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## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON TETZAVE - 5774

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from: Rabbi Yissocher Frand [ryfrand@torah.org](mailto:ryfrand@torah.org) to:  
[ravfrand@torah.org](mailto:ravfrand@torah.org) date: Thu, Feb 6, 2014 at 4:01 PM subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Tetzaveh  
**Rabbi Yissocher Frand**  
**Parshas Tetzaveh**

These divrei Torah were adapted from the Hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: CD #847 Teaching Torah to a Potential Ger. Good Shabbos!

Betzalel Son of Uri Son of Chur (Son of Miriam)  
[Even though we will be speaking this evening about a pasuk that is not in Parshas Tezaveh, the pasuk is in both Ki Sisa and Vayakhel. Since in many senses, the last 5 parshiyos of the Book of Shmos all deal with the same topic (the construction of the Mishkan and the various vessels and priestly garments used in the "Temple Service") my practice is to treat all 5 parshiyos as one for homiletic purposes and feel it is not inappropriate to discuss this pasuk the week of Tezaveh, even though it does not actually appear in the current week's parsha.]

The pasuk says, [Shmos 35:30]: "And Moshe said to the Children of Israel: Behold Hashem has designated by name – Betzalel son of Uri son of Chur of the Tribe of Yehudah." (Almost the exact same pasuk appears in Shmos 30:2.) Every construction project needs a project manager – an architect, a general contractor, a person who guarantees to get the job done. That person in the Mishkan construction project was Betzalel son of Uri son of Chur.

In Parshas Vayakhel, Rashi identifies Betzalel's grandfather Chur as "the son of Miriam", sister of Moshe. Chazal say that at the time of the building of the Mishkan, Betzalel was only 13 years old. Picture the

scene: Moshe Rabbeinu called a press conference. In front of the entire Jewish nation, Moshe introduced the future architect for the construction of the Mishkan – one of the most monumental building projects that would ever take place in the history of the Jewish people. Who does Moshe introduce to be the general contractor for the project? A 13 year old! Would this inspire confidence in the project? This was a young kid who had no previous experience in anything near the magnitude of what was being proposed! What goes on here?

The Medrash in Shmos Rabbah raises the question why Chur was mentioned in describing the lineage of Betzalel (typically the Torah identifies individuals at most by their father's name only). The Medrash explains that Chur allowed himself to be martyred when he protested the desire of the people to make a Golden Calf, under the assumption that Moshe was not going to return from his 40 day absence atop Mt. Sinai. Chur stood up against the crowd, tried to subvert their idolatrous intentions, and was killed in the process. At that moment, Hashem promised to reward Chur for his act of self-sacrifice (mesiras nefesh). The payback for Chur's heroism was that he had a grandson with the talents of Betzalel who was entrusted with the task of constructing the Mishkan. For this reason, Chur's name is mentioned when Betzalel is introduced. Betzalel became who he was by virtue of the heavenly reward promised posthumously to his grandfather.

Let's put ourselves in Chur's place. The crowd was dancing around singing "we need this Calf, we need this Calf!" From a rational point of view, it made absolutely no sense for Chur to try to stand up against the frenzied mob. It was an irrational act, almost foolhardy. There was no way the large crowd was going to change their mind because of the stubborn opinion of one individual. The proof that the "rational" thing to do was to go along with the will of the masses, is that this is exactly what Aharon did. The Talmud says that Aharon saw what happened to Chur and was convinced that the same thing would happen to him unless he cooperated with the unruly crowd.

So, in hindsight was Chur right or wrong? In hindsight he was right! Sometimes in life a person just needs to do the right thing without asking himself "Is this going to succeed or not?" Sometimes a person needs to do the right thing and take a stand even though it will not succeed and even though he will pay a personal price for taking this stand. There are times when we need to let the chips fall where they may and not determine our actions based on their potential chance for success.

In retrospect, Chur's activities did pay off and bear fruit. Because of his self-sacrifice, he merited a grandson like Betzalel who had the merit of building the Mishkan.

Moshe Rabbeinu came to Klal Yisrael – a group of slaves fresh out of Egypt who only knew how to work with bricks and mortar. He told them that the nation was now going to have a magnificent structure with exquisite vessels and priestly garments made out of the finest of materials. Their reaction undoubtedly was "We cannot do it. We do not have the expertise to accomplish the task. We don't have the training. We don't have the skills."

Moshe Rabbeinu then brought forth a little Bar Mitzvah boy named Betzalel. He introduced him to the nation and said, "See this kid? This is our head architect. He is going to do it for us! Do you know why he is going to be able to do it? It is because he had a grandfather named Chur. When Chur looked at the impossible mission, his attitude was 'We must try.'" < br /> This is why Moshe called the "press conference" to introduce Betzalel. It was not to show off Betzalel's resume, which was non-existent, but rather to emphasize where he came from. He was the grandson of Chur. Chur showed us that when confronting a 'Mission Impossible,' a person must nevertheless try.

This also explains why Rashi adds the biographical information regarding Chur: "He was the son of Miriam." From where did Chur get this capacity to see something that appears to be beyond human

possibility and say "I am going to do it anyway because it's the right thing to do"?

The Tolner Rebbe writes that he got this very characteristic from his mother. When Amram – the greatest man of his generation – went ahead and divorced his wife (after the decree that the male children would be thrown into the Nile), out of a sense of hopelessness and resignation to the inevitable fate of the children, it was Miriam who told him he was wrong. Amram evaluated the situation and said "Our efforts in having children in Egypt is for naught. We will have children and they will be killed." Miriam argued with her father. She told him that his decree was worse than Pharaoh's decree.

Why was Miriam arguing with her father? Did she think she had a chance convincing her father – the "Gadol haDor" [greatest sage of his generation] that he was wrong and she was right? What were her chances of success? Next to nothing! So why did she do it? It was because it was the right thing to do. When something is the right thing to do, one does not ask questions, one just does what is right.

This is the hallmark of the House of Miriam, which is the House of Chur, which is the House of Betzalel. When presented with impossible situations, one just does what one has to do; the best one can do under the circumstances. G-d will take care of the rest.

The Tosfos HaRosh on the Torah suggests an interesting background to the pasuk "And Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aharon, took the tambourine in her hand and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing." [Shmos 15:20] The Tosfos HaRosh explains that after the Splitting of the Red Sea and the song of "Moshe and Bnei Yisrael," the women came to Miriam and told her "We want to sing also. We also want to participate." Miriam told them, "You can't. It is forbidden and immodest for women to sing publicly in front of men." Everyone walked away depressed because they were not able to participate. Miriam then said, "Wait a minute! I have an idea!" She took a tambourine in her hand and started making noise with it. Then she said, "Now it is okay to sing, because the men will not be able to hear you above the noise of my tambourine."

Miriam saw a situation that looked hopeless. What can we do? The halacha is that we can't sing – we must find a solution to the problem. She took the tambourine and did find a solution to the problem.

A similar pattern emerges from the Gemara in Shabbos which teaches that the women wove curtains for the Mishkan from wool that was still on the backs of live goats. It is hard enough to weave in general. What kind of idea was it to make the curtains from wool while it was still attached to the live goats?

It is because all the women wanted to weave. They each wanted to be involved in the mitzvah of making the curtains for the Mishkan. However, some of them were impure due to their menstrual periods. They would not be able to come in contact with the curtains, lest they make them 'tameh'. They went to Miriam and asked her – "What can we do?" Miriam gave them the idea to weave on the backs of the live animals. A live animal is not susceptible to impurity (not 'mekabel tumah'). Here again, Miriam solved a seemingly insolvable problem with creativity and determination!

When the situation looked hopeless, when the prognosis was desperate, Miriam was the 'go-to person'. She always had a plan. That was her legacy to her son Chur – do not walk away from a hopeless situation. Do the right thing. Chur did the right thing. He stood up and that action bore fruit – two generations later in his grandson.

Moshe saw that the people felt the task of building a Mishkan was hopeless. They had no experience, they had no talent, and they had no training. "Fear not", he told them. See that G-d has designated someone who comes from a long line of ancestors who take action and whose actions bear fruit even in situations which look hopeless: Namely, Betzalel son of Uri son of Chur, (son of Miriam -- Rashi).

The Sefas Emes cites the Zohar that after Betzalel was introduced to Klal Yisrael, his face changed to the image of his grandfather Chur. This is exactly what Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to convey. Chur got us here. This Chur, in the personage of his grandson Betzalel, will be responsible for building us our Mishkan.

This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. Tapes, CDs, MP3s or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. To Support Project Genesis- Torah.org Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD RavFrand, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. Join the Jewish Learning Revolution! Torah.org: The Judaism Site brings this and a host of other classes to you every week. Visit <http://torah.org> or email [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) to get your own free copy of this mailing. Need to change or stop your subscription? Please visit our subscription center, <http://torah.org/subscribe/> -- see the links on that page. Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Torah.org. Both the author and Torah.org reserve certain rights. Email [copyrights@torah.org](mailto:copyrights@torah.org) for full information.

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### **Britain's Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks Prophet and Priest**

The sedra of Tetsaveh, as commentators have noted, has one unusual feature: it is the only sedra from the beginning of Shemot to the end of Devarim that does not contain the name of Moses. Several interpretations have been offered: The Vilna Gaon suggests that it is related to the fact that in most years it is read during the week in which the seventh of Adar falls: the day of Moses' death. During this week we sense the loss of the greatest leader in Jewish history - and his absence from Tetsaveh expresses that loss. The Baal HaTurim relates it to Moses' plea, in next week's sedra, for G-d to forgive Israel. "If not," says Moses, "blot me out of the book you have written" (32: 32). There is a principle that "The curse of a sage comes true, even if it was conditional" (Makkot 11a). Thus for one week his name was "blotted out" from the Torah. The Paneach Raza relates it to another principle: "There is no anger that does not leave an impression" When Moses, for the last time, declined G-d's invitation to lead the Jewish people out of Egypt, saying "Please send someone else", G-d "became angry with Moses" (Ex. 4: 13-14) and told him that his brother Aaron would accompany him. For that reason Moses forfeited the role he might otherwise have had, of becoming the first of Israel's priests, a role that went instead to Aaron. That is why he is missing from the sedra of Tetsaveh which is dedicated to the role of the Cohen. All three explanations focus on an absence. However, perhaps the simplest explanation is that Tetsaveh is dedicated to a presence, one that had a decisive influence on Judaism and Jewish history. Judaism is unusual in that it recognises not one form of religious leadership but two: the navi and Cohen, the prophet and the priest. The figure of the prophet has always captured the imagination. He (or she) is a person of drama, "speaking truth to power", unafraid to challenge kings and courts or society as a whole in the name of high, even utopian ideals. No other type of religious personality has had the impact as the prophets of Israel, of whom the greatest was Moses. The priests, by contrast, were for the most part quieter figures, a-political, who served in the sanctuary rather than in the spotlight of political debate. Yet they, no less than the prophets, sustained Israel as a holy nation. Indeed, though Israel were summoned to become "a kingdom of priests" they were never called on to be a people of prophets (Moses said, "Would that all G-d's people were prophets", but this was a wish,

not a reality). Let us therefore consider some of the differences between a prophet and a priest:

- The role of priest was dynastic. It passed from father to son. The role of prophet was not dynastic. Moses' own sons did not succeed him; Joshua, his disciple did.
- The task of the priest was related to his office. It was not inherently personal or charismatic. The prophets, by contrast, each imparted their own personality. "No two prophets had the same style" (This, incidentally, is why there were prophetesses but no priestesses: this corresponds to the difference between formal office and personal authority. See R. Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron, Responsa Binyan Av, I: 65).
- The priests wore a special uniform; the prophets did not.
- There are rules of kavod (honour) due to a Cohen. There are no corresponding rules for the honour due to a prophet. A prophet is honoured by being listened to, not by formal protocols of respect.
- The priests were removed from the people. They served in the Temple. They were not allowed to become defiled. There were restrictions on whom they might marry. The prophet, by contrast, was usually part of the people. He might be a shepherd like Moses or Amos, or a farmer like Elisha. Until the word or vision came, there was nothing special in his work or social class.
- The priest offered up sacrifices in silence. The prophet served G-d through the word.
- They lived in two different modes of time. The priest functioned in cyclical time - the day (or week or month) that is like yesterday or tomorrow. The prophet lived in covenantal (sometimes inaccurately called linear) time - the today that is radically unlike yesterday or tomorrow. The service of the priest never changed; that of the prophet was constantly changing. Another way of putting it is to say that the priest worked to sanctify nature, the prophet to respond to history.
- Thus the priest represents the principle of structure in Jewish life, while the prophet represents spontaneity.

The key words in the vocabulary of the Cohen are kodesh and chol, tahor and tamei, sacred, secular, pure and impure. The key words in the vocabulary of the prophets are tzedek and mishpat, chessed and rachamim, righteousness and justice, kindness and compassion. The key verbs of priesthood are lehorot and lehavdil, to instruct and distinguish. The key activity of the prophet is to proclaim "the word of the Lord" The distinction between priestly and prophetic consciousness (torat cohanim and torat nevi'im) is fundamental to Judaism, and is reflected in the differences between law and narrative, halakhah and aggadah, creation and redemption. The priest speaks the word of G-d for all time, the prophet, the word of G-d for this time. Without the prophet, Judaism would not be a religion of history and destiny. But without the priest, the children of Israel would not have become the people of eternity. This is beautifully summed up in the opening verses of Tetsaveh: Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives, to keep the lamp constantly burning in the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that is in front of the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep the lamps burning before the Lord from evening to morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come. Moses the prophet dominates four of the five books that bear his name. But in Tetsaveh for once it is Aaron, the first of the priests, who holds centre-stage, undiminished by the rival presence of his brother. For whereas Moses lit the fire in the souls of the Jewish people, Aaron tended the flame and turned it into "an eternal light". To read more writings and teachings from the Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, please visit [www.chiefrabbi.org](http://www.chiefrabbi.org).

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### **The Dual Focus of the Bigdei Kehunah**

**Author: Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb**

Article Date: Friday February 11, 2011

The Torah goes to great length and spares no detail in describing the bigdei kehunah, the special priestly vestments worn during the service in

the Mishkan (and Beis Ha-Mikdash). This very detail, however, as well as the ornate nature of the garments themselves, raises the obvious question: why the preoccupation with clothing, something external and superficial?

When commanding Moshe about the bigdei kehunah God notes that the purpose of these garments is "le'chavod u-le'sifares," for glory and for splendor (Shemos 28:2). However, this doesn't seem to answer the question; it begs the question. Since when are glory and honor admirable goals to aspire towards? And why, in the Mishkan of all places, is there a focus on material beauty? This difficulty is compounded when one considers that the Rambam (Kelei Ha-Mikdash 8:4-5) goes even further, ruling that if there is any imperfection in the garments – a small stain, not exactly the right size – they must be discarded. Again, why such an emphasis on the appearance of the kohanim?

The Netziv (Ha'amek Davar) explains that the special clothing was necessary because of the important message it projected to the Jewish people. He explains that it was crucial for the kohanim's service – and especially for the Kohen Gadol – that they be respected and held in high esteem. Even as they were accessible to everyone it was necessary for the kohanim to be perceived as somewhat removed from the rest of the nation. The Netziv explains that the priestly vestments were therefore elaborate and beautiful, thereby elevating the stature of the kohanim by projecting a sense of dignity and inspiring feelings of awe.

Rav Elya Meir Bloch (Peninei Da'as al Ha-Torah) offers an alternate explanation which focuses on the impact that the garments had, not on others, but on the kohanim themselves.

R. Bloch notes that while Hashem initially tells Moshe that the purpose of the vestments is "for glory and for splendor," in the very next verse (28:3), when Moshe is told how to instruct the artisans, the emphasis is on garments' function, "le'kadsho, le'chahano li," sanctify and serve God. The question is, obviously, why the shift in focus? Why does the Torah emphasize appearance of the garments when speaking to Moshe but stress their functionality when giving instructions to the artisans?

To resolve this difficulty R. Bloch explains that the purpose of the garments was to "bring down" a certain level of kedushah, sanctity, into the world. To achieve this purpose the garments needed to be made exactly according to Hashem's specifications. Theoretically, though, the garments could have been very modest and not elegant at all; as long as the kohanim performed their service in garments made in keeping with Hashem's directions their function would be served and the kedushah would be obtained. Thus, R. Bloch notes, the instructions given to the artisans who would actually weave the begadim needed only to relate to the spiritual function of the garments, "le'kadsho, le'chahano li."

But that was not enough. Hashem understood that in reality the garments couldn't be simple or modest; they had to be beautiful and dignified. While the appearance of the begadim may not matter for the spiritual reality, it most certainly mattered for the human reality. While it wouldn't make a difference for Hashem, it would make a difference to the kohanim who had to work in those garments. R. Bloch explains that human nature is such that we take more seriously those things which are associated with special and beautiful clothing. To ensure that the kohanim would constantly recognize the significance of their avodah it was necessary for them to wear elegant and dignified clothing. Therefore, when instructing Moshe, who would then communicate with Aharon and his children, the stress was placed on their appearance, "le'chavod u-le'sifares."

Aside from providing insight into the importance of the bigdei kehunah, the respective explanations of the Netziv and R. Bloch have broader significance as well. What is true of the priestly vestments is similarly true regarding the clothing that each of us wear. The way we dress – both men and women – projects an image to others and, at the same time, impacts our self-image. The more modestly and dignified we dress the more respect from others we will engender and the more self-

respect we will have. And the opposite is, unfortunately, true as well. In this, as in so many other areas, the kohanim should serve as our role models. We should dress – and generally act – in a way that is both dignified, “le’chavod u-le’sifares” and that will help us live noble lives, “le’kadsho, le’chahano li

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from: Aish.com newsletterserver@aish.com date: Wed, Feb 5, 2014 at 4:06 PM subject: Advanced Parsha - Tetzaveh (Exodus 27:20-30:10)

### **Wisdom of the Heart**

#### **by Rabbi Ozer Alport**

Parshas Tetzaveh introduces us to the unique garments that were worn by the Kohanim during the time that they served in the Temple. Because these vestments were so special and holy, they couldn't simply be made by anybody who possessed the necessary skills and craftsmanship.

God specifically instructed Moshe to command the wise of heart to make these special garments for Aharon and his sons (Exodus 28:3). This is difficult to understand. We are accustomed to associating wisdom with the brain. Why does the Torah stress that their wisdom was found in their hearts?

Rabbi Leib Chasman explains that our understanding of wisdom is fundamentally flawed. From the Torah's perspective, a wise person is not a Harvard professor who is able to intelligently discuss esoteric topics in difficult academic subjects. If his actions don't reflect his sophisticated intellectual knowledge, the facts and theorems which he has stored in his head, or even developed and named after himself, are essentially meaningless.

For example, an expert botanist who is intimately familiar with the scientific characteristics and medicinal properties of every plant and herb in the world, yet chooses to recommend and distribute poisonous plants instead of healing ones can hardly be defined as wise. He is more accurately compared to a donkey laden with a pile of thick tomes on the subject of botany. The knowledge that he has acquired in his brain remains for him an external load which has failed to penetrate into his heart.

The Torah recognizes that the primary criterion for evaluating wisdom lies in the ability to connect one's mind, and the information stored therein, with his heart, which guides his actions. It is for this reason that God stressed the importance of selecting the truly wise - the wise of heart.

This concept is illustrated by a well-known, if perhaps apocryphal, story which is told about one of the famous Greek philosophers. In between lessons, his students once encountered him in a section of town known for its immoral activities (what they were doing there hasn't been established).

Unable to reconcile his behavior with the lofty philosophical teachings that he espoused during his lectures, his students pressed him for an explanation. The legendary philosopher answered them, "When class is in session, I am your great teacher, and I share my pearls of wisdom with you. At other times, I am not the philosopher with whom you are familiar."

We live in a society which holds wisdom and its pursuers in high esteem. We benefit from this atmosphere which motivates us to pursue education and wisdom, as Judaism clearly places a high value on the importance of learning. Yet as we pursue our studies, it is important to be cognizant of the Torah's message about the true definition of wisdom. Parshas Tetzaveh teaches us to make sure that whatever we study penetrates our hearts and becomes part of us so that it influences and guides our future actions and makes us truly wise.

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#### **MOSHE'S MISSING PARSHA**

The Baal HaTurim points out that from the birth of Moshe until his death, this week's parsha is the only one (except for a few parshas in

Deuteronomy, in which Moshe speaks in the first-person) in which his name isn't mentioned a single time. He explains that this is because in next week's parsha, Moshe beseeched God to forgive the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf. He requested (Ex. 32:32) that if God wouldn't forgive them, his name should also be erased from the entire Torah.

Although God ultimately accepted Moshe's prayers and forgave the Jewish people, the Talmud (Makkos 11a) teaches that a conditional curse of a righteous person will be fulfilled even if the stipulation itself doesn't come to pass. God partially implemented Moshe's request by removing his name from one entire parsha.

This explanation still begs the question. Why was Moshe's name specifically left out of this week's parsha as opposed to any other?

The Vilna Gaon notes that the yahtzeit of Moshe, 7 Adar, traditionally falls during the week of Parshas Tetzaveh. In order to hint that it was at this time that Moshe was taken away from the Jewish people, the Torah purposely removed his name from this parsha. The Oznayim L'Torah contrasts this with the non-Jewish approach of establishing holidays on the day their leader was born or died. We, on the other hand, recognize that as great as Moshe was, he was still human. The date of his death isn't even explicit in the Torah, and during the week when he passed away, he isn't even mentioned in the parsha.

Alternatively, Rabbi Zev Leff explains that Rashi writes (4:14) that Moshe was originally intended to serve as the Kohen Gadol, but the position was taken away from him and transferred to his brother Aharon. Parshas Tetzaveh deals almost exclusively with the unique garments and inauguration procedure for the Kohen Gadol. One might have thought that Moshe was bitter at being reminded of the loss of what could have been his and would want to compensate by at least having his name mentioned repeatedly. To demonstrate that Moshe was genuinely happy about his brother's appointment, his name isn't mentioned a single time in the parsha which should have revolved around him, as he willingly stepped aside to allow Aharon his moment in the spotlight.

Finally, Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef suggests that the word ??? (Your book), from which Moshe requested to be removed, can also be read as ???-? - the 20th portion in the Torah, which is Tetzaveh.

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#### **NOT RELISHING IN WAR**

The Megillat Esther stresses that our observance of Purim is not in commemoration of the fact that the Jews fought and killed their enemies because if it was, we would celebrate it on 13 Adar when that happened. The Meshech Chochmah explains that in contrast to other nations which declare the days on which they achieved military victories to be national holidays, Judaism doesn't believe in celebrating the downfall of our enemies, as King Solomon writes (Proverbs 24:17) "Do not rejoice over the downfall of your enemy."

The Talmud (Megillah 10b) teaches that the angels wanted to sing a song of praise to God at the Red Sea, and God responded, "My creations and handiwork are drowning in the sea, and you want to sing!?"

For this reason, the Torah doesn't describe Pesach as the Yom Tov when God punished the Egyptians, but rather as the Yom Tov when God freed us from Egypt. Similarly, on Chanukah our celebration is only due to the miracle of the oil that burned for eight days and of the rededication of the Holy Temple, but not of the military victory over the Greeks.

Similarly, Purim wasn't established to commemorate the death of Haman or the defeat of our enemies. Rather, we celebrate Purim on 14 Adar, the day when the Jews were able to rest and return to their normal lives of serving God without distractions. He adds that this had the additional benefit of not inspiring jealousy on the part of our Achashverosh and our other non-Jewish neighbors. During the time between the original miracle of Purim and its enactment as a Yom Tov, the number of anti-Semitic enemies had surely increased, and the last

thing Mordechai wanted to do was give them ammunition and reason to hate us more.

He adds that for this reason, the Torah commands us in Exodus 12:16 to make a Yom Tov on the seventh day of Pesach, while the Jews were still in Egypt and well before they had arrived at the Red Sea. The reason is that if God only told us to make a festival on the seventh day of Pesach after the splitting of the Red Sea, we might mistakenly think that it's a Yom Tov to celebrate the death of the Egyptians. Therefore, it was told to them in advance to make it clear that it is part of the celebration of the Exodus from Egypt, but not a commemoration of the downfall and suffering of the Egyptians.

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### **A Light onto our Nation**

**Rabbi Yosef Levinson**

This week's Parsha begins with the mitzva of kindling the Menora. The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzva 98) explains that the purpose of this mitzva was to add glory and splendour to the Beis Hamikdash. The tendency of man is to look upon a house with glowing lights with honour and distinction. Seeing the Beis Hamikdash in all its magnificence instils one with awe and humility.

This mitzva appears to be out of place. In Parshas Teruma, Moshe is commanded to erect the Mishkan. He is taught how to construct the Mishkan and all the necessary keilim. Afterwards, Moshe is told to direct the manufacture of the bigdei Kehuna. This is a continuation of the preparations of the Mishkan. However, in between these two commandments, Moshe is ordered to inform Aharon to light the Menora. Why does the Torah interrupt the construction of the Mishkan with the kindling of the Menora? In the beginning of last week's parsha, Moshe is told to collect materials for the Mishkan. All the items that the Torah lists were required for the construction of the Mishkan except for two: shemen lamaor, oil for kindling the Menora and the ketores, incense. These were required for the daily service. Why was it necessary for Moshe to collect these items along with the other materials? Additionally, what is the significance of lighting the Menora - in particular, why are we taught to prepare the oil as we donate for the Mishkan, and why was the command to light the Menora issued before that of the daily offerings?

The Ramban explains (introduction to Teruma) that the purpose of the Mishkan was to be a continuation of the Revelation at Har Sinai. (The glory that was present at Sinai was present and also seen in the Mishkan on a constant basis.) Just as Hashem spoke to and taught the Torah at Har Sinai, so too, His voice was heard in the Mishkan, where Hashem spoke to Moshe. There were two keilim in the Mishkan which represented the Torah: The Aron and the Menora. The Aron symbolised Torah shebe'ksav, the written law and the traditions of the Oral law. Indeed, Hashem spoke to Moshe from atop the Keruvim on the Aron. The Menorah represents in-depth study of Torah and sevara, the logic of Torah. One can toil in Torah and reveal lessons which were previously hidden. Chazal teach that one who wants to become wise, should pray towards the South. The Menora was stationed on the south side of the Ohel Moed, meeting tent (Bava Basra 25b). The Gemara also says that one who sees olive oil in a dream can expect to be shown the light of Torah, as it is written, oil is for lighting and Torah is compared to light (Brachos 57b).

The Netziv explains that this is why the Torah mentions the shemen zayis and the lighting of the Menora in the middle of the construction of the Mishkan. The Torah is reminding us that the essence of the Mikdash, and essence of hashra'as HaShechina is the limud of Torah and plunging its depths. The Rabbeinu Bachya writes that the word 'kasis' which is used to describe the quality of the oil can be divided into two syllables, kas (kaf, saf) and yas (yud, suf). The gematria, numerical value of the former is 420, equal to how long the second Beis Hamikdash stood while the gematria of the latter is 410, which is how long the first

Beis Hamikdash stood. The Torah is hinting that it is in merit of the Or HaTorah, light of the Torah, that we merit the Or HaShechina, Divine light.

The Netziv explains further, that Bnei Yisrael had two primary mentors, Moshe and Aharon. Moshe taught the Dvar Hashem as he heard it from Hashem. Thus Moshe was the teacher of the Torah shebe'ksav and the mesora of Torah sheba'al peh. (Moshe kibel Torah misinai u'mesora l'Yehoshua, Moshe received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Yehoshua, Avos 1:1.) However Aharon was the primary source of sevara. It was Aharon who taught the first halacha learnt through logic which he told over to Moshe. The role of Aharon and his children was to disseminate this discipline of Torah to the nation. As it is written: "They shall teach Your laws to Yaakov and Your Torah to Yisrael" (Devarim 33:10). Therefore Aharon was designated to light the Menora.

Although Aharon was the Kohen Gadol, this was not why he was selected to kindle the Menora. The Halacha actually states that lighting the Menora is not an avoda, Temple service, and does not require a Kohen; it may be performed by anyone. Rav Moshe Feinstein observes that Moshe was commanded to direct Aharon to kindle the Menora before Aharon was even designated to be a Kohen. It was only in the merit of Torah and to assist him in his role as transmitter of the Or HaTorah, the depths of Torah wisdom, that Aharon was selected to light the Menora. (The Netziv also writes that when Moshe wanted to contemplate the Torah, he would enter the Ohel Moed. Through the light of the Menora, he was able to comprehend that depths of the Torah.)

We might add that the main avoda of the Menora, which did require a Kohen, was cleaning and preparing the Menora for lighting. The lighting itself however, was not an avoda. This is consistent with the idea that one's success in learning is in comparison with his efforts. The more he toils, the more he will succeed. However even then, we are only able to comprehend the Torah as a gift from Hashem - Yagaati Umatzasi, Taamin. Rav Chaim Volozhin writes that if one exerts himself and says that he 'found' Torah, he was given Torah knowledge, believe in him. Through toiling in Torah, Hashem grants us the ability to grasp Chachmas Elokim, Wisdom from on High, which ordinarily is way beyond human comprehension. The Kohen must clean the Menora and make the necessary preparations. After that it does not matter who kindles the Menora, for the light is then a gift.

There are those who are fond of saying that the role of the Jewish people is to be a light unto the nations. However we must realise that our primary focus should be to draw upon the light of our nation: "See I taught you decrees and laws as Hashem... Has commanded me.... For it is Your wisdom and perception in the eyes of the nations... and who shall say: "Surely a wise and perceptive nation this is". (Devarim 4:5-7). When we toil to understand the Torah, the nations will realise the beauty of the Torah. The wisdom of Torah will shine forth as a beacon of light throughout the world.

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Home In My Opinion LEAP YEAR

**Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog**

**LEAP YEAR**

This year on the Jewish calendar, 5774, is a leap year. In terms of the Jewish calendar this means that it is a thirteen-month year instead of the usual twelve-month year. This anomaly is accomplished by repeating the month of Adar twice. In the secular calendar every fourth year is also called a leap year. That leap year is identified by having the month of February be twenty-nine days long instead of the usual twenty-eight days. The scientists who deal with absolute time, as though there is such an actual measurable thing, also have created for us a leap second and there are many other such leap items that abound in our complex universe. I have often thought that there is a unique message that lies in the word leap as it appears in all of these cases regarding the passage of time. I think that almost all of us, in looking back on our lives tomorrow, will agree that time leaps and does not drag. It goes faster than we wish and allows us little ability to savor the precious moments that it sporadically provides. In the words of the Psalmist: "For it (the time of one's lifespan) flies away swiftly." Time therefore leaps and does not tarry. Therefore in reality all of our years are leap years for they have

all leapt away quickly and sometimes even without notice or remembrance. That to me has always been the message of calling these leap years, those that have within them an unusual number of days. All of our lives therefore are one long leap, strenuous and swift, dangerous and exhilarating. And we are always leaping into the unknown. There is a strange idiom that exists in the English language called “killing time.” This almost always means wasting time or being forced to wait and/or being delayed from accomplishing a certain task or goal or project that exists before us. The word “killing” when used in connection with time seems to be a strange choice of a verb. We do not usually think of time as being a living object that is in danger of being killed. Yet by the very use of the idiom we are pointing out to ourselves that disregarding the passage of time and treating time in a wasteful and cavalier fashion is akin somehow to murder. Time is deemed to be so precious that it is no longer just a measure of life but it is life itself. And therefore it can be killed and snuffed out just as any other form of life that exists on our planet. So when the Torah forbids murder and the unjustified taking of life it is indirectly also forbidding us from destroying and wasting the time that is allotted to us on this earth. The great men of Lithuanian Mussar had a short poem that sums up all of this: “People concern themselves over the loss of wealth; but they do not concern themselves over the loss of time. Eventually wealth cannot help them; but the days of time will never return.” In Hebrew these sentences rhyme. However I think the message is clear in no matter in what language the sentiments are expressed. One of the great challenges in life is how to deal with time. How do we fill our days? This is a major challenge in the years of life when we are less active, already retired from our professions and enterprises, and thus find ourselves with time on our hands. There is no magic answer to this problem and one size certainly does not fit all. Yet medically, socially and emotionally our nature is to be busy and occupied. There is an inner drive within us to avoid killing time. This certainly is part of the heritage of the Jewish people. Maybe in a rueful way it explains why no one in Israel wants to wait in line for any service or attention. The dreaded visit to the post office and its inevitable long line, waiting impatiently for the bus or train to arrive and rushing to get on it when it finally does come, and many other such instances in our daily lives, exhibit our impatience and stem from our innate desire not to waste time. Deep down we are aware how precious and valuable time is and of the necessity for exploiting it to the utmost in a productive fashion. Just as we abhor the slaughter of innocent people so to are we inclined not to kill time. It is far too precious a commodity to be treated lightly and without profound respect and consideration. A happy leap year to all! Shabat shalom Berel Wein

Home Weekly Parsha TETZAVEH

**Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog**

TETZAVEH

**Eternal Lights**

The Torah busies itself in this week's parsha to point out the necessity for an eternal light to always burn in God's tabernacle. The Talmud points out that the light was certainly not for God's benefit. The Lord is always beyond our physical needs and environment. The commentators to the Torah always searched for a deeper and more understandable meaning to this commandment. Many ideas have been presented to explain the necessity for this eternal light. One that I wish to mention here in this essay is that the eternal light represented the eternity of Israel and its survival as a people no matter what. Just as the Lord inexplicably demanded that an eternal light be present and lit in the Tabernacle and the Temple, so too is the survival of Israel to be seen as something that is truly inexplicable. The lights of Hanukkah are the successors to the eternal light of the Tabernacle and the Temple. They too symbolize the unlikely and miraculous, the triumph of the weak and few. This symbolic

light is meant to guide us in our understanding of Jewish history and life. The otherwise seemingly unnecessary light represents God's guarantee of Jewish survival and of the great lesson that a small candle while burning can illuminate a great deal of darkness. The Lord needs no light but humankind cannot operate in the darkness. The prophet Isaiah chose his words carefully when he charged Israel to be “a light unto the nations.” Our mere existence and accompanying story of survival is enough to be a guide to a very dark world and lead it towards a better future and a brighter day. When the eternal light of the national existence of the Jewish people was dimmed by the Roman legions, the Jews installed a physical eternal light in their synagogues. But just as the eternal light in the Tabernacle and Temple required human effort and physical material – pure olive oil – so too does our current eternal light require human effort and physical material. Lighting a dark room requires ingenuity, ability, planning and the correct fixtures. Since Torah is compared to light in Scripture, and it too is an eternal light, it is obvious that the maintenance of Torah and the spread of its light also require human effort, talent and industry. Even the glorious eternal light that hangs in front of the ark in our synagogue has to have its bulbs changed and cleaned periodically. The Lord, Who needs no light, demands from us that we provide light in the physical and spiritual sense of the word. The High Priest of Israel was charged with the daily cleaning, preparing and lighting of the eternal light in the Temple. The Lord never provided for automatic lighting but rather for a light that would be generated and cared for by human beings in the daily course of their godly duties. That remains the case today as well. Though our survival as a people is guaranteed, paradoxically, it cannot happen without our efforts and dogged commitment. We must light our lamp ourselves in order for it to burn brightly and eternally. Shabat shalom Rabbi Berel Wein  
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**Peninim on the Torah**

**by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum** - Parshas Tetzaveh

PARSHAS TETZAVEH Bring to near to yourself Aharon, your brother, and his sons with him... to minister to Me. (28:1) The Midrash teaches that Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to be Kohen Gadol, despite his position as facilitator of the Torah to Klal Yisrael. Imagine being the conduit through which our nation received the Torah. Yet, Moshe apparently wanted more; he sought the Kehunah Gedolah, High Priesthood. Hashem told Moshe, "I gave you the Torah. It was mine, and I gave it to you." This was supposed to placate Moshe. How? Moshe did not deny his lofty plateau as the nation's quintessential Rebbe; he wanted the Kehunah Gedolah - also!

In his Shemen HaTov, Horav Zev Weinberger, Shlita, quotes the Talmud in Sotah 21a, which cites the pasuk in Mishlei 6:23, Ki ner mitzvah v'Torah or, "For candle is a mitzvah and Torah is light." Apparently, the light of Torah is more powerful than the light emanating from a mitzvah. The Talmud observes that an aveirah, sin, has the power to extinguish the light created by a mitzvah. Torah, however, cannot be extinguished by an aveirah. Furthermore, a mitzvah serves as protection for a person only while he is performing the mitzvah. Torah has the power to protect the individual even when one is not studying.

We derive from this that the spiritual plateau achieved by one who studies Torah is more exalted than one who performs a mitzvah. Torah study is pre-eminent and greater than any other

spiritual endeavor. Moshe represented Torah since, after all, Hashem gave the Torah to the Jewish People via the medium of Moshe. Aharon represents the light of a mitzvah. Moshe argued that if he were to be Kohen Gadol and the Rabban shel kol Yisrael, Rebbe of the entire nation, the level of Kehunah would be so exalted that no sin would have the power to abrogate it. Indeed, in his commentary to Parshas Pikudei, Sforno writes that the reason the Mishkan, unlike Shlomo Hamelech's Bais Hamikdash, never fell into the hands of our enemies is that Moshe constructed the Mishkan. Moshe's edifice would endure forever. Had he been the Kohen Gadol, however, that institution would have survived the test of time and the vicissitudes of life.

Rav Weinberger observes that the Mishkan and Bigdei Kehunah, Priestly Vestments, were all one step removed from Moshe and Klal Yisrael following the

Giving of the Torah. This is very much like the comparison the Midrash makes to a king who became angry with his queen. Despite divorcing her, he continued to send her jewelry and trinkets with which to adorn and beautify herself. Otherwise, there was very little chance that she would once again find favor in his eyes. After their committing the sin of the Golden Calf, Hashem instructed them to construct the Mishkan, Mizbayach, Bigdei Kehunah - all in order to return to Hashem's favor once again. Moshe's spiritual level transcends even this. The sin of the Golden Calf had no effect on his level. Thus, he argued for the Kehunah Gedolah, so that the effects of the chet ha'eigel, sin of the Golden Calf, would be limited.

In his commentary to the beginning of the parsha, the Baal HaTurim notes that this parsha is the only parshah in the Torah, since Moshe's birth, in which his name is not mentioned. He attributes this to Moshe's declaration, Mecheini na miSifrecha, "Erase me (my name) from Your Book." Parashas Tetzaveh most often falls out around the seventh of Adar, which is Moshe's yahrtzeit. Since he demanded his name be erased, and the words of a tzaddik, righteous person, may not be ignored, Moshe's name was "erased" from one parsha. What more appropriate parsha than the one which coincides with his yahrtzeit?

Applying the above distinction between Torah and mitzvah, Moshe was alluding to Hashem, "If You will 'carry' their sin [Golden Calf] - (which means that Hashem would expunge the sin as if it did not occur), then I can continue to be their leader. If not (if the sin of the Golden Calf remains in its glaring reality; if the Jewish People will thus descend from the spiritual level acquired during the Giving of the Torah), then I can no longer be their leader. Erase me from Your Book." They were no longer on the madregah, spiritual level, of Torah; they were now on the level of mitzvah, which was reserved for Aharon. Moshe's name no longer applies in Parashas Tetzaveh, since this parsha addresses the function of Aharon and the Kohanim.

Rav Weinberger takes this idea one step further, as he delineates between the function of Kohen and Navi, Prophet. Indeed, we find nowhere a set of vestments specifically endemic to the Navi; the Kohen, however, does have special holy vestments. Another distinction applies to each individual mission. The Kohen is involved in today - addressing the needs of the nation in the "here" and "now." The Navi speaks to the future, foreshadowing what will be, what the nation should do to circumvent what might occur as a consequence of the present behavior. In other words, the Kohen is limited in his spiritual venue; the Navi is not. The common denominator between them is the talmid chacham, Torah scholar.

Chacham adif m'Navi, "The Torah scholar is greater than the prophet." On the one hand, the Torah scholar is limited; on the other hand, he is capable of arousing himself to an elevated and expanded spiritual realm which indicates unlimited potential. After all is said and done, we observe a clear distinction between Moshe and Aharon, with each representing two different facets of service to Hashem. Moshe personifies Torah; he is the one who brought the Torah down from Heaven to earth. Aharon personifies mitzvah observance, which, in effect, elevates earth, bringing it up to Heaven. Each served as a conduit, a connection between Heaven and earth. Moshe brought Heaven down; Aharon sanctified and elevated earth.

You shall make sacred vestments for your brother, Aharon, for glory and splendor. (28:2)

Kavod and tiferes are terms which are associated with the dignity of man and the requirement of manifesting this sense of reserve and class. When we mention the gadlus ha'adam, greatness of man, one immediately thinks of Slabodka, the yeshivah whose Mashgiach/founder, the Alter zl, of Slabodka, Horav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, was its primary exponent. I take the liberty of expounding on the subject and its intended impact on the Jewish imperative.

When Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel was about to launch his yeshivah, he asked Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, founder of the Mussar, character refinement, movement, "On which foundations shall I build my yeshivah?" Rav Yisrael replied, applying the pasuk in Yeshayah 57:15, L'hachayos ruach shefalim u'lehachayos lev nidkaim, "to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the despondent." This pasuk became the cornerstone of the Alter's work. His goal was to uplift his students' spirits, broaden the horizons of their mind - not to think small, but to think globally. This was at a time when the self-image of the yeshivah students was on the defensive end of a Jewish community that treated them with complete disregard.

The Alter focused on man's greatness and his power in the world. He shied away from the anochi afar va'eifer, "I am dust and ashes" attitude, which had won favor in the eyes of some educators; rather, he saw it as his imperative to develop man's stature as vital to his elevation. He attempted to infuse each of his students with a sense of his own significance and responsibility, as the consequence of his role as the crown of Creation. When one realizes his incredible potential, he will begin to acknowledge the awesome responsibility that rests on him. This awareness is a great motivation for him to exert himself to realize his potential. Thus, with the

realization of what he is and what he could achieve, he is availed that most wonderful gift which eludes so many: the gift of joy.

The Alter battled valiantly on behalf of the yeshivah student's stature and sense of importance, in his own eyes and in the eyes of the Jewish community. Regrettably, yeshivah students were considered to be on the low end of the totem pole. The world was changing as a result of the changing "isms": Communism, Socialism, secular Zionism. These movements were in addition to the pervasive Haskalah, Jewish Enlightenment, which was responsible for the destruction of the spiritual lives of countless of unknowing Jews. The espousers of these organized trends treated those who devoted their lives to Torah study as wastrels who had no part in the greater world outside. The appearance and manner of dress of the yeshivah students, often the result of poverty and neglect, certainly did not ameliorate their preconceived self-satisfying notions.

The Alter demanded that his students be scrupulous in their behavior, both within the environs of the yeshivah and in their interaction with the outside world. He insisted that they dress properly, neatly and respectfully - indeed, l'kavod u'tiferes, "for the dignity and beauty of the Torah." He understood that one's self image is affected by his external appearance. The attire upon which he insisted included a short-coated suit and a hat, no beard, and hair to be cut in a manner considered respectable by conventional norms. Slowly, the townspeople's attitude toward the yeshivah bachurim changed. Even more important, the student's self-image also changed. He learned to view himself as a person of stature, as a ben Torah, a talmid chacham, Torah scholar, who exemplified the embodiment of Torah - not an am ha'aretz, one unschooled in Torah erudition. In other words, the world saw where he excelled, over and beyond the characterization of the proponents of the Enlightenment.

One of the Alter's most prominent disciples, an individual who represented Slabodka in the fullest sense, was Horav Meir Chodosh, zl, venerably known as the Mashgiach. He transmitted his Rebbe's philosophy of life to his many students in Eretz Yisrael. In his biography, his daughter, Rebbetzin Shulamis Ezrachi, relates the following two telling vignettes:

Horav Isaac Sher, zl, was the son-in-law of the Alter and Rosh Yeshivah of Slabodka. He was a man who walked and stood with an erect carriage, eyes cast down to the ground. It is related that, in his youth, he would walk with a stooped nature. The Alter wanted him to walk erect, upright, the way one should walk. One day, he called Rav Isaac over and said to him, "Go buy yourself a pair of pince-nez." These were a type of elegant eyeglasses which was stylish at the time. The problem was that they did not have ear pieces. They stayed on by pinching the bridge of the nose. The only way to keep the pince-nez from falling off was by standing very erect.

The student followed the Mashgiach's instructions, purchased the glasses, and, a short time later, they fell off his nose and shattered. Rav Isaac felt terrible. The Alter noticed that he was not wearing the glasses, and, after finding out what had happened, gave his student more money to purchase another pair of pince-nez. This time, Rav Isaac was much more careful; he kept his head straight and his shoulders erect, so that he would not allow the glasses to slip downward and break. This is how Rav Isaac learned to walk with an upright posture.

Horav Simchah Wasserman, zl, came to Slabodka and introduced himself to the Alter. "How is your father?" the Alter asked. (This was a reference to Horav Elchanan Wasserman, zl, Rosh Yeshivas Baranovitz and one of Europe's pre-eminent Torah leaders.) Rav Simchah replied, Nisht kasha, "Not bad". The Alter became visibly upset: "Is this the way you speak about your father, as though he were a horse in the stable?" This is really the reason I came to Slabodka," Rav Simchah replied. "I heard that here one learns how to speak (properly)." The Alter calmed down.

One last story: A Kollel fellow in Chevron visited Horav Meir Chodosh. During the course of the conversation, he asked the Mashgiach to explain the philosophy of gadlus ha'adam to him, as it was manifest in Slabodka. The Mashgiach answered, "All that I can explain to you will be theoretical and worthless until you see the behavior of Horav Zevulun Graz, (zl) Rav of Rechovos. I suggest that you take a trip to Rechovos and spend a day with the Rav."

The avreich, young man, traveled to Rechovos and presented himself at the house of Rav Graz. "Does the Rav have a place for me to spend the night?" he asked. The Rav asked no questions. Here was a young man, properly dressed, from a good family - why not? The Rav immediately invited him in and prepared a bed for him to sleep.

The young man was excited about his good fortune. He went to bed and feigned sleep. Perhaps he would notice something during the night that would validate what he felt were the strange instructions of the Mashgiach.

The night went by, and, after a few hours of learning, Rav Zevulun retired to bed. The young man figured that it was all a waste. One does not go to Slabodka to learn

how to sleep, but the Mashgiach did say that it would all be explained. So, he was determined to remain awake all night. Something was going to happen that would make sense out of it all.

At two o'clock in the morning, Rav Zevullun arose from his bed to use the facilities. The young man figured that this was it. He might as well get a few hours of sleep and return to the Mashgiach with a "mission not accomplished." Then the most unusual thing took place. Rav Zevullun went over to the closet, removed his kapote, frock, and homburg, hat, and then, when he was clothed in his rabbinic garb, he recited the Asher Yotzar blessing, with great kavanah, concentration and intention.

It now all made sense. The "greatness of man" is not measured by how he acts in public. The barometer for gadlus ha'adam is determined by how he acts in middle of the night, in the privacy of his own home. When he makes the Bircas Asher Yotzar upon leaving the bathroom, does he spend a few minutes to realize that he - the crown of Creation - is about to speak to the Creator, so that he dresses accordingly?

They shall take the gold, the turquoise, purple and scarlet wool, and the linen. (28:5)

Moshe Rabbeinu was commanded concerning the construction of the Bigdei Kehunah, Priestly Vestments. For this purpose, he was to obtain gold, turquoise, purple and scarlet, various colors of dyed wool, from the people which were to be used to make the Eiphod, Cheshev ha'Eiphod, Choshen and Avnet. Sheish is flax/linen. Thus, the Bigdei Kehunah were constructed of shatnez, a mixture of wool and linen. Given the reality, one would conjecture that while shatnez is prohibited to be worn by a Jew, the Bigdei Kehunah constituted an exception to the rule. In other words, a dispensation is made for the Priestly Vestments, allowing for them to be constructed of the forbidden mixture of wool and linen.

Rabbeinu Yosef Bechur Shor has an understanding of this halachah which is diametrically opposed to general conjecture. He explains that, similar to the prohibition of making Shemen Hamishchah, anointing oil, or the Ketores, Incense, for general use, and in accordance with the prohibition against constructing one's home with architecture resembling the Bais Hamikdash or making a Menorah of seven branches like the Menorah in the Temple - shatnez is prohibited for use by the general public, because it is reserved for Bigdei Kehunah. Thus, Bigdei Kehunah - and only Bigdei Kehunah - are supposed to be made of shatnez. The prohibition of shatnez is based upon the fact that it resembles the holy Priestly Vestments.

Horav Yaakov Galinsky, Shlita, explains why the Kohen Gadol specifically should be the one to wear a garment comprised of wool and linen. The Zohar Hakadosh posits that the dyed wool represents the middah, Attribute, of Rachamim, Mercy, while the pishtan, flax/linen, represents the Attribute of Din, Strict Justice. These two attributes are incongruous with one another. To mix the two together creates a tension which is counterproductive - unless they come together in a perfect situation, such as for the Kohen during his service. When the Kohen stands before Hashem and performs the avodah, service, he achieves a level of sheleimus, perfection, which is otherwise rarely accomplished. At this point, a fusion of justice and mercy achieves tiferes, beauty and complete harmony.

I take the liberty of explaining this concept further. In his commentary to the beginning of Sefer Bereishis, Rashi observes the Torah's choice of referring to Hashem as Elokim as opposed to Yud - Kay - Vov - Kay. The name Elokim represents Din, an attribute that does not allow for leeway, compromise or negotiation. This middah does not exclude any aspect of sin. One is guilty. The four-letter Name, however, represents Hashem's Attribute of Mercy, an attribute which reflects Hashem's dealing with the shortcomings of His creations on a compassionate basis, thus viewing them in a more positive light.

Hashem was originally thought to have created the world using the process of Din as its "engine," hence, the opening Name of Elokim. When Hashem saw that the world could not possibly endure if the hanhagah, guiding principle, would be Strict Justice, He placed Middas HaRachamim into the equation and joined it with Din, to sort of temper down the Justice. This is why His Name is now written in the four-letter form implying Rachamim. The mixture of Din and Rachamim is not natural. As is the case with opposing attributes, a tension exists between them. Yet, the Almighty mixed them together. This is why some Chassidim place a few drops of water to dilute the wine for Kiddush. Wine represents Din; water represents Rachamim. Thus, they emulate Hashem in diluting and weakening the wine/Din with a little Rachamim.

The Mesillas Yesharim explains another aspect of this mixture. Each component of the mixture impacts the other. Both remain in a "weakened" state. For example, Middas HaDin demands that punishment be swift and uncompromising, consistent with the grievous nature of the sin. Rachamim dilutes this by allowing for time to elapse before punishment is exacted. The punishment is less severe. This allowance

of time encourages the vehicle of teshuvah to play a role in ameliorating the sin and decreasing the severity of the punishment. Indeed, teshuvah - if successfully implemented - can even expunge the sin completely. In most instances, the Din must be "placated." Therefore, the punishment will be meted, but in a much more amenable version.

Returning to the original thesis, Rav Galinsky explains that we all possess a conglomerate of attributes - character traits which are, by their very nature, opposites of one another. Two objectives are demanded of us: first; we should not lock ourselves into one middah. Diversity is good, for it allows for a harmonious relationship between the middos so that each one "rubs off" on the other. Second, one must know when to use a specific attribute. There is a time for compassion and a time for justice; a time for tempered justice; a time for compassion with common sense. One may not have mercy on cruel, evil, unconscionable people. Indeed, Chazal say that one who has misplaced compassion will one day be guilty of misplaced justice; thus, he will render guilty one with whom he should have dealt with greater compassion.

This is the lesson of shatnez in the Bigdei Kehunah. It is important that we coalesce the attributes which normally create tension with one another. When we serve Hashem, we should attempt to emulate His way of doing things. Hashem diluted Strict Justice with Mercy. The Kohen Gadol wears both - wool and linen - to exemplify and impart this lesson. Our primary focus should be one of kindness and mercy, but, yes, at times, we must apply justice - with restraint - but justice no less. There is no such thing as a bad middah; it all depends on how and when we apply it. When considering two diverse antagonistic attributes, it is necessary that one be paradigmatic of the sheleimus achieved by the Kohen during his avodah. This is the lesson of the prohibition of shatnez: one may not create the tension inherent between strict justice and mercy only in a situation which manifests perfection.

And you shall engrave upon it, engrave like a signet ring Holy to Hashem. (28:36)

The Tzitz Hakodesh was a Head-Plate inscribed with the words Kodesh l'Hashem, Holy to Hashem, that was worn by the Kohen Gadol. These words were engraved on the Head-Plate similar to a signet ring.

Pituchei chosam - "engraved like a signet ring" is used by the Gaon m'Vilna as an allusion to a statement made by Chazal. "Three keys (mafteichos, which have the same root word as pituchei) were not given to man. They remain in the domain of the Almighty (Only He can "open the door" to these events). They are: chayah, to give life to a child, the key to fertility - a chayah is also a midwife; Techiyas HaMeisim, the Resurrection of the Dead; matar, the blessing of rain. These three events are alluded in the word chosam: cheis - chayah; taf - techiyas hameisim; mem - matar. They are all Kodesh l'Hashem, Holy to Hashem. Only He has the key to them.

I came across an incredible story which demonstrates the power invested in a tzaddik, holy and righteous person, to petition Hashem on behalf of a supplicant. Horav Aharon Rokeach, zl, the Admor m'Belz, took a trip to Lishensk, so that he could pray at the grave of the Noam Elimelech. The Rebbe would have to spend two nights in Lishensk. As a result, his attendants sought out suitable hospitality for him. They selected the home of one of the community's distinguished leaders as an appropriate place for the Rebbe to reside. The Belzer entered the home and, after making a "walk through," decided that it did not feel right. He did not have a secure spiritual feeling about the home. Apparently, it lacked the correct holy atmosphere required for such a saintly person.

As the Rebbe prepared to leave, a young boy about ten years of age, blocked his passage. "Please Rebbe, stay in my home," the child pleaded. "Since my family is wealthy, I have my own room. I am sure that my room will measure up to the Rebbe's standards." The boy was on the floor, lying by the tzaddik's feet, preventing him from leaving.

The Rebbe listened to the boy and walked back to his room. Apparently, whatever had troubled him earlier, was no longer of concern. The room was suitable for him. The Rebbe stayed in Lishensk for two days and nights, using the boy's room for his hospitality.

Years passed. The Holocaust took its terrible toll on European Jewry. The Rebbe was spared, and he escaped to Eretz Yisrael. The young boy, who was now an adult, miraculously survived the war and also came to Eretz Yisrael. The Rebbe was visiting Tel Aviv, and throngs of Jews came to visit him. They came to petition his blessing, to ask him to intercede with the Heavenly Tribunal on their behalf. This young man was among those who came to ask the Rebbe for a blessing. He had been married a number of years and had yet to be blessed with a child.

When it was his turn to enter the Rebbe's room, he gave the Rebbe a kvitel, paper with his request written on it, and then told the Rebbe that he was that ten-year old young boy in whose room the Rebbe had slept. The Rebbe listened and said two words: "Two nights, two children."

The man was blessed with two G-d-fearing sons who were greatly successful in Torah study. Indeed, to whichever endeavor they turned, their success quotient was unusual. Hashem had "turned the key."

Va'ani Tefillah U'leavdo b'chol levaychem u'b'chol nafshechem. And to serve Him will all your heart and with all your soul.

Interestingly, this parsha of Krias Shema makes no mention of b'chol meodeichem, "with all of your material bounty," as is mentioned in the previous parsha of V'ahavta. In his Nefesh HaChaim, Horav Chaim Volozhiner, zl, explains that the first parsha of Krias Shema focuses on love for Hashem. Understandably, such love should be expressed with one's complete heart, soul, and money. Love transcends everything. If one's love of Hashem is compartmentalized and not overflowing from all that is his, then the love has limitations. It is not b'chol, with all. The second pasha addresses avodas Hashem, service to Hashem. Chazal teach that avodah zu Tefillah, avodah is defined as prayer. The individual's tefillos to Hashem must be expressed with all of his heart - sincere, and with all of his soul - his very life. Money does not enter the equation.

The word u'leovdo, and to serve Him, connotes avdus, as a slave serves a master. Horav Binyamin Diskin, zl, observes that a slave is distinguished in two areas. First, in his service to his master. Second, in his beholdenness and total reliance on his master for everything. A slave has nothing of his own. He eats whatever his master feeds him. He is completely dependent upon his master's good will for sustenance and support. The amount of hakoras hatov, gratitude, that the slave must have is immense. Now, if the master were to say to his slave, "When you come and ask me for your needs - not only will I give them to you - I will reward you simply for asking!" would not such a slave carry out his master's every request with the greatest enthusiasm? This is the meaning of serving Hashem with all of our heart and with all of our soul. He is so good to us; how could our tefillos not resonate with effusive gratitude?

Dedicated in memory of Moshe ben Shmuel z"l Krivol

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from: Rabbi Kaganoff ymkaganoff@gmail.com reply-to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com date: Sun, Feb 2, 2014 at 4:05 PM subject: in honor of parshas tetzaveh, The Spectrum of Muktzah Utensils

### **The Spectrum of Muktzah Utensils**

#### **By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff**

In the period of the construction of the second Beis HaMikdash, Nechemiah noticed that many Jews were extremely lax in Shabbos observance. In his own words, "In those days, I saw people in Judea operating their winepresses on Shabbos and loading their harvest on donkeys; and also their wine, grapes, and figs and all other burdens; and transporting them to Yerushalayim on Shabbos... the Tyrians would bring fish and other merchandise and sell them to the Jews" (Nechemiah 13:15-16). Nechemiah then describes how he succeeded in closing the city gates the entire Shabbos, in order to keep the markets closed.

To strengthen Shabbos observance, Nechemiah established very strict rules concerning which utensils one may move on Shabbos. These rules form the foundation of the laws of muktzah (Shabbos 123b). Initially, he prohibited using and moving on Shabbos virtually all utensils, excluding only those basic items used for eating, such as table knives. We will call this Nechemiah's "First Takkanah." By prohibiting the moving of items even indoors, he reinforced the strictness of not carrying outdoors on Shabbos (Shabbos 124b; Raavad, Hilchos Shabbos 24:13). Furthermore, observing the laws of muktzah protects people from mistakenly doing forbidden melacha with these tools. In addition, the laws of muktzah guarantee that Shabbos is qualitatively different from the rest of the week, even for someone whose daily life does not involve any manual activity (Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 24:12-13).

As the Jews became more careful in their Shabbos observance, Nechemiah gradually relaxed the rules of muktzah, permitting limited use of some utensils on Shabbos. Eventually, Nechemiah established rules whereby most utensils may be moved and used on Shabbos when necessary, whereas certain utensils that one usually would not use on Shabbos remained prohibited (except under unusual circumstances, such as danger). When discussing the halachos of muktzah as they apply today, I will refer to Nechemiah's "Final Takkanah."

Nechemiah's Final Takkanah established four distinct categories of utensils:

1. Not Muktzah. Items that one may move without any reason whatsoever. This category includes food, sifrei kodesh and, according to many authorities, tableware (Mishnah Berurah 308:23) and clothing (see Shitah La'Ran 123b s.v. barishonah).

2. Kli She'me'lachto l'heter means a utensil whose primary use is permitted on Shabbos, such as a chair or pillow. One may move such a utensil if one needs to use it, if it is in the way, or if it may become damaged. However, one may not move it without any reason (Shabbos 123b-124a; Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 308:4).

3. Kli She'me'lachto l'issur, which means a utensil whose primary use is forbidden on Shabbos, such as a hammer, a saw, or a needle. Items in this category may be moved if they are in the way or if one has a Shabbos need to use it (Shabbos 124a). Under normal circumstances, one may not move them for any other purpose.

4. Completely Muktzah. These are utensils that one may not move under normal circumstances.

I will now explain the four categories.

#### 1. NOT MUKTZAH

One may move food and sifrei kodesh without any reason, and, according to many authorities, also tableware and clothing. Why may I move certain items on Shabbos without any purpose, whereas I may move other items only if there is a reason to do so? The answer to this halachic question has a historical basis. When Nechemiah declared his original gezeirah prohibiting muktzah, he applied it only to utensils, not to food, and also excluded table knives and similar appliances. Thus, Nechemiah never declared food and table knives muktzah, even during the First Takkanah. However, a kli she'me'lachto l'heter was included in the First Takkanah, and at that time was completely muktzah. Later, Nechemiah relaxed the takkanah to permit moving these utensils under the circumstances mentioned above; however, when these circumstances do not apply, the original prohibition declaring them muktzah remains in effect.

As mentioned above, many authorities rule that forks, spoons, dishes, and drinking glasses are also excluded from any halachos of muktzah (Mishnah Berurah 308:23, quoting Shiltei HaGibborim), although there are opinions who consider them keilim she'me'lachta l'heter (Graz, 308:16; Ben Ish Chai, 2:Mikeitz). The lenient opinion contends that Nechemiah permitted moving tableware, just as he permitted moving table knives. The strict opinion contends that Nechemiah included all items, including tableware, in his prohibition. They hold that forks, spoons, dishes, and drinking glasses are included in the gezeirah of muktzah as members of category # 2, kli she'me'lachto l'heter, which means that they may be moved when needed but not otherwise. I will soon explain the practical difference between these opinions.

#### 2. KLI SHE'ME'LACHTO L'HETER

A utensil that is used primarily for a task that is permitted on Shabbos, such as a chair or pillow, is categorized as a kli she'me'lachto l'heter. I may move such a utensil for one of three reasons:

A. I want to use it on Shabbos. The Gemara (Shabbos 123b) calls this l'tzorech gufo.

B. I want to put something else in its place or it is in my way. The Gemara calls this l'tzorech m'komo.

C. I am concerned that it might become damaged. The Gemara refers to this as moving the utensil from the sun to the shade.

However, I may not move a kli she'me'lachto l'heter without any purpose, nor may I use it when I do not really need the utensil. Thus, I may not use a kli she'me'lachto l'heter to help me with a task that I can do without any tool (Shabbos 124a; Shaar HaTziyun 308:13).

I mentioned above that the authorities dispute whether we categorize tableware as not muktzah at all, or as kli she'me'lachto l'heter. For example, the Ben Ish Chai, who contends that it should be considered kli she'me'lachto l'heter, rules that if one placed extra pieces of silverware on the table, one may not move them back into the kitchen simply because they serve no purpose on the table. He points out that this fulfills none of the three conditions mentioned above necessary to move a kli she'me'lachto l'heter. (He agrees that one may remove the items of silverware from the table if they are in the way, or if one is concerned that they might become damaged.) However, the other opinion contends that silverware is not muktzah at all and may be returned to its correct storage place, even without any other need.

#### 3. KLI SHE'ME'LACHTO L'ISSUR

A utensil whose primary use is forbidden on Shabbos, such as a hammer, saw, or needle, may be moved, if I need to use it for something permitted on Shabbos or if it is in the way of something I need to do. Thus, I may use a hammer to crack open a coconut on Shabbos or a needle to remove a splinter (Mishnah Shabbos 122b).

(When removing the splinter, one should be careful not to intentionally cause bleeding [Magen Avraham 328:32; see also Biur Halacha 308:11]. Also, one may not sterilize the needle on Shabbos [Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 12:1].) Similarly, on Shabbos, I may remove a hammer or saw that was left on a table, counter, or chair, if I need to put something else there.

However, I may not move a kli she'me'lachto l'issur to save it from becoming broken. When Nechemiah relaxed the takkanah that treated kli she'me'lachto l'issur as completely muktzah, he allowed it to be moved only if I need it or its place on Shabbos, but for no other reason.

If I know I will need a kli she'me'lachto l'issur later today, and I am afraid it will get broken or ruined and be unusable by then, I may save it from breaking (Tehillah LeDavid, 308:5). This is because moving it now makes it available to me later, and thus it is considered l'tzorech gufo.

Once someone picks up a kli she'me'lachto l'issur for a permitted reason, he may put it wherever he chooses (Shabbos 43a). Some authorities extend this rule further, permitting someone who picked up a kli she'me'lachto l'issur by mistake to place it down wherever he pleases, since the item is already in his hand (Magen Avraham 308:7). However, many dispute this, arguing that this leniency applies only when one has permission to pick up the utensil, but not when it was picked up in error (Gra, Yoreh Deah 266:12). Thus, someone who picked up a hammer, saw, or needle by mistake may not continue to hold it. The Mishnah Berurah (308:13) implies that one may follow the lenient approach when necessary. Following his position, one may hold the kli she'me'lachto l'issur until he finds a convenient place to put it down.

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KLI SHE'ME'LACHTO L'HETER AND SHE'ME'LACHTO L'ISSUR

After Nechemiah's final takkanah, both kli she'me'lachto l'heter and kli she'me'lachto l'issur have an interesting status: sometimes they are muktzah and sometimes not, depending on why one wants to move them. Even within this in-between category of sometimes-muktzah items, there is a "pecking order", whereby kli she'me'lachto l'heter is less muktzah than kli she'me'lachto l'issur. Several differences in halacha result:

A. As mentioned above, one may move a kli she'me'lachto l'heter if one is concerned it may become damaged, whereas a kli she'me'lachto l'issur may not be moved for this reason.

B. A kli she'me'lachto l'issur may not be moved when a kli she'me'lachto l'heter is available to do the job (Mishnah Berurah 308:12; Elyah Rabbah 308:32).

C. One may carry a kli she'me'lachto l'heter early in the day, even though he does not anticipate needing it until much later that day (Taz 308:2). This is considered as moving for a purpose. On the other hand, a kli she'me'lachto l'issur may be picked up only when one needs to use it.

D. Many authorities contend that a kli she'me'lachto l'issur that was intentionally left on top of a permitted item conveys the status of kli she'me'lachto l'issur onto the lower item (Tehillah LeDavid 266:7 & 308:1; Aruch HaShulchan 310:9). The lower item becomes a "basis l'davar ha'asur," literally, a base for a prohibited item. Thus according to these poskim, if a hammer was intentionally left on a chair, concern that the chair may become damaged will not be a sufficient reason to permit moving the chair on Shabbos. However, according to those who contend that there is no concept of basis l'davar ha'asur for a kli she'me'lachto l'issur, one may move the chair to save it from getting damaged (Pri Megadim, introduction to 308). (We will leave a full discussion of the subject of basis l'davar ha'asur for a different time.)

To the best of my knowledge, no authority contends that a kli she'me'lachto l'heter creates a "basis l'davar ha'asur." Thus, if someone intentionally left a wristwatch or a book (remember those?) on top of a basket of fruit, the fruit does not have the laws of a kli she'me'lachto l'heter, but retains the status of the fruit, which is not muktzah at all.

#### IS SOMETHING MELACHTO L'HETER OR MELACHTO L'ISSUR?

What is the halacha of a utensil that has two equal usages, one l'heter and the other l'issur? The halacha is that this appliance has the halachic status of a kli she'me'lachto l'heter (Magen Avraham 308:9). Thus, if I use an index card as a place mark, although it inherently can also be used for writing, it is categorized as melachto l'heter. (I chose an index card because many people prefer them as bookmarks because they are sturdy.)

#### A FIFTH CATEGORY OF MUKTZAH UTENSIL

What about a utensil whose primary use is for a prohibited purpose, but its typical use includes a permitted purpose, such as a pot? Its primary use, cooking, renders it a kli she'me'lachto l'issur. However, it also functions as a storage vessel after the food finishes cooking, which is a permitted purpose on Shabbos. What is its status?

This type of utensil has an interesting status: It changes in the course of Shabbos from being a kli she'me'lachto l'heter to a kli she'me'lachto l'issur. When storing food, it has the status of a kli she'me'lachto l'heter. However, when the food is emptied out, it reverts to its primary status and again becomes a kli she'me'lachto l'issur (Rashba, Shabbos 123a s.v. ha disnan, quoted by Pri Megadim, Eishel Avraham 308:9 and Mishnah Berurah 308:26). Therefore, while the pot contains food, I may move it, if I am concerned it might become damaged. However, once

the food has been removed, I may not move the pot only to avoid its being damaged. However, I may move the pot if I want to use it to store food, or if it is in the way. (Furthermore, I may move a used pot out of the way, if its appearance is unpleasant [Shabbos 124a]. This is another topic that we will leave for a different article.)

#### 4. COMPLETELY MUKTZAH

Most items categorized as muktzah are not utensils and are muktzah because they usually have no Shabbos use. Thus, pieces of scrap wood, dirt, money, ashes and a useless broken item are all muktzah, because we do not expect to use them on Shabbos. Even if a use presents itself on Shabbos, or the item is in one's way, one may not use or move it.

(There are a few instances when one may move such items, such as when someone might get hurt, or when the muktzah items are repulsive.)

#### MUKTZAH MACHMAS CHISARON KIS

However, there are examples of items that are utensils and are nevertheless completely muktzah. One category includes specialized tools whose primary use is prohibited on Shabbos and which are not used for other purposes, lest they become damaged. Such utensils are muktzah machmas chisaron kis, muktzah because of financial loss. Since the owner would never use them for any other purpose, and their primary use is prohibited on Shabbos, he never expects to use them on Shabbos, and this renders them muktzah (Tosafos, Shabbos 123a s.v. basichi). Thus, a musical instrument, a mohel's or shocheit's knife, craftsman's tools, or any other specialty equipment whose owner would not allow it to be used except for its intended purpose is muktzah. Since a shocheit will not use his knife to carve a turkey or to slice salami, and its primary use (shechitah) is prohibited on Shabbos, his knife is muktzah. However, an old shechitah knife that its owner no longer uses for shechitah is not muktzah.

#### MERCHANDISE

Merchandise that one intends to sell is usually muktzah on Shabbos, since one does not intend to use it oneself (Rama 308:1).

A kli that is muktzah machmas chisaron kis that becomes damaged on Shabbos so that it is no longer valuable, remains muktzah machmas chisaron kis for that Shabbos, although for future Shabbosos it will be treated like a kli she'me'lachto l'issur. This is because once a utensil is muktzah at the beginning of Shabbos, it remains muktzah the whole Shabbos (Magen Avraham 308:19; Tosafos, Beitzah 2b).

Example: I sell fancy merchandise from my house that I would never use myself. One Shabbos, one of the kids opens the package and uses one of the items, so that I could never sell it. Although I will now use the item myself, I must treat it as muktzah until Shabbos is over, since it was muktzah when Shabbos began.

#### BROKEN UTENSIL

A utensil that broke or tore on Shabbos does not become muktzah, unless it has no use whatsoever. This is true, even if you immediately threw it into the garbage. However, if it broke before Shabbos and you threw it into the garbage before Shabbos, it becomes muktzah (Shabbos 124b). Since it was in the garbage when Shabbos arrived, that renders it muktzah.

Thus, a shirt that tore on Shabbos does not become muktzah, since you might use it as a rag, even if you threw the torn shirt into the garbage on Shabbos. However, if it tore before Shabbos and you disposed of it before Shabbos, it is muktzah.

#### TEFILLIN

Where do tefillin fit into the muktzah spectrum? Most people assume that tefillin are muktzah, since we do not wear them on Shabbos. However, the halacha is otherwise. Some poskim rule that tefillin are kli she'me'lachto l'heter, since one may don tefillin on Shabbos, as long as one does not intend to fulfill the mitzvah (see Rama 308:4), whereas most poskim treat them as kli she'me'lachto l'issur (Taz, Magen Avraham and others ad loc.). Therefore, if a pair of tefillin is lying in an inconvenient place, I may remove it and then put it wherever is convenient for me.

Of course, this article cannot serve even as a primer for hilchos muktzah, but intends merely to mention some interesting and lesser known aspects of the halachos of muktzah.

The entire takkanah of muktzah is highly unusual. While observing Shabbos, we constantly need to focus on what we move and how we use it. Thus, hilchos muktzah become more absorbing than the halachos of Shabbos that the Torah itself mandated. Nechemiah instituted these halachos precisely for these reasons. By having us implement the laws, he was able to make us have Shabbos observance constantly on our minds.