

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

'Be extremely protective of your lives' (D'varim 4:15)

Translation by Yehoshua Siskin

Here are some shocking numbers: 7 people have drowned in a 24 hour period on beaches or in swimming pools in Israel; from the start of the bathing season, 22 Israelis have drowned, including 12 children; 133 have required medical attention and August is not yet here. There are a number of explanations for these tragedies: bathing in areas not designated as beaches; entering stormy waters; children going into the water without parental supervision, and others.

I thought that the coronavirus would have changed our perspective. If we were so concerned about every

patient on a ventilator, scrupulously counted every coronavirus patient and victim, and carefully adhered to social distancing and wearing masks -- how could this pandemic not have taught us to have greater appreciation for life under all circumstances?

This is supposed to be the most magical time of the year for vacationing in our land. Millions of Israelis go on trips, and this week's Torah portion describes the beautiful vistas that accompany them on their travels:

"For HaShem your God is bringing you to a good land, a land with brooks of water, fountains and depths, that emerge in valleys and mountains, a land of wheat and barley, vines and figs and pomegranates, a land of oil-producing olives and honey" (Devarim 8:7-8).

From now on, may we experience this "good land" with blessings alone.