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BS"D

## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON REEH - 5781

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**Commemorating the 20th Yahrzeit of Moreinu Horav Avrohom Pam zt"l Friday 28 Av 5761**

From **The Pleasant Way** by Rabbi Sholom Smith Adopted from the **Teachings of Rav Pam**

<https://www.amazon.com/Pleasant-Way-Adapted-Teachings-Avrohom/dp/193168135X>

### **Two Kosher Signs**

But this you shall not eat from among those that bring up their cud or have a completely separated split hoof the camel, the hare and the hyrax, for they bring up their cud, but their hoof is not split - they are unclean to you. And the pig, for it has a split hoof but not the cud - it is unclean to you. (Reeh 14:7,8)

Among the many mitzvos that are repeated in Chumash Devariim (Mishneh Torah) are the guidelines for identifying which animals are permitted to be eaten. The Torah gives two identifying characteristics of kosher animals - they chew their cud and have completely separated split hooves. Any animal that does not have these two features is forbidden.

The overwhelming majority of animals on earth have none of these characteristics. In the entire Creation, only four animals have one kosher sign. The Torah lists them - the camel, hare and hyrax, which chew their cud and the pig which has split hooves.

The Alter of Kelm notes this as a proof of the Divine origin of the Torah. No human author would dare to declare publicly that there are only four animals in the world with but one kosher sign. By doing so, he would open himself up to refutation and ridicule if other animals with one kosher sign would later be discovered in some distant part of the globe. Only the One who created the world, and knows exactly what He created can make such an unequivocal statement.

The Kli Yakar comments homiletically on the Torah's description of these four unique animals. Why does the Torah begin by first noting their one kosher sign? If they are indeed not kosher because they lack a kosher sign, shouldn't that be stressed first in the pasuk? He explains by saying that the fact that these animals have one kosher sign makes their non kosher status worse, so to speak.

He mentions the Midrash (Vayikra Rabba, end of ch. 13) which compares Esau and his Edomite descendants to a pig. A pig lies on the ground and displays its cloven hooves, as if to delude people into thinking that it is indeed kosher. In fact, this is the source of the Yiddish expression "Chazer-fissel kosher" (pig's foot) which is used to describe hypocritical people who present themselves as paragons of virtue, but in reality are very far from righteous behavior.'

The Kli Yakar says that the stress of the Torah on the kosher sign of these non-kosher animals is a parallel to two-faced people who deceive others with their acts of piety while camouflaging their inner wickedness. This makes them more dangerous than those who openly embrace sin.

In the Talmud (Shabbos 105b) we find the expression Adam Kasher an upright (lit. kosher) person. This denotes someone who has two "kosher signs," so to speak. He is "good to Heaven and good to people," meaning that he performs the mitzvos "between man and man" in the same manner that he performs the mitzvos "between man and G-d."

There are some people who go to great lengths to fulfill the mitzvos "between man and G-d." They spare no expense to buy the most mehudar (beautiful) tefillin. They spend days looking for the most beautiful esrog. They pray with great intensity and devotion and their Shemoneh Esrai is extended. While this is certainly meritorious, it is their conduct concerning mitzvos between man and man" that is sorely lacking. They have no qualms about destroying the reputation of a business competitor.

They angrily refuse a call to come to the aid of a neighbor in need. Their Shalom Bayis leaves much to be desired. Thus, the fact that they have one "kosher sign," (i.e. their devotion to performing mitzvos "between man and G-d") only serves to highlight their lacking a second "kosher sign", (i.e. their failure to do mitzvos "between man and man").

This shortcoming is infinitely worse when displayed by a Jew with one "kosher sign" than it is by a Jew with none. One does not automatically expect exemplary ethical behavior from someone who is not a Torah Jew. His lack of proper conduct is taken in stride. In fact, his deficiency can serve as an example to others displaying what happens when a Jew's life is not inextricably bound to the Torah.

On the other hand, a person who is conscientious of his Torah obligations to Heaven and yet acts improperly in his interpersonal relationships is undermining the Torah itself. People will say, "Why should we aspire to a holy Torah life if this is what happens to a person who learns Torah and performs mitzvos?"

The Talmud Shabbos (31a) tells of the Gentile who came to the great nasi, Hillel and agreed to convert if he could be taught the whole Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel replied that the entire Torah can be encapsulated into one phrase, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man." Basing it on the pasuk in Vayikra (19:18), Love your neighbor as yourself, Hillel said, "This is the entire Torah. The rest is but an elaboration. Go and learn it."

The commentators are puzzled by Hillel's statement. It is a summary of all the mitzvos "between man and man". But where is there a reference to the mitzvos "between man and G-d"? Thus, when one completely fulfills his interpersonal obligations as required by the Torah, it shows that his G-dly obligations are being fulfilled as well.

The question that comes to mind on this is that we see honest. Jews who are polite and well-mannered, considerate, generous and honest. How can this be, if they obviously don't perform mitzvos "between man and G-d"? The explanation of this that their meritorious conduct is only exhibited under normal conditions. At times of stress, pain and anxiety their true personality

shortcomings emerge. They will explode in anger and act in a selfish and cruel manner. The nations of the world have yet to produce a Chofetz Chaim - a person who was a paragon of ethical conduct under even the most trying circumstances. Such purity of spirit is only possible when it is motivated by a total halves to the mitzvos "between man and G-d." Thus, the two halves of mitzvah observance - between "man and man" and "man and G-d", are inextricably tied together.

This is the underlying message of the Kli Yakar. One must strive to be an Adam Kasher, to excel in both kosher signs. This is especially relevant to B'nei Torah who spend their lives in the intricacies of Halacha. They expend great energy and cost in trying to fulfill every nuance of a mitzvah, including the minhagim and chumras (stringencies) of the mitzvos and G-d." They go well beyond the letter of the law. Shouldn't their stringencies be equally applicable to the mitzvos "between man and man?"

<https://www.rabbimeirbaalhaneis.com/Rabbi%20Avrohom%20Yaakov%20Pam.asp>

RABBI AVROHOM YAAKOV PAM (1913-2001)

Rabbi Avraham Yaakov Pam was a great Talmudic scholar, and the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Torah Vodaas in Brooklyn, New York.

Rabbi Avraham Yaakov Pam was born in Vidz, a small village in Lithuania. His father, Rabbi Meir, was an exceptional Torah scholar. Rabbi Pam would tell his family and students that his father almost never went to bed. He would learn until he dozed off from fatigue, and would wake up in the middle of the night and return to his studies. His mother was a learned and pious woman. Rabbi Pam would say about her that since she was incapable of seeing bad in people, she never could speak ill of anyone. She was also fluent in the entire Tanach and was expert at using its lessons to comfort the downtrodden.

Rabbi Meir Pam first learned in Knesses Bais Yitzchak, and later in the Chofetz Chaim's Kollel Kodoshim, where two of his colleagues were Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman and Rabbi Yosef Kahaneman, the future Ponevitzer Rav. Rabbi Kahaneman later was the Rabbi of Vidz for a while, and invited Reb Meir to give lectures in the yeshiva there. In 1927, Rabbi Meir Pam came to the United States. After securing positions as a Talmud lecturer in Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin and as rabbi of the Beis Medrash Hagadol in Brownsville. He then brought over his family. .

When Rabbi Avrohom Pam was 11 years old, his parents sent him away from home to a yeshiva. There was a time when he slept on a bench in the local shul, but nothing deterred him from learning as long and intensely as he could. He was part of a special group of youngsters in Slabodka, where he became a frequent Shabbos guest of Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky. It was a warm relationship that was to be resumed many years later when Rabbi Kamenetzky became Rosh Yeshiva in Torah Vodaas.

When Rabbi Pam returned to America he became a student in Torah Vodaas in Brooklyn. He remained there for the rest of his life. Rabbi Pam's teaching career began at Yeshiva Torah Vodaas in 1938, when he was appointed a Talmudic lecturer there. Holding various teaching positions at Torah Vodaas, Rabbi Pam spent over sixty years there, including even teaching mathematics, utilizing his degree from City College. For many years he delivered the semicha class to students studying toward rabbinic ordination. Rabbi Pam was totally unassuming; in his dress, his speech, as well as in his mannerisms. Rabbi Pam was a great Talmudic scholar, but he was famous for his humility and soft-spoken style. He was one of the great spiritual leaders of our generation and a member of the Council of Torah Sages of Agudath Israel.

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subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

**Weekly Parsha RE'EH 5781**

**Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog**

Stripping away all the details that oftentimes clutter our lives, we can agree that the type of life that we live is pretty much dependent upon the choices that we make throughout our lifetimes. Often, these choices were made when we were yet young and immature. Nevertheless, we are forced to live by those choices and decisions, that we may now, with greater life experience under our belts, regret.

Personal choices, professional and career choices, lifestyle choices all combine to make up our individual life stories. This week's Torah reading highlights the importance and consequences of choices that we make. Many times, we make serious choices when we are not in a serious mood. Many important choices are made flippantly, on the spur of the moment, or under the influence of others. Peer pressure is a fact of life, especially for the young, and often, when we allow others to make choices for us, at the end they are very detrimental to our well-being.

It is simply peer pressure that causes young people to take on unhealthy life habits – smoking is a prime example of this – and once the habit is ingrained within us, it is very difficult to break, and escape from its consequences. Life inflicts upon us, on a daily basis, the necessity of making decisions. What choices we do make become the expression of gift of free will that the Lord has endowed us with. Choices are, therefore, the highest form of human opportunity, as well as being the most dangerous and perilous of all the human traits.

The Torah, in this week's reading, presents us with the most basic choice that we can make – the stark choice between eternal life and death itself. At first glance, this choice is a relatively simple one to make. The life instinct within us, as human beings, is always present. However, we are witness to the fact that many times human beings make choices that are anti-life. There are many distractions that exist in this world, many illusory ideas and false prophets that somehow combine to dissuade us from choosing life. The Torah, therefore, encourages us and even warns us to choose life.

We acknowledge in our daily prayers that the Lord implanted within us an eternal soul which can sustain eternal life within us. We should not fritter away this most precious of gifts. Therefore, when we consider choices that exist before us regarding our behavior and attitudes, we should always judge the matter through the prism of a life and death choice. This makes even the most simple and apparent decisions that we make in life of great consequence and lasting importance.

In effect, there are no small choices, for they all have consequences and later effects that are unknown to us when we make the choice. Seeing these decisions that way may grant us life. It will enable us to choose wisely and carefully, and to allow our good instincts and fundamental human intelligence to control our emotions and desires and help us make correct life choices.

Shabbat shalom

Rabbi Berel Wein

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from: torahweb@torahweb.org

to: weeklydt@torahweb.org

date: Aug 5, 2021, 11:51 AM

subject: **Rabbi Benjamin Yudin - A Different Kind of Outreach**

**Rabbi Benjamin Yudin**

**A Different Kind of Outreach**

Among the fifty-five mitzvos found in Parshas Re'eh, the Sefer Hachinuch counts the mitzvah of tzedakah as containing both a negative and positive mitzvah. The restriction is not to harden one's heart in response to the request of the needy, and the positive mitzvah is to give tzedakah in accordance with one's ability.

It is fascinating to note that the Chinuch (#479) begins his discussion of the mitzvah of tzedakah by defining the mitzvah as to give "b'simcha u'v'tuv levav - With happiness and a glad heart." It is understandable that the mitzvah of Vesamachta Bechagecha (#488, also found in this parsha) requires that one be in a happy and joyous state of being during the Shalosh

Regalim. Why, however, does the Chinuch require the emotional element of simcha to accompany the mitzvah of tzedakah? He does not instruct us to affix a mezuzah nor to don one's tefillin b'simcha; what is special about this mitzvah that must be done b'simcha? I'd like to suggest two answers to this question.

The first answer is based on the Gemara (Bava Basra 10a) where Turnas Rufus asked R' Akiva, if Hashem loves the poor of Israel, why does He not provide for them Himself? R' Akiva answered that Hashem ordained the mitzvah of tzedakah to save the wealthy from "dino shel Gehinom", that they be rewarded and not punished in the world to come. Commenting on this Gemara, the Alter of Kelm taught that it is not the giving of the tzedakah per se that saves the donor, but rather the manner in which he gives, namely fulfilling that which the Torah prescribes "Lo yerah l'avicha bisitcha lo" - one is not to feel bad and resentful when giving tzedakah. It is, says the Alter, the attainment of "v'avavta l'reacha kamocho", feeling the plight of the other, i.e. not only giving him money but uplifting his spirit, which saves the donor from Gehinom. Therefore, he must give "b'simcha u'v'tuv levav", to attain the necessary emotional and uplifting manner in which the mitzvah is performed.

Our second answer is a lesson from Shemos (22:24) where the Torah teaches that we should lend money to, "es heani imach", which literally means "to the poor person who is with you."

According to the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh, the Torah is teaching the donor that what appears to be a magnanimous manifestation of generosity on his part, is, in reality, simply giving the poor and needy what is rightfully theirs. How so? Hashem orchestrates society such that (Devarim 15:11), "despised people will not cease to exist within the land", and He blesses and endows others with more than they need, thereby enabling them to give to the poor what is rightfully theirs. If one truly appreciates the privilege of being chosen to be a giver, then he will be in a state of simcha and tuv lev, recognizing that Hashem has blessed him with the privilege of doing His work.

It is so sad, and indeed tragic, that often when a meshulach or needy individual comes to someone's door, a parent might instruct his children "tell them I am not home." This behavior is doubly unfortunate. Firstly, the parent is teaching that it is okay to lie. Secondly, the foolish parents do not realize that they are missing out on a golden opportunity. What could have been a positive opportunity to assist and enrich, both monetarily and emotionally, an individual, as well as adding dividends to their life insurance for their soul, was not only wasted, but unfortunately there was a violation of mitzvah 488, that of hardening one's heart in response to the request of tzedakah.

In addition, Rabbeinu Yonah (Shaarei Teshuva 3:36) writes that it is possible for one to give charity to a needy individual, but if he does so in a cold and begrudging fashion, he has violated the prohibition of (15:7) "Lo sisametz es levavcha - You shall not harden your heart." Interestingly, the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 249:3) legislates that one is to give tzedakah "b'sever panim yafos" and "b'simcha u'v'tuv levav." The Gr"a attributes the source for this to the Avos D'rabi Nosson (13:4), "Havei mikabel es kol ha'adam b'sever panim yafos", which teaches us that we are to be cheerful and respectful not only to our friends and all other individuals we meet, but especially to the indigent and downtrodden of society.

This Sunday is Rosh Chodesh Elul. There are many acronyms which charge us to appreciate this month. The Megaleh Amukos, Rav Nosson Shapira, who was the Av Beis Din in Crakow and a great mekubal, ascribed the following acronym to Elul: Echad Ladin V'echad L'tzedakah. The Gemara (Chagiga 14a) understands a verse in Daniel (7:9) to mean that there are two thrones in Heaven. The Gemara understands the two thrones to be Echad Ladin V'echad L'tzedakah, meaning one throne is for Hashem to execute justice and the other is for tzedakah. Many attribute the recitation of Tehillim 47 - lam'natzeiach - on Rosh Hashana prior to the blowing of the shofar to be based upon the verse contained therein, "alah Elokim b'truah", meaning Hashem has ascended with the blast. "Alah Elokim b'truah" is understood by

Vayikrah Rabbah (29) to mean that the blowing of the shofar accompanied by the repentance of the Jewish nation causes Hashem to arise from The Throne of Judgement and ascend The Throne of Mercy. May we use this acronym to remind us of the great opportunity we have especially in the month of Elul to give tzedakah in a manner of b'simcha u'v'tuv levav and thereby merit to be judged by Hashem b'tzedakah.

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from: Rabbi Sacks <info@rabbisacks.org>

subject: Covenant and Conversation

**Defining Reality (Re'eh 5781)**

**Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks zt"l**

One of the gifts of great leaders, and one from which each of us can learn, is that they frame reality for the group. They define its situation. They specify its aims. They articulate its choices. They tell us where we are and where we are going in a way no satellite navigation system could. They show us the map and the destination, and help us see why we should choose this route not that. That is one of their most magisterial roles, and no one did it more powerfully than did Moses in the book of Deuteronomy.

Here is how he does it at the beginning of this week's parsha:

See, I am setting before you today the blessing and the curse—the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known. (Deut. 11:26-28)

Here, in even more powerful words, is how Moses puts it later in the book: See, I set before you today life and the good, death and the bad... I call Heaven and Earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore choose life, so you and your children may live. (Deut. 30:15, 19)

What Moses is doing here is defining reality for the next generation and for all generations. He is doing so as a preface to what is about to follow in the next many chapters, namely a systematic restatement of Jewish law covering all aspects of life for the new nation in its land.

Moses does not want the people to lose the big picture by being overwhelmed by the details. Jewish law with its 613 commands is detailed. It aims at the sanctification of all aspects of life, from daily ritual to the very structure of society and its institutions. Its aim is to shape a social world in which we turn even seemingly secular occasions into encounters with the Divine Presence. Despite the details, says Moses, the choice I set before you is really quite simple.

We, he tells the next generation, are unique. We are a small nation. We have not the numbers, the wealth, nor the sophisticated weaponry of the great empires. We are smaller even than many of our neighbouring nations. As of now we do not even have a land. But we are different, and that difference defines, once and for all, who we are and why. God has chosen to make us His stake in history. He set us free from slavery and took us as His own covenantal partner.

This is not because of our merits. "It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land." (Deut. 9:5) We are not more righteous than others, said Moses. It is because our ancestors – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah – were the first people to heed the call of the one God and follow Him, worshipping not nature but the Creator of nature, not power but justice and compassion, not hierarchy but a society of equal dignity that includes within its ambit of concern the widow, the orphan and the stranger.

Do not think, says Moses, that we can survive as a nation among nations, worshipping what they worship and living as they live. If we do, we will be subject to the universal law that has governed the fate of nations from the dawn of civilisation to today. Nations are born, they grow, they flourish; they become complacent, then corrupt, then divided, then defeated, then they die, to be remembered only in history books and museums. In the case of Israel,

small and intensely vulnerable, that fate will happen sooner rather than later. That is what Moses calls “the curse.”

The alternative is simple – even though it is demanding and detailed. It means taking God as our Sovereign, Judge of our deeds, Framers of our laws, Author of our liberty, Defender of our destiny, Object of our worship and our love. If we predicate our existence on something – some One – vastly greater than ourselves then we will be lifted higher than we could reach by ourselves. But that demands total loyalty to God and His law. That is the only way we will avoid decay, decline and defeat.

There is nothing puritanical about this vision. Two of the key words of Deuteronomy are love and joy. The word “love” (the root a-h-v) appears twice in Exodus, twice in Leviticus, not all in Numbers, but 23 times in Deuteronomy. The word “joy” (with the root s-m-ch) appears only once in Genesis, once in Exodus, once in Leviticus, once in Numbers but twelve times in Deuteronomy. Moses does not hide the fact, though, that life under the covenant will be demanding. Neither love nor joy come on a social scale without codes of self-restraint and commitment to the common good.

Moses knows that people often think and act in short-term ways, preferring today’s pleasure to tomorrow’s happiness, personal advantage to the good of society as a whole. They do foolish things, individually and collectively. So throughout Devarim he insists time and again that the road to long-term flourishing – the ‘good,’ the ‘blessing,’ life itself – consists in making one simple choice: accept God as your Sovereign, do His will, and blessings will follow. If not, sooner or later you will be conquered and dispersed and you will suffer more than you can imagine. Thus Moses defined reality for the Israelites of his time and all time.

What has this to do with leadership? The answer is that the meaning of events is never self-evident. It is always subject to interpretation. Sometimes, out of folly or fear or failure of imagination, leaders get it wrong. Neville Chamberlain defined the challenge of the rise to power of Nazi Germany as the search for “peace in our time.” It took a Churchill to realise that this was wrong, and that the real challenge was the defence of liberty against tyranny. In Abraham Lincoln’s day there were any number of people for and against slavery but it took Lincoln to define the abolition of slavery as the necessary step to the preservation of the union. It was that larger vision that allowed him to say, in the Second Inaugural, “With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds.”[1] He allowed neither abolition itself, nor the end of the Civil War, to be seen as a victory for one side over the other but instead defined it as a victory for the nation as a whole.

I explained in my book on religion and science, *The Great Partnership*, [2] that there is a difference between the cause of something and its meaning. The search for causes is the task of explanation. The search for meaning is the work of interpretation. Science can explain but it cannot interpret. Were the Ten Plagues in Egypt a natural sequence of events, or Divine punishment, or both? There is no scientific experiment that could resolve this question. Was the division of the Red Sea a Divine intervention in history or a freak easterly wind exposing a submerged and ancient riverbank? Was the Exodus an act of Divine liberation or a series of lucky coincidences that allowed a group of fugitive slaves to escape? When all the causal explanations have been given, the quality of miracle – an epoch-changing event in which we see the hand of God – remains. Culture is not nature. There are causes in nature, but only in culture are there meanings. Homo sapiens is uniquely the culture-creating, meaning-seeking animal, and this affects all we do.

Viktor Frankl used to emphasise that our lives are determined not by what happens to us but by how we respond to what happens to us – and how we respond depends on how we interpret events. Is this disaster the end of my world or is it life calling on me to exercise heroic strength so that I can survive and help others to survive? The same circumstances may be interpreted differently by two people, leading one to despair, the other to

heroic endurance. The facts may be the same but the meanings are diametrically different. How we interpret the world affects how we respond to the world, and it is our responses that shape our lives, individually and collectively. That is why, in the famous words of Max De Pree, “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.”[3]

Within every family, every community, and every organisation, there are tests, trials and tribulations. Do these lead to arguments, blame and recrimination? Or does the group see them providentially, as a route to some future good (a “descent that leads to an ascent” as the Lubavitcher Rebbe always used to say)? Does it work together to meet the challenge? Much, perhaps all, will depend on how the group defines its reality. This in turn will depend on the leadership or absence of leadership that it has had until now. Strong families and communities have a clear sense of what their ideals are, and they are not blown off-course by the winds of change. No one did this more powerfully than Moses in the way he monumentally framed the choice: between good and bad, life and death, the blessing and the curse, following God on the one hand, or choosing the values of neighbouring civilisations on the other. That clarity is why the Hittites, Canaanites, Perizzites and Jebusites are no more, while the people of Israel still lives, despite an unparalleled history of circumstantial change. Who are we? Where are we? What are we trying to achieve and what kind of people do we aspire to be? These are the questions leaders help the group ask and answer, and when a group does so together it is blessed with exceptional resilience and strength.

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By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Parshas Re’eih includes the commandment that instructs us how to prepare our meat for our table (Devarim 12:15).

#### **Hunting for Meat**

**By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff**

Question #1:

Sheis, the son of Adom Harishon, was traveling one day and realized that he had not packed enough peanut butter sandwiches for the trip. Now hungry, he witnessed a travel accident, which resulted in an animal being killed. Was he permitted to cook the carcass for lunch?

Question #2:

Sheis’ descendant, Linda, lives in the modern era and is Jewish. While traveling in an unfamiliar area, she hunts for kosher meat, discovering some with an unfamiliar supervision, and calls her rabbi to ask whether he recommends it. What factors does he consider in advising her whether to use this product?

Question #3:

In a previous position, I was responsible for researching sources of meat that our local Vaad HaKashrus would accept. I traveled to many cities and visited many meat packing facilities. People have often asked why, sometimes, my hunt resulted in a new acceptable source, and why sometimes it did not. What was I looking for?

Before answering these questions, we need to understand what are the Torah’s requirements for allowable meat.

Upon Noah’s emerging from the teivah (the ark), Hashem speaks to Noah, notifying him that he and his descendants may now eat meat for the very first time. Prior to this time, no one had ever been permitted to sink his teeth into a steak or even a schnitzel (Sanhedrin 59b, based on Bereishis 1:29-30, 9:3; as interpreted by Rambam, Hilchos Melachim 9:1). In actuality, not all authorities agree that Adam and his pre-mabul descendants were required to be vegetarian – some maintain that they were permitted to eat the meat of animals that had already died, and were forbidden only to kill animals for meat (Rashi, Bereishis 1:29 and Sanhedrin 57a s.v. limishri basar; Tosafos, Sanhedrin 56b s.v. achal). According to this last opinion, pre-Noach mankind may have eaten sushi, steak or schnitzel, provided that they did not take the animal’s life.

Thus, whether Sheis could barbecue the discovered road kill (Question #1 above) depends upon whether he held like Rashi, in which case he could, or like the Rambam, in which case he could not. According to the Rambam, he was restricted to a vegetarian diet, which included the responsibility to check that his veggies were insect-free.

Presumably, he called the local Vaad HaKashrus to determine how to check each type of vegetable. I wonder what he did when he wanted to eat Brussels sprouts!

However, when Noah emerged from the teivah, he and his descendants were permitted to give up their vegetarian lifestyle, provided that they ate no meat that had

been removed from an animal while it was still alive (eiver min hachai). Just think -- had Sheis lived after the time of Noah, he could have included some tuna sandwiches in his lunchbox or picked up a salami at the local grocery, instead of going hungry!

When the Torah was given, it both limited the species that a Jew may eat and created many other regulations, including that kosher meat and poultry must be slaughtered in the halachically-approved way (shechitah), and may be eaten only if they are without certain defects that render them tereifah. Even after ascertaining that the animal, itself, may be eaten, one must still remove the blood, certain fats called cheilev, and the sciatic nerve (the gid hanasheh). These last two prohibitions do not apply to fowl.

In the contemporary world, guaranteeing that one's meat is appropriate for the Jewish table involves several trained and G-d-fearing people, including shochatim, bod'kim, menakerim, mashgichim, and knowledgeable rabbonim to oversee the entire process.

#### THE SHOCHET'S JOB

Aside from the shochet's obvious responsibility to slaughter the animal the way Hashem commanded, he must also fulfill another very important task: following the slaughtering, he must verify that he performed the shechitah correctly. This is a vitally important step; without this inspection, the animal or bird must be considered non-kosher -- it will be acceptable for the table of Bnei Noah, but not for Klal Yisroel.

Next, the animal or bird is examined to ensure that it is not tereifah. Although common use of the word "treif" means something that is non-kosher, for any reason whatsoever, the technical meaning of the word refers to an animal with a physical defect that renders it non-kosher, even if it was the beneficiary of a proper shechitah.

#### THE BODEIK

In a meat packing plant (beef, veal or lamb), the individual accountable to check for these defects is called a bodeik (pl. bod'kim). Most bod'kim are trained shochatim, and, indeed, in most plants, the bod'kim and shochatim rotate their tasks, thus making it easier for them to be as attentive as the post requires. As a result, a person licensed both as a shochet and as a bodeik is usually called a shochet, although, technically, he should be called a shochet ubodeik, to truly reflect the extent of his training.

#### THE SECOND BODEIK

The responsibility to check for tereifos is divided between two bod'kim. The first, the bodeik penim, checks the lungs in situ, which is the only way one can properly check that the lungs do not adhere to the ribs, to the membrane surrounding the heart (the pericardium), or to themselves in an improper way, all of which render the animal non-kosher. This checking is performed completely based on feel. The bodeik gently inserts his hand, and runs his fingers carefully over all eight sections of the lung, to see if he feels any adhesion between the lung and one of the other areas.

The second bodeik, the bodeik chutz, rechecks the lungs and makes a cursory check of other organs, upon their removal from the carcass, particularly the stomachs and intestines, for swallowed nails and for various imperfections that render the animal non-kosher.

After the two bod'kim are satisfied that the animal is kosher, the second bodeik or a mashgiach tags the different parts of the animal as kosher with lead or plastic seals. Longstanding practice is that, in addition, the bodeik or a mashgiach makes small slits between the ribs that identify the day and parsha of the week, to mark the piece as kosher. A mark made when the meat is this fresh appears completely different from one made even a few hours later, making it difficult to counterfeit. Of course, this mark is not, alone, used to verify that the meat is kosher, but it is an essential crosscheck, since the old-styled tags can be tampered with.

The modern kosher poultry plant is organized slightly differently: The shochatim perform shechitah only, whereas the bedikah inspection is performed by mashgichim trained to notice abnormalities. If they notice any, they remove the bird from the production line; a rav or bodeik then rules whether these birds are kosher.

For both animals and birds, one needs to check only for commonly occurring tereifos, but not for uncommon problems. For example, the established halachic practice of over a thousand years is to check an animal's lungs, because of their high rate of tereifos, and today it is common practice in Israel to check legs. Animal lungs frequently have adhesions called sirchos, which render them non-kosher (Chullin 46b), although Ashkenazic custom is that easily removed adhesions on mature cattle do not render them treif (Rosh, Chullin 3:14; Rema, Yoreh Deah 39:13). An animal without any sircha adhesions is called glatt kosher, meaning that its lung is completely smooth -- that is, without any adhesions, even of the easily removable variety.

The rav hamachshir's responsibilities include deciding which problems are prevalent enough to require scrutiny and what is considered an adequate method of inspection. Depending on the factory, the next steps in the preparation of beef, veal or lamb are occasionally performed in the same facility where the shechitah was performed, or alternatively, they are performed at the butcher shop.

#### TRABERING

Prior to soaking and salting meat to remove the blood, certain non-kosher parts of the animal, including the gid hanasheh (the sciatic nerve), non-kosher fats called "cheilev,"

and certain large blood vessels, must be removed (Yoreh Deah 65:1). The Hebrew word for this process is "nikur," excising, and the artisan who possesses the skill to properly perform it is called a menakeir (pl. menak'rim). The Yiddish word for this process is traberem, which derives from tarba, the Aramaic word for cheilev, the non-kosher fat. This step is omitted in the production of poultry, since it is exempt from the prohibitions of gid hanasheh and cheilev, and its blood vessels are small enough that it is sufficient to puncture them prior to the soaking and salting procedures.

Early in its butchering, a side of beef (which is half its carcass) is divided into its forequarter and hindquarter. Since the gid hanasheh and most of the cheilev are located in the hindquarter, traberem it is a tedious process that requires a highly skilled menakeir. (On RabbiKaganoff.com, there is an article on the history and halachic issues germane to this practice.) The forequarters must still be trabered prior to soaking and salting, to remove blood vessels and some fat (Rema, Yoreh Deah 64:1; Pischei Teshuvah 64:3). Although traberem is a relatively easy skill to learn, Linda's rabbi might need to check whether the hechsher can be trusted that this was done properly, as the following story indicates.

I once investigated the kashrus of a certain well-known resort hotel, one not usually frequented by frum clientele. I called the hotel and asked who provided their hechsher, and was soon on the telephone with both the resident mashgiach and the rav hamachshir.

I began by introducing myself and the reason for my phone call, and then asked about the sources of the meat used in the hotel. In the course of the conversation, it became evident that neither the rabbi nor the mashgiach knew the slightest thing about traberem, although they were officially overseeing a staff of in-house butchers, none of whom was an observant Jew. I realized that the rather poor kashrus reputation of this establishment was, indeed, well deserved. The rabbi overseeing the hechsher, himself, did not know traberem, nor did he have any halachically reliable supervisor. What was he overseeing?

#### SOAKING AND SALTING

Returning to our brief overview of the proper preparations for kosher meat: After the meat has been properly trabered, it is ready to be soaked and salted to remove its blood. In earlier generations, this process, usually called kashering meat, was performed exclusively at home, but today, common practice is that this is performed either by the butcher or at the meat packer. Almost all kosher poultry operations today soak and salt the meat immediately after shechitah, and it is becoming increasingly more common in beef operations.

To kasher meat, it should be rinsed well, soaked in water for half an hour, drained, salted for an hour, and then rinsed three times (Rema, Yoreh Deah 69:1, 5, 7). The halacha requires that the meat be covered with salt on all exposed surfaces (Yoreh Deah 69:4). Most packing plants do this job appropriately, although I have seen places where the salting was inadequate; entire areas of the meat were not salted. This is, probably, simple negligence; although when I called this problem to the attention of the mashgiach, he insisted that it was performed adequately, notwithstanding my observing the contrary. Needless to say, I did not approve this source.

#### WASHED MEAT

The Geonim instituted a requirement that meat be soaked and salted within 72 hours of its slaughter (Yoreh Deah 69:12). This is because of concern that once 72 hours have passed, the blood becomes hardened inside the meat, and salting no longer removes it. If more than 72 hours passed without the meat being salted, the Geonim ruled that if the meat is broiled, it may be eaten, since this process will still remove the blood, even though salting will not (Yoreh Deah 69:12).

A question that developed with time was whether wetting the meat prevents the blood from hardening inside. Some early authorities permitted soaking meat to extend the 72-hour period (Shach 69:53). However, this leniency often led to highly liberal interpretations. I have seen butchers take a damp rag and wipe the outside of the meat and considered it washed. Thus, there are two different reasons why most reliable kashrus operations do not allow the use of "washed meat," either because they do not accept this leniency, altogether, or because of concern that once one accepts hosed meat, it becomes difficult to control what type of washing is acceptable.

#### THE RAV HAMACHSHIR

Thus far, I have described the tremendous responsibilities of most of the staff necessary to guarantee that the meat is of the highest kashrus standards. One person that I have not adequately discussed is the rav hamachshir, the supervising rabbi, who has the final say on the kashrus standards that the meat packer and butcher follow. Although a rav overseeing meat kashrus does not necessarily have to be a shochet or trained menakeir himself, he certainly must be proficient in all of these areas, both in terms of thorough knowledge of halacha and in terms of practical experience. For most of Jewish history, the most basic requirement of every rav demanded that he be proficient in all the halachos of kosher meat production. As the local rav, his responsibility included all shechitah and bedikah in his town.

However, in the contemporary world of mass production and shipping, the local shul rav is rarely involved in the details of shechitah, and often has limited experience and training in these areas. Depending on the semicha program he attended, he may not have been required to study the laws of shechitah and tereifos. Thus, what was once the province of every rav has now become a specialty area, and, sometimes, rabbonim involved in the giving of meat hechsherim lack the proper training.

I was once given a tour of a meat packing plant by the supervising rabbi of the plant. During the course of the tour, I became painfully aware of the rabbi's incompetence in this area of kashrus. For example, he was clearly unaware of how to check shechitah knives properly, certainly a basic skill necessary to oversee this type of hechsher. Would you approve this meat supplier for your local Vaad HaKashrus?

At this point, I want to address the third question I raised above: Sometimes, my visit to a meat packer resulted in a new, acceptable source, and sometimes it did not. What was I looking for, and why would I disapprove a source that a different rav was approving?

The answers to these questions are sometimes subjective, but I will provide you with some observations of mine.

#### IS THE SYSTEM WORKABLE?

There are many subtle and not-so-subtle observations that a rav makes when examining a meat packer. I could not possibly list in one article all the types of problems I have seen, but I will mention certain specific concerns to which I would always be attentive.

Is the production line too quick for the shocheit or mashgiach to do his job properly? Are the shochatim or mashgichim expected to perform their job in an unrealistic manner, either because of a shortage of trained manpower or because of the speed or organization of the production line?

#### QUALITY OF PERSONNEL

Are the shochatim knowledgeable? Do they appear to be G-d fearing individuals? Although it is impossible to know whether someone is, indeed, a yarei shamayim, it is unfortunately often very obvious that he is not. It can happen that one rav has questions about the staff, and for this reason, he does not approve a source of supply.

I will give you an example of this. While visiting a plant to determine whether we should allow this shechitah, we heard a conversation in which one of the shochatim showed a shortcoming in tzeniyus within his family. Although one could point to a specific law that disqualifies him as a shocheit, I, personally, was uncomfortable with entrusting him with decisions that would affect what I eat. After discussion with the other rabbonim in our community, we decided not to accept meat from this shechitah.

Does this mean that we considered this meat non-kosher? G-d forbid. It simply means that we were uncomfortable allowing it, and decided that we have that responsibility as rabbonim of our community.

Thus, it could indeed happen that what one rav considers acceptable, another rav feels is not. The differences may be based on the interpretation of halacha, or they may result from a rav's inclination as to how a plant should be run.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the above information, we can better understand many aspects of the preparation of kosher meat and why it is important to use only meat that has a proper hechsher. We can also gain a greater appreciation of how hard rabbonim and shochatim work to maintain a high kashrus standard. Now that we recognize the complexity involved in maintaining kosher meat standards, we should always hope and pray that the food we eat fulfills all the halachos that the Torah commands us.

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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a

**Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com**

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:

Learning Maran Ha-Rav Kook in High School

Q: Is it appropriate for boys and girls to learning the writings of Maran Ha-Rav Kook in high school?

A: Selected portions.

Tip for Poor Service

Q: Do I still have to give a tip if someone provides poor service at a restaurant?

A: A small one.

Expulsion from Meiron

Q: Is the claim true that last year the Rashbi did not allow us to visit him on Lag Be-Omer, and this year he expelled us?

A: No.

Calling Mom

Q: When I go out late at night, my mother asks me to check in, and sometimes it wakes her up. Is it permissible to do so from the perspective of honoring parents?

A: Yes. A person's desire is his honor. See Tosafot in Kiddush 31b quoting the Yerushalami regarding Rabbi Tarfon's mother.

Treif Cooking Show

Q: Is it permissible to watch a cooking show where they prepare Treif food?

A: Yes, on condition they are non-Jews.

Unproven Stories about Rishonim

Q: Is it true that Rashi's daughters put on Tefillin?

A: There is no source for this, not among Rashi's descendants or his students.

Q: Did the Ramban's son convert to Christianity?

A: It is mentioned in a few books, but it never happened.

Q: Is the book Shut Besamin Rosh from the Rosh?

A: No. None of it is from the Rosh. An enlightened Jew from Berlin wrote it.

Q: Is the story about Maharam Mi-Rotenburg in jail reliable?

A: It is brought in Yam Shel Shlomo, but there is no earlier source for it. It could be that an inaccurate story reached him.

Reserve Duty in Tzahal

Q: Should I perform reserve duty in Tzahal if it is difficult for my wife?

A: Certainly. Reserve duty is a Mitzvah, an obligation, and a great merit.

Call from Another Phone Number

Q: If someone refuses to answer my telephone call, can I call from another person's telephone, or is it Genivat Da'at (deceit)?

A: It is certainly forbidden. But you can ask your friend to call in your name.

Arab who Raises Palestinian Flag

Q: If I see an Arab raising a Palestinian flag, should I physically confront him in order to show that we are the sovereign authority here?

A: No. 1. Do not lower yourself to his level. 2. He knows full well that we are the sovereign authority here, and feels great shame, and therefore is involved with childish nonsense.

Mitzvah of Shalom Bayit

Q: If Shalom Bayit is so important, why doesn't the Torah make more mention of it?

A: It is the pinnacle of "Love your fellow as yourself".

Son in Father's Class

Q: Can a son be a student in his father's class?

A: It is sometimes a blessing and sometimes a curse. Each class must be decided on its own. If there is a doubt, one should be strict and refrain from doing so.

Returning Corpses of Fallen Tzahal Soldiers

Q: What Mitzvah is there in returning corpses of fallen Tzahal soldiers from Gaza? Redeeming captives?

A: No, it is the Mitzvah of honoring the deceased.

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from: Esplanade Capital <jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com>

subject: Rabbi Reisman's Chumash Shiur - Audio and Print Version

**Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Re'eh 5781**

**Topic – A Really Wonderful Dvar Torah on the Parsha**

We have the Mitzvah of giving Tzedaka as is found in 15:10 (נָתַן תְּתֵן לוֹ). It says (וְלֹא-יֵרַע לְבָבְךָ בְּתַתֶּךָ לוֹ). Don't feel bad and don't act sad when you give Tzedaka. (וְלֹא-יֵרַע לְבָבְךָ בְּתַתֶּךָ לוֹ: כִּי בְגִלְלַת הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, יִדְרֹךְ אֶל-רִיבֶךָ). Because when you give Tzedaka you get blessing. (בְּכֹל-מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וּבְכֹל-מִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ). You get blessing from giving Tzedaka.

The Hafla'a is quoted by the Tchebiner Rav as having said the following.

The Hafla'a said that all of the Berochos of Schar of wealth that come from

giving Tzedaka only come if you give B'saveir Panim Yafos, if you give together with a Chizuk to the person taking the Tzedaka, a smile to the person. So the Posuk says (ולא-גרע לְבָרָה בְּתַתֶּקָּהּ לוֹ). Don't give in a sad way. Why? (כִּי בְגִלְלַת הַדְּבָר הִנָּה). (הַדְּבָר הִנָּה). The Sifri says and it is quoted here in the Hameik Davar on the Posuk. The Sifri says (הַדְּבָר הִנָּה) is Hadibur Hazeh. (כִּי יִבְרָקָה יְרוּרָה אֶלְרִידָה, (בְּגִלְלַת הַדְּבָר הִנָּה), the way you talk when you give Tzedaka. (יִבְרָקָה יְרוּרָה אֶלְרִידָה). Then you get the blessings. (יִבְרָקָה). The Sifri as a matter of fact says even if you don't give the Ani any money, just (הַדְּבָר הִנָּה) you speak to him and you give him Chizuk (יִבְרָקָה יְרוּרָה אֶלְרִידָה). So the Yesod is that all of the Schar for Tzedaka that is promised is when a person gives it B'saveir Panim Yafos, in a happy way. In a way that he feels privileged to give it.

With this, the Hafla'a answers a Kasha of the Rishonim in Bava Basra 8. The Halacha is Kofin Alav Tzedaka. Batei Dinim used to compel (force) people to give Tzedaka. Tosafos asks we have a rule that any Mitzvah that the Torah spells out Schar it is a Mitzvah that we are not Kof'e, we do not force people to do. By Tzedaka the Torah spells out the Schar for giving Tzedaka. So Freigt Tosafos why do we compel, why do we force, why are we Kofin Alav Tzedaka?

Enfert the Hafla'a, beautiful. He says the Schar is for someone who gives happily, someone who gives happily we don't force him, he is giving happily. This fellow who needs to be forced to give Tzedaka, for him there is no Mattan Sechara B'tzida. It doesn't say the Schar that a person is going to get. For him we are Kof'e him, we force him.

I saw from Rav Shternbuch that he adds. The Gemara says in Rosh Hashana 4a (8 lines from the top) that if someone gives Tzedaka Al Menas She'yich'ye B'ni, Harei Zeh Tzaddik Gamur (הַאֹמֵר סַלַע זֶה לְצַדִּיקָהּ בְּשִׁבְלֵי שִׁיחִי). He gives Tzedaka and in the Zechus of the Tzedaka he should have a Refuah for a child or long life for a child, Harei Zeh Tzaddik Gamur. Why Tzaddik Gamur? If you give not Al Menas She'yich'ye B'ni it is also Tzaddik Gamur.

Zagt Rav Shternbuch according to the Hafla'a it is beautiful. When you go to an Ani and you give him Tzedaka he feels bad that he has to take. But if you tell him I need this Zechus, I want that in the Zechus of the fact that I am helping you that Al Menas She'yich'ye B'ni, I need that my child should have a Refuah Sh'leimah. So if you tell the Ani and the Ani feels that he is helping you and you tell the Ani Daven for me. If you give to an Ani from Eretz Yisrael, tell him you are lucky to be in Eretz Yisrael please Daven for my child. In that way you are giving it B'saveir Panim Yafos, in a happy way.

People here from Eretz Yisrael Shlepp to America to raise money. It is not easy. It is difficult. Some of these men are 60, 70 or even older. It is hard for them, it is very difficult. It is sad that they have to do it. Really we should be traveling to Eretz Yisrael looking for the Aniyim. But when they come to your door, be Mekabeil them B'saiver Panim Yafos. And when they are sad that you can't give them a large amount of money say what I say to them. I always tell them Oy I wish I had a spare million dollars to give you, and they smile. Then I give them a drink and they go on their way. B'saveir Panim Yafos.

I should remember to do it all of the time. When they come in and I am relaxed it is easy. When they come in and I am in middle of something it is not so easy. We have to remember that (כִּי בְגִלְלַת הַדְּבָר הִנָּה, יִבְרָקָה יְרוּרָה אֶלְרִידָה). And so, speaking to you from Artzeinu Hakedosha, the Ir Hakodesh, the Yeshiva Kadosha Ohr Sameiach. So many Kedushos I am Zoche to be standing in. HKB"H should help that I should absorb some of the Kedusha. It should give me an Aliyah and you too should be Zoche to come and have an Aliyah B'karov Mamash. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

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from: Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>

date: Aug 5, 2021, 5:40 AM

subject: Torah Weekly - Parashat Re'eh

**Parashat Re'eh**

by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - [www.seasonsofthemoon.com](http://www.seasonsofthemoon.com)

## PARSHA OVERVIEW

Moshe presents to the nation the blessing of a spiritually oriented life, and the curse of becoming disconnected from Hashem. When the nation enters Eretz Yisrael, they must burn down any trees that had been used for idol-worship, and destroy all idolatrous statues. Hashem will choose only one place where the Divine Presence will dwell. Offerings may be brought only there, but not to a private altar.

Moshe repeatedly warns against eating animal blood. In the desert, all meat was slaughtered in the Mishkan, but in Eretz Yisrael meat may be shechted anywhere. Moshe lists the categories of foods that may be eaten only in Jerusalem. He warns the nation against copying the ways of the other nations. Since the Torah is complete and perfect, nothing may be added to or subtracted from it. If a so-called prophet tells the people to permanently abandon a Torah law or indulge in idol worship, he is to be put to death. One who entices others to worship idols is to be put to death. A city of idolatry must be razed. It is prohibited to show excessive signs of mourning, such as marking the skin or making a bald spot.

Moshe reiterates the classifications of kosher and non-kosher food and the prohibition of cooking meat and milk. Produce of the second tithe must be eaten in Jerusalem, and if the amount is too large to carry, it may be exchanged for money with which food is bought in Jerusalem and eaten there. In certain years this tithe is given to the poor. Bnei Yisrael are instructed to always be open-hearted, and in the seventh year any loans must be discounted, and then Hashem will bless the person in all ways. A Jewish bondsman is released after six years, and must be sent away with generous provisions. If he refuses to leave, his ear is pierced with an awl at the door post and he remains a bondsman until the Jubilee Year. This Torah portion concludes with a description of the three pilgrimage festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Succot.

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from: Rabbi Yochanan Zweig <genesis@torah.org>

to: rabbizweig@torah.org

date: Aug 4, 2021, 10:29 PM

subject: Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha - Restoring Dignity

**Rabbi Yochanan Zweig**

This week's Insights is dedicated in loving memory of Eliyahu ben Moshe Aron Lefkowitz OBM by the Lefkowitz family.

"May his Neshama have an Aliya!"

**Getting By Giving**

**You shall truly tithe... (14:22)**

The Gemara (Taanis 9a) records a fascinating conversation between R' Yochanan and his young nephew. R' Yochanan asked his nephew, "Recite to me the Bible verse [you have learned today]." The latter replied, "You shall surely tithe." At the same time, his nephew asked, "What are the meaning of these words?" R' Yochanan answered, "Give tithes that you may be enriched."

The boy then asked, "How do you know this?" R' Yochanan replied: "Go test it [for yourself]." The boy thereupon asked, "Is it permissible to test the Holy One, blessed be He? Do we not have a verse (Devarim 6:16) that says, 'You shall not try the Lord?'" R' Yochanan replied, "Thus said R' Oshaia: The case of tithe-giving is excepted [from the prohibition], as it is said (Malachi 3:10), 'Bring the tithes unto the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and with this you may test me.'"

In other words, a person can literally test Hashem's promise to enrich those who give tzedakah. Even though the general rule is that one may not test the Almighty; the mitzvah of giving charity is exempted from this prohibition. Not only is it exempted, but Hashem actually encourages us to test Him by giving charity. Additionally, the Gemara (Pesachim 8a) states that if a person says, "I am giving this money in order that my son shall live," he is a complete tzaddik. Meaning that even though he is giving the money with an ulterior motive, it is a proper act of tzedakah and he is considered righteous.

Why is the mitzvah of tzedakah an exemption to the prohibition of testing Hashem? Furthermore, there is a general rule laid down in Pirkei Avos (1:3) that says, “Do not be as a servant serving his master in order to receive reward.” So, why is the mitzvah of tzedakah different?

Rashi (Vayikra 20:17) explains that the word chessed in Aramaic means shame. In prior editions of INSIGHTS it has been explained that Aramaic is the language of understanding another person’s perspective. While a person may feel good about sharing his good fortune with others by giving tzedakah, one has to also consider the receiver’s perspective. In other words, when a person has to accept chessed from someone there is a devastating feeling of embarrassment that he cannot take care of his own needs. This is why we ask Hashem in bentsching: “Do not cause us to come to need to rely on gifts or loans from others.” It is debilitating to one’s psyche to have to rely on the largesse of others for survival. Yet, we know that giving tzedakah and doing chessed are key components of one’s obligation to “follow in His ways.” So how do we reconcile this obligation with the pain being caused to the recipient of tzedakah?

This is the reason why Hashem created a system by which the person giving is monetarily enriched by his act of tzedakah. Just as a person would not be embarrassed to be paid for giving someone terrific investment advice, so too a person receiving tzedakah is providing the giver the opportunity to enrich themselves. In fact, it is better than ordinary investment advice; its success is actually guaranteed by the Almighty. Hashem, in his infinite wisdom, is removing the poor person’s shame in receiving tzedakah by enabling him to give back to the person giving the tzedakah. Perhaps this is why the word “nassan – to give” in Hebrew is a palindrome – a word that reads the same backwards and forward; because the giving goes in both directions.

#### The Tipping Point

And when you send him out free from you, you shall not let him go away empty handed. You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, and out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress; of that with which Hashem your God has blessed you, you shall give to him (15:13-14).

The Torah charges us with giving a gift to our Jewish servants when they leave our service; the Hebrew word for this is “hanaka.” Rashi (ad loc) explains that this comes from the Hebrew word for adornment. Similarly, the word anak is used in scriptures to mean necklace (Shir Hashirim 4:9). In fact, giants are called anakim because they wear the sun around their neck like a necklace (Sotah 34b). Rashi on this verse explains that you have to give the freed slave something that makes it clear that you have given him a gift. Why are we obligated to give him a gift at all? He had already been paid in advance for all of his years of servitude, why does the Torah place an obligation to bestow him with a parting gift? In addition, this reference to a necklace indicates that he needs to leave our service bejeweled. But what does that really mean? He actually isn’t given jewelry – as the verses go on to explain, and further elucidated in the Talmud and Rambam (Hilchos Avadim 3:14) – he receives food and food related items. What is this reference to being bejeweled?

Did you ever wonder why when checking in at a hotel you tip the bell person and chambermaid, but not the person who checked you in? Or when shopping, you tip the person who carries your bags to the car, but not the cashier? When ordering food in a restaurant, you tip the waitress; but if you go to the counter and order, you do not tip the person at the register. Why? When do we instinctively give a tip and when do we not give one? In fact, what is the purpose of giving a tip?

The answer is, we give a tip when someone performs a personal service for us. In other words, these are all situations where we would physically be taking care of ourselves; carrying bags to a car or room, cleaning the room, bringing food to the table, etc. In all of these situations a person has demeaned themselves and acted in our service so that we didn’t have to. One could not check himself into a hotel or a flight – the hotel or airline has to check a person in – therefore no tip is warranted.

A tip is given to restore a person’s dignity. Giving a tip is a statement that we appreciate that someone else is doing something that we would otherwise do for ourselves. The very giving of the gift means that the person isn’t a servant, we have no right to expect the act of them, and we appreciate what they are doing for us.

But perhaps even more important is the lesson in what our attitude toward them should be: If we are obligated to restore someone’s dignity for their act of service, how much more so do we have to speak and relate to them in a kindly fashion during their act of service, and ensure that we do not further diminish their dignity.

That is why the Torah describes it as bejeweling a person even though no jewelry is involved. We want to make sure that the Jewish servant who is leaving our service has a measure of his dignity restored. Meaning, by recognizing him as an individual he is now coming back into the community not as a servant, but as a respected member of society.

#### Did You Know...

This week’s parsha discusses the physical signs that distinguish between kosher animals and fish and their non-kosher counterparts. The section concludes with several halachos, including the prohibition of cooking meat with milk.

There’s a Gemara (Chullin 109b) that relates a fascinating principle: “Whatever the Merciful has forbidden he permitted something just like it.” This means that for every food that the Torah has prohibited, there’s another permissible food that tastes exactly like it. This, as explained by the Achronim, was provided by Hashem in order to teach us that the reason for prohibiting the food wasn’t because he wanted to deny us of its special taste. The Gemara continues and lists several of these examples:

- Blood is forbidden to be consumed, but eating an animal’s liver is fine. Rashi here explains that the liver is made up entirely of dried blood and tastes like blood. Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah 73:2) writes that we know we are allowed to eat the liver because the kohanim were permitted to eat it.
- Certain fats of domesticated animals we may not eat (ox, lamb, and goat), but the corresponding fats of undomesticated kosher animals (deer, etc.) we may eat.
- We are not allowed to eat pork, but we can eat the brains of the shibuta fish. Consequently, there have been many attempts to identify the shibuta fish, however the most likely match is the Iraqi fish (and remarkably named to this very day) “shabout,” a type of carp known today by its scientific name, *barbus grypus*.
- He forbade girusa, a non-kosher bird species, but allowed fish tongue. Tosafos (Moed Katan 11a), explains that not all fish tongues have this unique taste, but a specific species of fish does.
- Lastly, since Hashem forbade the consumption of milk and meat together, what is permitted is the cow’s udder, which contains the milk.

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from: **Rabbi Chanan Morrison** <chanan@ravkooktorah.org> via mailchimpapp.net

date: Aug 5, 2021, 1:41 AM

subject: **Rav Kook on Re'eih**: Private and Public Redemption  
When Did the Exodus Occur?

At what time of day did the Jewish people leave Egypt? The Torah appears to contradict itself regarding the hour of the Exodus.

In Deut. 16:1 we read, “It was in the month of spring that the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt at night .” Clearly, the verse states that the Israelites departed in the night. However, the Torah previously stated in Num. 33:3 that they left during the daytime:

“On the day after the Passover sacrifice, the Israelites left triumphantly before the eyes of the Egyptians.”

So when did they leave — during the night, or in broad daylight, “before the eyes of the Egyptians”?

Two Stages of Redemption



The Talmud in Berachot 9a resolves this apparent contradiction by explaining that both verses are correct. The redemption began at night, but it was only completed the following morning.

After the plague of the first-born struck at midnight, Pharaoh went to Moses, pleading that the Israelites should immediately leave Egypt. At that point, the Hebrew slaves were free to depart. Officially, then, their servitude ended during the night.

However, God did not want His people to sneak away “like thieves in the night.” The Israelites were commanded to wait until daybreak before proudly quitting their Egyptian slavery. Thus, the de facto redemption occurred during the day.

Night and Day

Rav Kook explained that there is an intrinsic correlation between these two time periods — night and day — and the two stages of redemption.

The initial redemption at night was an inner freedom. Egyptian slavery was officially over, but their freedom was not yet realized in practical terms. The joy of independence, while great, was an inner joy. Their delight was not visible to others, and thus corresponded to the hidden part of the day — the night.

The second stage of redemption was the actual procession of the Jewish people out of Egypt. This was a public event, before the eyes of Egypt and the entire world. The consummation of their freedom took place at daybreak, emphasizing the public nature of their liberation from Egyptian bondage. As the sun shone, “the Israelites marched out triumphantly” (Ex. 14:18).

(Gold from the Land of Israel, pp. 316-317. Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. I, pp. 43-44)

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from: **Peninim on the Torah** <peninim@hac1.org>

date: Aug 3, 2021, 11:52 AM

subject: Parashas Re'eh

It shall be when Hashem, your G-d, brings you to the Land to which you come to possess it, then you shall deliver the blessing on Har Gerizim and the curse on Har Eival. (11:29)

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As the nation prepared to enter the Land, Hashem instructed them to initiate a new covenant upon entering Eretz Yisrael. One does not enter Eretz Yisrael unless he first prepares himself with the appropriate sense of submission born of awe. Kabbolas haTorah, receiving the Torah forty years earlier, carried them along their journey through the wilderness. A new generation was preparing to enter the Land. In the Plains of Moav this new generation also received an induction into kabbolas ol Malchus Shomayim, accepting upon themselves the yoke of the Heavenly Kingdom. The covenant into which the nation was now entering was made in Eretz Yisrael, a land which demands humility on the part of the newcomer. As Eretz Yisrael is a holy land which Hashem has bequeathed to Am Yisrael, the people were to view the Land through eyes of deference and lowliness, because this Land is unlike any other, which is defined by its geographical locus. Eretz Yisrael is the parcel of land that Hashem designated to Avraham Avinu, the Patriarch, as the homeland for his descendants. It is the land in which the fulfillment of the Torah's mitzvos achieves its apex.

Interestingly, throughout Sefer Devarim, whenever living in Eretz Yisrael is underscored and reiterated, the word yerushah, inheritance (in various forms and conjugations), is used to refer to our relationship with the Land. This term presents an inconsistency with regards to Shevet Levi. The Torah writes: “You shall rejoice before Hashem, your G-d – and the Levi who is in your cities, for he has no share and inheritance with you” (Ibid. 12:12).

Shevet Levi did not inherit a portion in Eretz Yisrael. Hashem is their portion. This in and of itself is a difficult concept to understand. One would think that he who devotes his life to spiritual service, to serving in the Bais HaMikdash as representatives of the nation, would, in fact, receive a portion in the Land. In his commentary to Devarim 10:9, Rashi explains that Shevet Levi was distinguished from the other tribes to serve in the Bais HaMikdash,

thus not leaving them sufficient time to plow and seed, to fulfill the agricultural responsibilities that are part and parcel of land ownership. Shevet Levi received their portion from the people (without the necessary work involved in obtaining it). They received the finished product, so that they would be free to devote themselves fully to serving Hashem in the Bais HaMikdash. In conclusion, by right, Shevet Levi should have received a portion in the Land. They did not, due to their obligation to serve in the spiritual sphere, a service which does not allow for their involvement in the agricultural upkeep of the Land.

Horav Aryeh Leib Heyman, zl, cites Rashi's comment to the initial pasuk of the Torah, “In the beginning of G-d's creating the heaven and the earth.” The Torah should have commenced its narrative with the first mitzvah that Klal Yisrael was enjoined prior to leaving Egypt. Why did it start with Bereishis? Koach Maasav Higeed l'Amo, lasseis lahem nachalas goyim; “The strength of His works He declared to His nation, to give them the heritage of the peoples” (Tehillim 11:6). When the nations of the world confront us with the accusation that we are thieves who conquered/stole the land of Eretz Yisrael, which was inhabited by the seven pagan nations, we will contest that Hashem created the world, so that He had the right to give the land to whomever He pleased. What validity does such an accusation have? Nations are constantly at war, with one conquering the other, and to the victor go the spoils. Why would we need to respond to world opinion when, in fact, it is a commonplace occurrence that one nation conquers another? What was one nation's land yesterday is another nation's land today. Why pay even lip service to such a ludicrous accusation?

Rav Heyman explains that it is not the anti-Semitic diatribe of the nations of the world that is relevant, but rather, the accusations the angels that represent the gentile nations level in the Heavenly sphere. They would question our right to Eretz Yisrael based on our spiritual designation as a Mamleches kohanim v'goi kadosh, Kingdom of Priests and a holy nation. As such, we are all Kohanim/Leviim (or should be) and, by right, our designated “vocation” does not permit us to devote our time to the land. Proof positive was apparent during the nation's forty-year trek in the wilderness, during which Hashem fully sustained millions of men, women and children. The Jewish People might require a place to live, but why would they warrant a particular land assigned specifically to them?

This, explains Rav Heyman, is exactly what the sarei ha'umos, angels of the nations, would have claimed had the Torah not opened with Bereishis bara Elokim. Hashem created the world. It is His, and He gave it to whom He designated. After twenty generations of “pain” resulting from the negative, immoral behavior which Adam's and Noach's descendants perpetuated, Hashem selected Avraham Avinu to be His standard bearer in the world. He would initiate, teach and guide his descendants on the proper course of life – a life committed to Hashem and His precepts. As a result, Hashem promised him Eretz Yisrael, for only there could his descendants fulfill the Torah in its entirety. Veritably, the nation was in the wilderness for forty years, during which Hashem completely sustained them – no work; no plowing, harvesting or any form of agricultural endeavoring. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience whose goal was to inculcate the nation with faith and trust in Hashem in preparation for their entrance into the Land and a life of material and physical laboring, under the aegis of, and commitment to, the Torah. Their wilderness experience was their hachsharah, training, for life in Eretz Yisrael which would, for all intents and purposes, appear to be teva, natural, but, in fact, could not be farther from the truth.

In conclusion, posits Rav Heyman, the purpose of inhabiting the Holy Land is to sanctify it with our mitzvah performance and for it to consecrate us through its holy essence. If we view Eretz Yisrael as our birthright and homeland, however, and that becomes the sole reason for our occupying it, we become no different than the nations of the world, who contend: “Why did you not select an uninhabited land to serve your nationalistic purposes?”