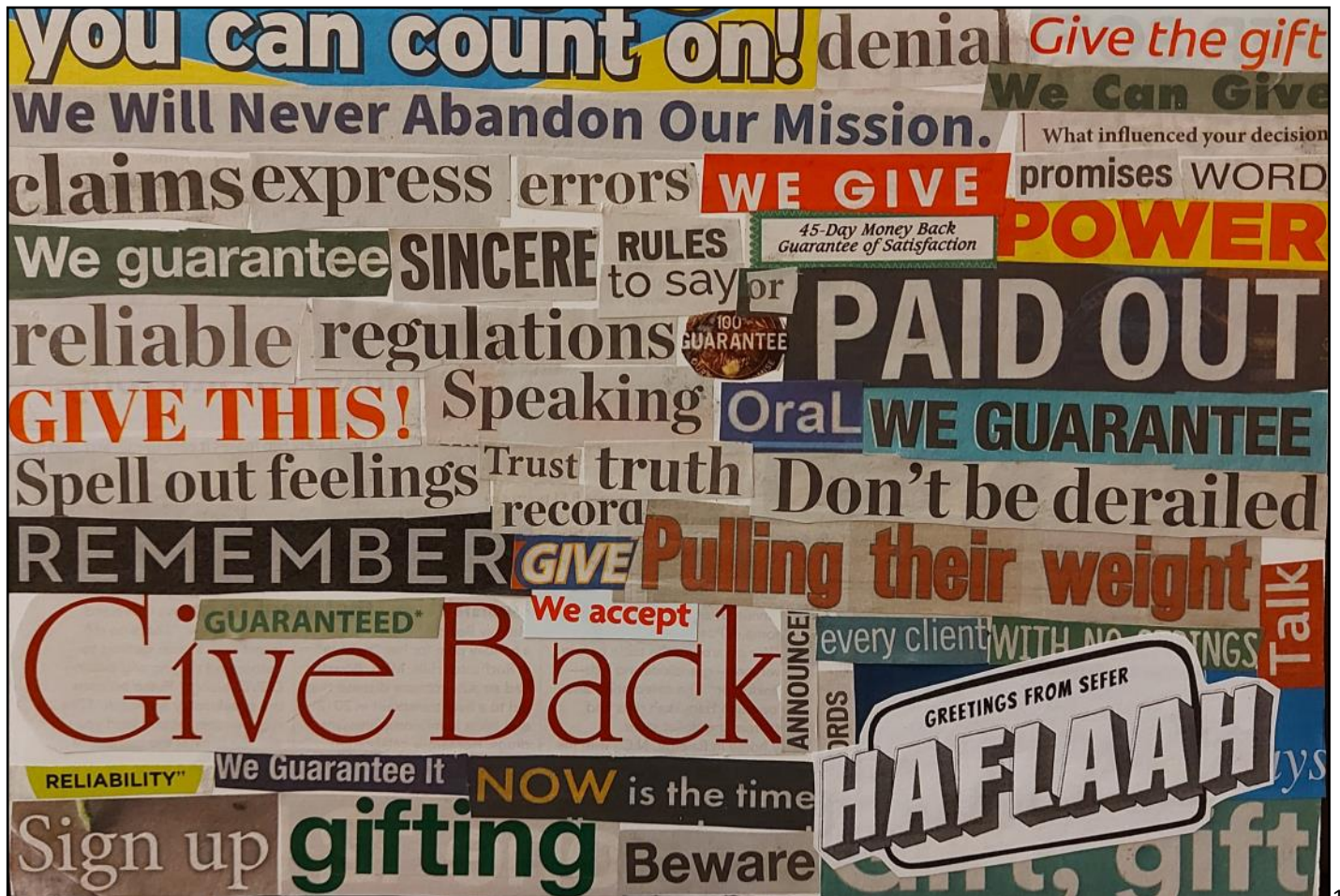
GREETINGS FROM SEFER  
**KEDUSHA**



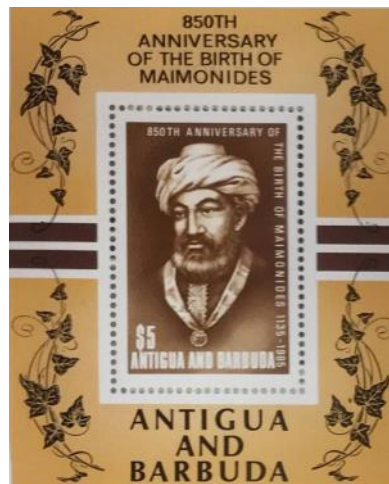


SEFER KEDUSHA, the Book of Holiness, is the fifth book and has three sections: The first is on forbidden relationships and marriages; the second is all about the laws of preparing and eating Kosher food; and the third section is on the laws of Shechitah.

This postcard focuses on Kosher food, split three ways between meat, pareve and dairy, with some of the famous national Kosher symbols that you can find on products in almost any supermarket. We also included two lesser-known symbols that are meaningful locally and to our family: the CHK of Crown Heights Kosher and the Vaad Hakashruth of the Capital District in Albany where we live. We also have a family connection to the OK because my uncle Rabbi Hendel is on its leadership committee.



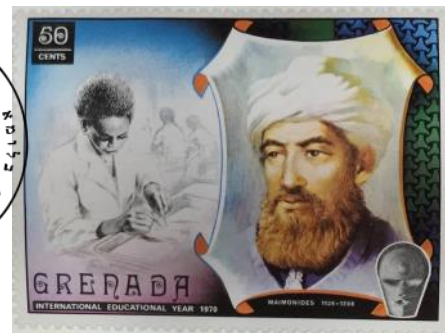




SEFER HAFLA'AH, the Book of Special Utterances, is the sixth book of Mishneh Torah and it has four sections - all about words of commitment: oaths; vows; the laws of the Nazirite; and the laws of pledges of Temple donations.

To illustrate the power and effect of words, pledges and promises, this postcard is filled with clipped words from newspapers about words, gifting, promises and commitments.





SEFER ZERAIM, the Book of Seeds, is the seventh book of Mishneh Torah with seven sections all regarding agricultural laws mostly relating to planting and produce. The sections include the laws of forbidden mixtures; Tzedakah and obligatory gifts to the poor; the various tithes of Terumah, Maaser, and Maaser Sheini; the laws of Bikurim a farmer's first fruits; and the Shemitta sabbatical year.

For a postcard on agriculture we did a farm scene with dirt and grass, produce and tools, against a burlap sack background.





---



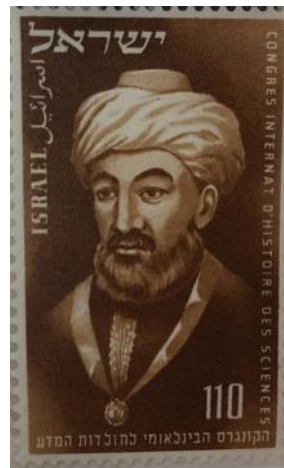
---



---

SEFER AVODAH, the Book of Temple Service, the eighth book, has nine sections about the Beit HaMikdash: its construction, design and structure; the laws of Temple vessels & equipment; laws of Temple entry and authorized access; things forbidden on the altar; general sacrifice procedures; regular basic & holiday bonus offerings; issue of disqualified consecrated items; the Yom Kippur Temple service; and laws of personal misuse of Temple property.

This postcard has an artistic adaptation of the Jerusalem Temple's basic facade. May it be rebuilt speedily in our time!




---



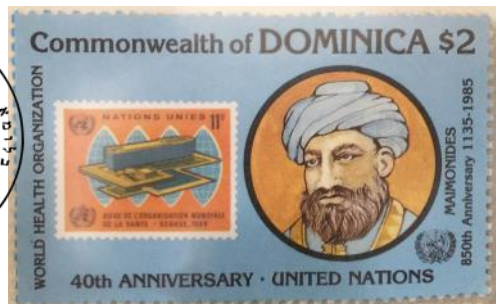
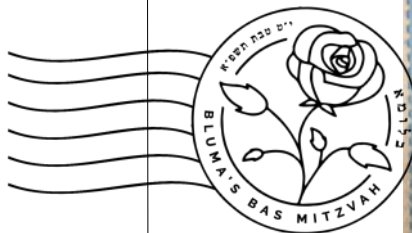
---



---







SEFER KORBANOT, the Book of Offerings, is the ninth book in Mishneh Torah. This book goes into the specifics of certain sacrifices, with 6 sections: the Korban Pesach; the Chagigah holiday offering; laws of the first-born; Korban Chatas for mistakes and unintentional sins; offerings for incomplete atonements; and the laws of animal substitutions.

The Temple had two altars, the inner smaller altar for incense, and the larger outer altar for sacrifices. The postcard depicts the outer altar with its hallmark ramp to fulfill the mitzvah not to walk up to the altar on steps.

---

---

---

מ ק ו ה ט ה ר ה



GREETINGS FROM SEFER  
**TAHARAH**



SEFER TAHARAH, the Book of Purity, is the tenth book in Mishneh Torah. It has eight sections all about the laws of purity and impurity: impurity through a dead body; the process of the red heifer; diagnosis and purification of Tzaraat; impurity through various degrees of touch; other sources of defilement; the many laws of vessels in issues of impurity; and the laws of the purifying waters of the Mikvah.

This postcard is titled as a Mikvah Taharah, the ritual purification pool that is an important local communal institution and is used to this day, even as many of the other laws of impurity do not practically apply nowadays.

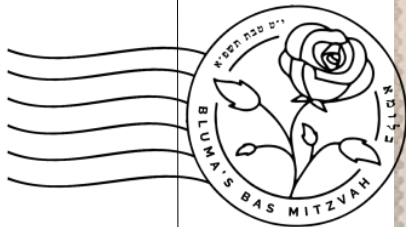
This book is yet another example of Rambam's comprehensive approach, his Mishneh Torah is the only book of Jewish law to include the full spectrum of all of Torah's laws, even the ones not practically applicable at this time.



---

---

---



SEFER NEZIKIN, the Book of Damages, is the eleventh book, which is focused on damages and crimes. It includes five sections: property damages; theft; robbery and lost property; personal injury; murder & preserving life. These laws are examples of how the Torah deals with civil law, not only religious matters. In fact there is a great deal of Talmud (where Rambam gets the Halacha from) devoted to these types of laws in great length & complexity.

This postcard about damages and crime has yellow caution tape all over it. The magnifying glass looks into the broken glass of the crime scene: Who is responsible? What are they liable for and to what extent? These laws address many more questions like these.

---

---

---



SALES

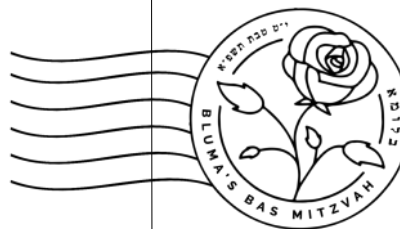
GIFTS

NEIGHBORS

AGENTS

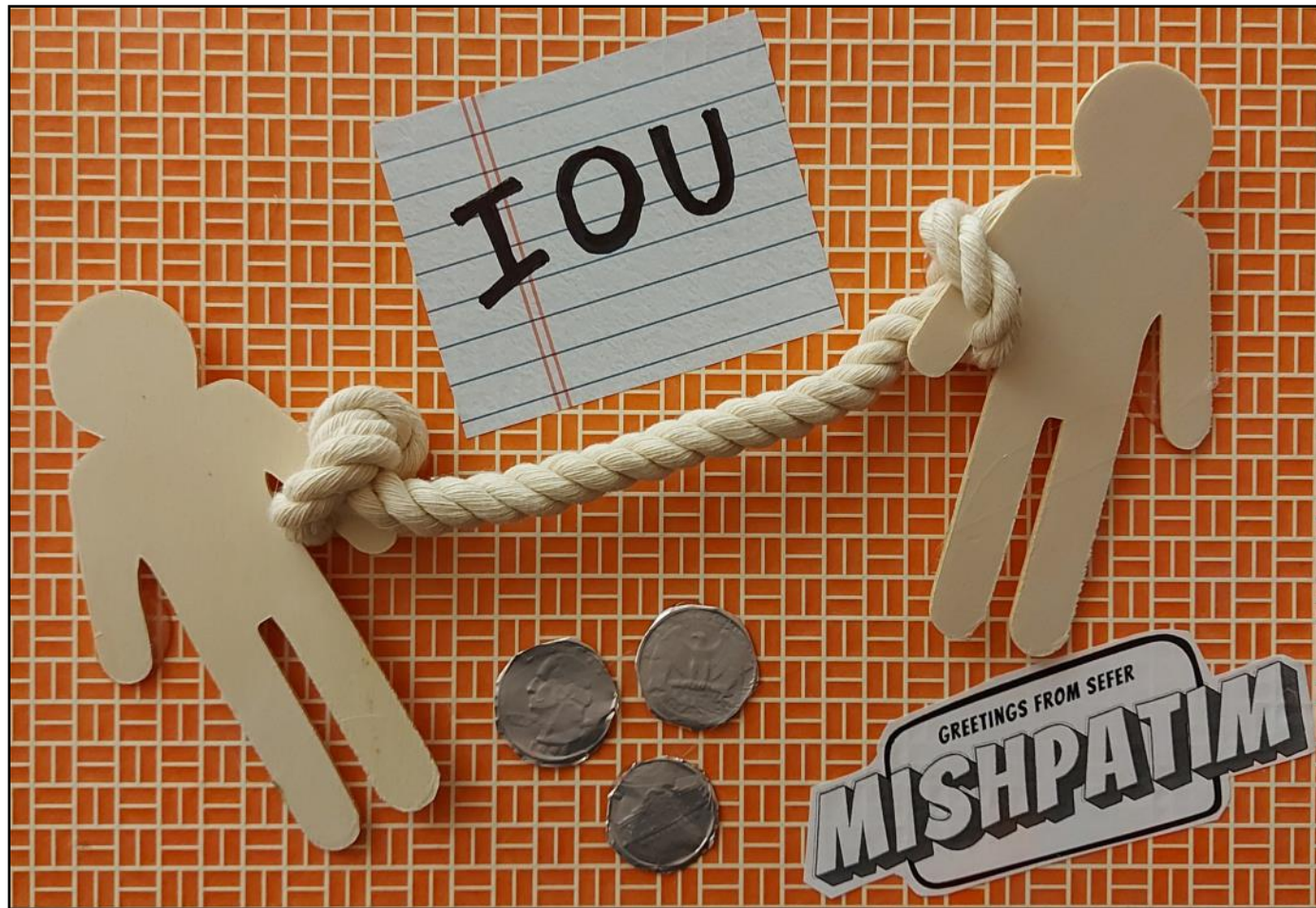


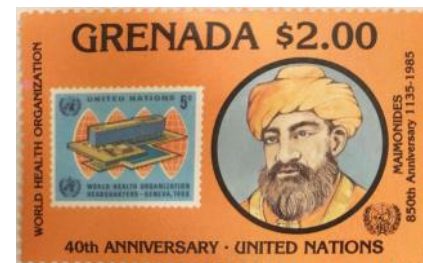




SEFER KINYAN, the Book of Acquisitions, is the twelfth book of Mishneh Torah. It deals with all types of transactions and business matters, in five sections: sales; gifts; neighbor laws; agents and partners; and slaves.

This postcard is very business-like and office-esque, with file folders organized on a cork background.





SEFER MISHPATIM, the Book of Civil Laws, is the thirteenth book of Mishneh Torah. It deals with matters of responsibility and liability, and all types of financial disputes. It has five sections: rentals; borrowing and deposits; lenders and borrowers; financial litigation; and matters of inheritance. These matters are the subject of much lengthy and complex discussion in the Talmud, which Rambam distills down into easier reading and accessible and practical Halachic clarity in Mishneh Torah.

This postcard has two stick figures in a (legal) tug-of-war, with coins in the middle and an I.O.U. document on top.



---

---

---

SEFER SHOFTIM, Book of Judges, is the fourteenth and final book of the Rambam's Mishneh Torah. It deals with courts, and matters of state and leadership. It has five sections: the Sanhedrin; laws of witnesses; issues of heresy; laws of mourning; and the laws of kings and wars. The best known chapters of this book are the very last two, in which Rambam discusses the yearning for Moshiach and the final and ultimate redemption.

This postcard depicts a courthouse of justice with a judges' gavel across the entrance pillars.



---

---

---

# Thank you for celebrating my Bas-Mitzvah!

Now that you've seen the "postcards" do you want to see more?

A postcard is just a small taste, a quick regards, or a greeting.

Interested in more Rambam study?

Search "Daily Study" online to find Chabad.org's excellent resources of Hebrew & English texts, audio & video.

The Rambam study cycle has two options for the 14 books of Mishneh Torah:

3 chapters per day for the annual cycle or 1 chapter per day to complete in three years.

There's a simpler Rambam Sefer HaMitzvos daily study cycle, too.

The weekly Chayenu daily study printed publication (or app) is another handy way to do it.

And here's a little added post-script:

For this current 1-chapter Rambam study cycle my father has been doing a daily #1ChapterRambam tweet or a few.

You don't have to be on Twitter to see it. You can google that hashtag and sort by "latest" to see them in order of most recent.