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cshulman@gmail.com

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From Rabbi Yissocher Frand ryfrand@torah.org &
genesis@torah.org To ravfrand@torah.org Subject Rabbi Frand on
Parsha From 3 years ago

Parshas Tetzaveh

The Mind Can Be Trained To Look At Blue And See The Divine Throne

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 583 -- The Bracha of Blossoming Trees. Good Shabbos! The Talmud relates [**Zevachim 88b**] that the different priestly garments atone for different sins and the robe (me'il) specifically atones for lashon harah [gossip]. The Maharal explains the connection between lashon harah and the priestly garments in general and between lashon harah and the me'il specifically.

The Maharal makes two points. First, the priestly garments highlight the institution of the priesthood and priests reinforce for us the concept of the different roles that exist within the Jewish people. Judaism is a role-oriented religion. This is a politically incorrect statement in our egalitarian society. American ideology is that everyone is equal and everyone is the same -- equal rights, equal roles, equal opportunities. Anyone can become the president of the United States.

Klal Yisrael does not work like that. Not everyone can become the Kohen Gadol. One cannot even become a gatekeeper in the Beis HaMikdash if he is not a Levi. Klal Yisrael is a role-oriented religion. This applies to men and women as well. There is a distinct role for men within the Jewish religion and a distinct role for women. This too is a concept that is becoming less and less popular in western society.

A part of lashon harah, says the Maharal, stems from the fact that people do not want to accept the idea that there are differing roles for different people. A lot of lashon harah stems from our becoming intolerant of other people's roles. We cannot adjust to the fact that just because we do things a certain way or we may be different from our neighbors or feel differently than them, that their ways or feelings or roles may not also be perfectly valid as well.

One person may have a natural inclination to be a ba'al chessed (a very kind and caring person). He is a person with a good heart. He may meet someone and ask that person for a favor. If the second person will decline his request, the first person may think very negatively of him. "What a mean person. If the tables were reversed, I would have certainly done the favor for him!" He may even be so incensed by the refusal that he will share this irritation with others and spread lashon harah about the person who turned him down.

It is true that we should all be kind, but inevitably different people have different emotions and standards when it comes to doing chessed for one another. There are people for whom chessed comes easily and there are people for whom chessed comes with great difficulty.

A person must come to the realization that there are all kinds of people in the world and not everyone must be exactly like himself in order to qualify as a person who should not be criticized.

Some people can sit down and study a whole day. Others, after sitting in one place for 20 minutes, need to take a break. Not everyone is cut out to sit and learn for 3 or 4 hours straight. One who has that ability should be praised, but one who does not have it should not be criticized.

Priestly garments reinforce to us the idea that Klal Yisrael is a role-oriented religion. We have to accept the idea that there are different roles and different personalities among individuals.

Specifically, the robe (me'il) was the garment that atoned for lashon harah. The Maharal explains that the me'il was the most striking of all the garments. It was made out of blue techeiles. When one would see the me'il, the idea that would be triggered in a person's mind is the thought pattern that is supposed to come to mind whenever one sees techeiles [Menachos 43b]: The blue techeiles reminds one of the sea. The sea reminds one of the sky. The sky reminds one of the Divine Throne (Kiseh haKavod). Thus seeing techeiles prompts one to think of the Almighty and do mitzvos.

This, says the Maharal, is the me'il's connection with lashon harah. So much of lashon harah has to do with what the mind automatically sees. The me'il demonstrates the speed of the mind. A mind can be quicker than a computer. Lashon harah has everything to do with how a person thinks and where his mind is.

We can see someone and automatically see his pros. On the other hand, we can see someone and automatically see his cons. Lashon harah is perhaps less a sin of articulating evil than it is a sin of perceiving the evil in someone else. Just like a person can be trained that if he sees blue he can think "The Divine Throne," so too a person can be trained to see an individual and think "good heartedness" and focus on all of his positive character traits. Alternatively, like anything else in life, one can see just the negative.

Everyone has both good characteristics and bad. The question is, what is a person's mind trained to see in his fellow man -- the good or the bad? Do we see the cup and call it half full or half empty? Lashon harah is about people who have trained themselves to see the negative.

The me'il teaches us to make positive connections when we perceive something visually. When we look at a person, we should try to see his Tzelem Elokim (G-dly Image). We should try to overlook the evil.

The Baal Shem Tov said on the pasuk [verse] "You shall love your neighbor like yourself" [Vayikra 19:18] that in considering a friend, one should consider how he views himself in the mirror. One generally is very forgiving of his own faults. He gives himself the benefit of the doubt and concludes that despite his shortcomings he is basically a good person. That, says the Baal Shem Tov, is how one should view his fellow man as well. "Yes, he has his faults. But basically he is a good person."

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Covenant & Conversation
Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

Lord Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth

[From several years ago]

<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/>

Covenant & Conversation » 5769 Tetzaveh Tetzaveh is the priestly sedra par excellence. The name of Moses does not appear - the only sedra of which this is true from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy. Instead, the place of honour is occupied by Aaron and his sons, the priests - their tasks, their vestments, their consecration. In this study I want to look at an argument between two of the great medieval sages, Maimonides and Nahmanides, in relation to prayer. What is the nature of worship in Judaism? On the duty to pray, Maimonides writes the following: To pray daily is a positive duty, as it is said, 'And you shall serve the Lord your G-d' (Ex. 23:25). The service here referred to, according to the teaching of tradition, is prayer, as it is said, 'And to serve Him with all your heart' (Deut. 10:13), on which the sages commented, 'What is the service of the heart? Prayer'. The number of prayers is not prescribed in the Torah. No form of prayer is prescribed in the Torah. Nor does the Torah prescribe a fixed time for prayer . . . The obligation in this precept is that every person should daily, according to his ability, offer up supplication and prayer . . . (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Prayer, 1: 1-2) Maimonides regards prayer as a biblical command, even though the details (texts, times and so on) were formulated by the rabbis. Nahmanides (in his glosses to Maimonides' Sefer haMitzvot, positive commands, 5) disagrees. He points to the many indications in the literature that suggest that prayer is only a rabbinic institution. Prayer in the Bible, he says, is a privilege, not a duty (with the sole exception of the command to cry out to G-d at times of national distress). Worship in the Bible takes the form of sacrifices, not prayer. How are we to understand their disagreement? There is a key passage in the Talmud (Berakhot 26b) which sets us thinking in the right direction: It has been stated: R. Jose son of R. Hanina said: The prayers (morning, afternoon and evening) were instituted by the patriarchs. R. Joshua b. Levi said: The prayers were instituted to replace the daily sacrifices. According to R. Jose son of R. Hanina, the patriarchs set the precedent for prayer. Abraham established the morning prayer, as it is said 'And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he had stood' (Gen. 19:27). Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer, as it is said, 'and Isaac went out to meditate in the field towards evening' (Gen. 24:63). Jacob instituted the evening prayer when he received his vision, at night, of a ladder stretching from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending (Gen. 28). The sages cited proof texts to show that each of these was an occasion of prayer. According to R. Joshua b. Levi, however, the prayers correspond to the daily sacrifices: the morning and afternoon prayers represent the morning and afternoon offerings. The evening prayer mirrors the completion of the sacrificial process (the burning of the limbs) which was done at night. This is a

fascinating dispute because it reminds us that there were two different spiritual traditions in the Torah: the priestly and the prophetic. These were different roles, occupied by distinct kinds of people, and involved different forms of consciousness. Prophetic prayer in the Bible is spontaneous. It arises out of the situation and the moment. We think of Abraham's prayer on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah; Jacob's prayer before his encounter with Esau; Moses' prayer to G-d to forgive the Israelites after the golden calf; Hannah's prayer for a child. No two such prayers are alike. Quite different was the service of the priests. Here, what was primary was the sacrifice, not the words (in fact, though the Levites sang songs at the Temple, and though the priests had a fixed formula of blessing, for the most part the priestly worship took place in silence). The actions of the priests were precisely regulated. Any deviation - such as the spontaneous offering of Aaron's two sons, Nadav and Avihu - was fraught with danger. The priests did the same thing in the same place at the same time, following a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly cycle. R. Jose son of R. Hanina and R. Joshua b. Levi do not disagree on the facts: the patriarchs prayed, the priests offered sacrifice. The question is: to which tradition do our prayers belong? There is another passage, this time in the Mishnah (Berakhot 4: 4), suggesting a similar disagreement. Rabban Gamliel states that at each prayer a person should say the 'eighteen blessings' (the original form of the Amidah, the 'standing prayer'). Rabbi Joshua says that one should say an 'abbreviated eighteen'. Rabbi Eliezer says: if a person makes his prayer 'fixed' (keva) then it is not a genuine 'supplication'. Later sages, in both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, argue over what exactly Rabbi Eliezer meant. Some suggest he was talking not about the words we say but the way we say them: we should not regard prayer as 'a burden' or read it 'like one who reads a letter'. Others say that he meant that we should say a new prayer every day, or at least introduce something new into the eighteen blessings. This is a disagreement about the respective places of structure and spontaneity in prayer. A further argument in the Mishnah [Rosh Hashanah 4: 9] concerns the role of the individual as against the community in prayer. The anonymous view in the Mishnah states that 'just as the leader of prayer [sheliach tsibbur] is obligated [to recite the prayer] so each individual is obligated'. Rabban Gamliel, however, holds that 'The leader of prayer exempts the individual members' of the congregation. This cluster of disagreements testifies to a profound difference of opinion as to which tradition of prayer is primary: the priestly or the prophetic. The priest offered sacrifices on behalf of the whole people. His acts were essentially communal and followed a precisely ordered, invariable pattern. The patriarchs and prophets spoke as individuals, spontaneously, as the circumstance required. Rabbi Eliezer, with his opposition to keva, favours the prophetic tradition, as does the view that each individual is obliged to pray. Rabban Gamliel, with his insistence on a fixed text and his belief that 'the leader of prayer' exempts the individual members of the congregation, sees prayer in a priestly perspective. The 'leader of prayer' is like a priest, prayer like a sacrifice, and worship an essentially communal act. There are other ways of interpreting these passages, but this is the simplest. We now understand the disagreement between Maimonides and Nahmanides. For Maimonides, prayer goes back to the dawn of Jewish history. The patriarchs and prophets spoke directly to G-d, each in their own way, and we, by praying, follow in their footsteps. For Nahmanides, though the patriarchs prayed, they did not set a binding precedent. Throughout the biblical era, the primary form of worship was the sacrifices offered by the priests, first in the Tabernacle, later in the Temple, on behalf of the whole people. When the Temple was destroyed, prayer replaced sacrifice. That is why prayer is only a rabbinic, not a biblical, obligation. It was established by the rabbis in

the wake of the destruction. For Maimonides, at the heart of prayer is the prophetic experience of the individual in conversation with G-d. For Nahmanides, by contrast, prayer is the collective worship of the Jewish people, a continuation of the pattern set by the Temple service. We can now appreciate the astonishing synthesis of Jewish tradition - because, remarkably, each prayer (with the exception of the evening prayer) is said twice. We pray once silently as individuals; then out loud (the 'reader's repetition') as a community. The first is prophetic, the second priestly. Jewish prayer as it has existed for almost 2,000 years is a convergence of two modes of biblical spirituality, supremely exemplified by the two brothers, Moses the prophet and Aaron the High Priest. Without the prophetic tradition, we would have no spontaneity. Without the priestly tradition, we would have no continuity. The sedra of Tetsaveh, in which the name of Moses is missing and the focus is on Aaron, reminds us that our heritage derives from both. Moses is a man of history, of epoch-making events. Aaron's role, though less dramatic, is no less consequential. The priestly dimension of worship - collective, structured, never changing - is the other hemisphere of the Jewish mind, the voice of eternity in the midst of time. Prayers from the past and present can shape our world of the future CREDO – THE TIMES JANUARY 2006

A classic Jewish story: a learned rabbi and a taxi driver depart this world at the same time and arrive together at the gates of heaven. The angel at the gate signals to the taxi driver to enter, then turns to the rabbi and sadly shakes his head. "What is this?" asks the rabbi. "I am a learned rabbi and he is only a taxi driver who, not to put too fine a point on it, drove like a lunatic." "Exactly so," replies the angel. "When you spoke, people slept. But when they got into his taxi, believe me, they prayed!"

That's a way of reminding us that prayer isn't always predictable. We never know in advance when we will feel the need to turn to G-d. Why then the discipline of daily prayer?

Preparing a new edition of the Jewish prayer book has made me yet more vividly aware of how powerful prayer really is. It is, said the eleventh century poet Judah Halevi, to the soul what food is to the body. Starve a body of food and it dies. Starve a soul of prayer and it atrophies and withers. And sometimes prayer is all the more powerful for being said in words not our own, words that come to us from our people's past, hallowed by time, resonant with the tears and hopes of earlier generations, words that gave them strength and which they handed on to us to use and cherish.

I remember visiting Auschwitz, walking through the gates with their chilling inscription, "Work makes you free", and feeling the chill winds of hell. It was a numbing experience. There were no words you could say. It was not until I entered one of the blocks where there was nothing but an old recording of the Jewish memorial prayer for the dead, that I broke down and cried. It was then that I realised that prayer makes grief articulate. It gives us the words when there are no words. It gives sacred space to the tears that otherwise would have nowhere to go.

I think back to my father, a Jew of simple faith. In his eighties he had to go through five difficult operations, each of which made him progressively weaker. The most important things he took with him to hospital were his tefillin (the leather boxes with straps worn by Jewish men during weekday morning prayer), his prayer book and a book of Psalms. I used to watch him reciting Psalms and see him growing stronger as he did so. He was safe in the arms of G-d: that was all he knew and all he needed to know. It was only when he said to us, his sons, "Pray for me", that we knew the end was near. For him, prayer was life, and life a form of prayer.

Prayer changes the world because it changes us. It opens our eyes to the sheer wonder of existence. Is there anything in the scientific

literature to match Psalm 104 as a hymn of praise to the ordered complexity of the universe? There is something in the human spirit that, however intricately it understands the laws of physics and biochemistry, wants not merely to explain but also to celebrate; not just to understand but also to sing.

Prayer teaches us to thank, to rejoice in what we have rather than be eternally driven by what we don't yet have. Prayer is an ongoing seminar in what Daniel Goleman calls emotional intelligence. It sensitizes us to the world beyond the self: the real world, not the one defined by our devices and desires.

Daily prayer works on us in ways not immediately apparent. As the sea smooths the stone, as the repeated hammer-blows of the sculptor shape the marble, so prayer - repeated, cyclical, tracking the rhythms of time itself - gradually wears away the jagged edges of our character, turning it into a work of devotional art, aligning it with the moral energies of the universe.

Prayer is not magic. It does not bend the world to our will; if anything it does the opposite. It helps us notice the things we otherwise take for granted. It redeems our solitude. It gives us a language of aspiration, a vocabulary of ideals. And seeing things differently, we begin to act differently. The world we build tomorrow is born in the prayers we say today.

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February 09, 2011

The Perfect Community

By Rabbi Eliyahu Safran

“AND YOU SHALL command the children of Israel.”

Tetzaveh begins with a charge to Moshe to command the community of Israel to bring all that is needed to maintain the Menorah. He is also told to instruct the “wise hearted” to prepare the vestments for Aaron the Kohen. As the parasha unfolds however there seems to be an abrupt change in the manner with which G-d continued to instruct Moshe. “And you shall make a Menorah,” “and you shall make a Shulchan, and the Mishkan shall you make.” No longer is Moshe told to command others. The instructions are now directed towards him personally to build and create the various components of the sanctuary. If that is the case, how then do we know that it was incumbent upon Moshe to instruct and command others to build the Mishkan? To this says the Midrash Hagadol, we must refer back to the parasha's beginning, where in the very first pasuk we are indeed told V'ata tetzaveh “and you shall command the children of Israel,” veyikchu “that they shall bring.” One would then conclude that it was Moshe's role to instruct, guide and command. It was Israel's task to fulfill, create and do.

This may very well be the reason as to why Moshe's name is not mentioned even once throughout the parasha. The Torah did not want to create the erroneous impression that the burden of responsibility to create and maintain a sanctuary is solely placed on the shoulders of Moshe, the leader. The responsibility of establishing a House of G-d is one to be shared by the entire community of Israel. It is the responsibility of the leader to inspire, teach and motivate. It is the community's responsibility to heed the call of its leaders and follow through on their initiatives.

There are cynics among us who believe that the burdens of mikdash are to be overwhelmingly borne by communal religious leaders. Many would like to believe that it was only Moshe who was told, “You make,” “You do,” “You create.” Many moderns mistakenly view their rabbis as the ones assigned to pray, learn, and observe mitzvot. They feel religiously comfortable when their rabbi

“conducts services,” and officiates at religious events, as they passively look on. Frequently, companies seeking to attain kosher certification, naively inquire when the “rabbi will come to bless the equipment,” failing to understand that much personal activity and involvement is needed to “be kosher.”

The Torah addresses the issue by informing us of the proper role definitions. Veata tetzaveh – your job, Moshe, is to teach, inspire, nudge and prompt the community. The community’s job is to enthusiastically and generously respond – veyikchu – to generously cooperate, participate and share. When everyone carries out their given responsibility fully and honestly, a sanctuary can be built where even G-d can reside comfortably.

“Oh, now we understand,” smirk the cynics. “You want to place the real burden upon the community. They need to do, bring, contribute. So, what is left for the leaders to do? You mean it’s such a big deal to lead and then also get the honor, recognition and press coverage that goes with it?”

I am reminded of two charming stories. The first is of a poor simpleton who was befriended by a millionaire lover of music who happened to have a private orchestra. One day the simpleton approached his benefactor and requested that he be assigned a position in the orchestra. Astonished, the rich man exclaimed, “I had no idea you could play an instrument.”

“I can’t,” was the simpleton’s response. “But I see you have a man there who does nothing but wave a stick around while the others are really working hard, playing. His job I can handle.” Don’t so many feel the same about their leaders? They do nothing but wave sticks around. The community’s members – they work hard!

The second story is also about a famous conductor, who was rehearsing a great symphony orchestra. Everything seemed to be going perfectly; 150 skilled musicians were responding to the maestro’s guiding hands.

Suddenly, in midst of a fortissimo passage, the conductor rapped the music stand. There was a sudden silence. “Where is the piccolo?” the conductor demanded.

The piccolo player had missed his entry, and the trained ear of the conductor, even in midst of the glorious volume of sound which filled the hall, had noted its absence. “Where is the piccolo?”

Trained, seasoned and sensitive leaders keep their eyes and ears attuned to the role and mission of every community member. When everyone plays together as a committed member of one orchestra, closely watching and following the leader’s beat, we have a perfect community. And that deserves thunderous applause!

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu Safran serves as OU Kosher’s Vice President of Communications and Marketing.

POINT BY POINT OUTLINE OF THE DAF prepared by Rabbi Pesach Feldman of Kollel Iyun Hadaf

Zvachim 88b

"BIGDEI KEHUNAH" BRING KAPARAH (a) (Beraisa):

The Me'il was made entirely of (wool dyed with) Techeiles - "va'Ya'as Es Me'il ha'Efod... Kelil Techeiles"; 1. The bottom was made of (three different colors of wool -) Techeiles, Argamon (purple) and Tola'as Shani (red) twined together, and the forms of pomegranates with closed mouths, like buttons that children hang from their hats; 2. Seventy-two bells with clappers are hung (our text, Ramban (Chumash) - in the pomegranates; Rashi, presumably he had the text of Shitah Mekubetztes - each between two pomegranates), 36 in front and 36 in back. 3. R. Dosa says, there were 36, 18 in front and 18 in back. (b) (R. Eineini bar Sason): They argue similarly about Tzara'as: 1. (Mishnah - R. Dosa bar Hurkinus): There are 36 Tamei colors of Tzara'as (in all, including

Tzara'as of clothing and houses); 2. Akavya ben Mehalalel says, there are 72. (c) Question (R. Eineini bar Sason): Why did the Torah write the Parshah of Korbanos next to that of Bigdei Kehunah?

(d) Answer: This teaches that just like Korbanos Mechaper, also Bigdei Kehunah: 1. The Kesones atones for murder - "va'Yitbelu Es ha'Kutones ba'Dam" (the Ketones will be a Tevilah, i.e. Kaparah, for blood(shed)); 2. The Michnesayim atone for Giluy Arayos - "...Michnesei Vad Lechasos (i.e. cover up) Besar Ervah"; 3. The Mitznefes atones for haughtiness. 4.

Question: What is the source of this? 5. Answer (R. Chanina): It is proper that something worn at the highest place (the head) atones for elevating oneself. 6. The Avnet atones for thoughts of the heart, for it is worn there. 7. The Choshen atones for (improper) judgment - "v'Asisa Choshen *Mishpat*"; 8.

The Efod atones for idolatry - "v'Ein Efod u'Srafiim." (This implies that when there is an Efod, there is no (liability for) Terafiim (idols). 9. The Me'il atones for Lashon ha'Ra. 10. Question: What is the source of this? 11. Answer (R. Chanina): It is proper that something with a voice (the bells on the Me'il are heard when the Kohen Gadol walks) atones for misuse of voice. 12. The Tzitz atones for audacity - "v'Hayah Al Metzach Aharon"; i. The forehead is where audacity is seen - "u'Metzach Ishah Zonah Hayah Lach". (e) Question: R. Yehoshua ben Levi taught that there are two things that Korbanos do not atone for, i.e. murder and Lashon ha'Ra. The Torah gave other Kaparos for them: 1. Eglah Arufah atones for murder, and Ketores atones for Lashon ha'Ra. 2.

Question (R. Chanina): What is the source that the Ketores atones (for Lashon ha'Ra)? 3. Answer: "Va'Yiten Es ha'Ketores va'Ychaper Al ha'Am." (Rashi - Bnei Yisrael had spoken Lashon ha'Ra about Moshe and Aharon.) 4. (Beraisa - Tana d'Vei R. Yishmael): Ketores atones for Lashon ha'Ra. It is offered covertly (in the Heichal), and it atones for things said covertly. 5.

Summation of question: Above we said that the Ketores and the Me'il atone for murder and Lashon ha'Ra! (f) Answer - part 1 (regarding murder): Eglah Arufah atones (for Bnei Yisrael) when we do not know who was the murderer. The Ketores atones when we know. 1. Question: If we know the murderer, we kill him! (No other Kaparah is needed.) 2. Answer: The case is, we cannot execute him for he (was Meizid, but he) was not warned. (g) Answer - part 2 (regarding Lashon ha'Ra): The Ketores atones for covert Lashon ha'Ra, and the Me'il atones for Lashon ha'Ra said in public.

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88b

AGADAH: ATONEMENT FOR MURDER AND PROMISCUITY
QUESTION: The Gemara discusses the specific sins for which each of the Bigdei Kehunah atone. For example, the Gemara says that when the Kohen wears the Kesones, it is Mechaper for the sin of murder, and when the Kohen Gadol wears the Me'il, it is Mechaper for Lashon ha'Ra. The Gemara asks that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said that the atonement for murder is the bringing of the Eglah Arufah, and the atonement for Lashon ha'Ra is the offering of the Ketores. The Gemara answers that both statements are true. When the identity of the murderer is unknown, the Eglah Arufah provides atonement. When the identity of the murderer is known, but he was not warned properly before the act and therefore he cannot be killed in Beis Din, the wearing of the Kesones provides atonement. Regarding Lashon ha'Ra, the atonement depends on the type of Lashon ha'Ra that was spoken. The offering of the Ketores atones for

Lashon ha'Ra spoken in private, since the Ketores, too, is offered in private. The Me'il atones for Lashon ha'Ra spoken in public, since the bells attached at the hem of the Me'il make noise, publicly, wherever the Kohen Gadol walks.

The same Sugya is recorded in the Gemara in Erchin (16a). However, the Gemara in Erchin records many sins for which a person is punished with Tzara'as, and among them is the sin of Lashon ha'Ra. The Gemara there asks that if Tzara'as atones for the sin of Lashon ha'Ra, then the Me'il must not atone for it. The Gemara there answers that it depends on whether the transgressor's Lashon ha'Ra had detrimental consequences or whether it had no consequences. If the person's Lashon ha'Ra had detrimental consequences, then he is punished with Tzara'as. If it had no practical consequences, then the Me'il atones for it. The Gemara there proceeds to record the discussion of the Gemara here concerning the statement of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi.

The Gemara there seems to ignore an obvious question. Two of the things that the Gemara in Erchin lists as causes of Tzara'as are murder and promiscuity. The statement regarding the atonement provided by the Bigdei Kehunah includes the Kesones as an atonement for murder, and the wearing of the Michnasayim as atoning for promiscuity. Why does the Gemara not immediately ask, as it does with regard to the atonement for Lashon ha'Ra, that both murder and promiscuity have double atonements? This question is especially relevant for the atonement for murder, since the Gemara itself asks later why murder needs both the atonements of the Eglah Arufah and the Kesones.

ANSWERS: (a) RASHI in Erchin (DH Ahanu) answers that the Gemara there knows that the atonement provided by the Bigdei Kehunah for murder and promiscuity is an atonement for the Jewish nation as a whole, and not for the individual perpetrator. This is based on verses that describe how the public is endangered by these sins of the individual. With regard to murder, the verse says, "... for the blood will obligate the land" (Bamidbar 35:33, see ONKELUS). Regarding promiscuity, the verse states, "... and the land became Tamei, and I punished it for its sin" (Vayikra 18:25). These verses show that atonement is needed in order to prevent the Jewish nation as a whole from being banished from Eretz Yisrael as a result of these sins. In contrast, there is no source that the public is endangered as a result of the individual's transgression of Lashon ha'Ra.

TOSFOS here (DH Mechaprim) also mentions Rashi's answer. Part of this explanation is given by Rashi (DH Bar Ketala) in the Gemara here, when he explains that the murderer himself does not gain atonement through the Kesones. (See PANIM ME'TROS who proves this from the Gemara in Makos 10b.)

Tosfos in Erchin (DH Ha) asks that this approach seems inconsistent with the Gemara in Shevuos (39a) that says that all Jews are responsible for any sin committed by another Jew, as long as they have the ability to protest and try to stop him. Why, then, does the Gemara assume that the public does not need a general atonement for the individual's transgression of Lashon ha'Ra (against which no other Jew protested)? Tosfos continues and says that if the Lashon ha'Ra was spoken in private and no one was able to protest, then in a similar case of murder and promiscuity committed in private, the public also is not held responsible.

(b) TOSFOS quotes others who explain that the Gemara in Erchin itself addresses this question. The Gemara answers that the need for atonement depends on whether the sinner's transgression was effective or not. This answer refers also to sins of murder and promiscuity. If someone actually killed, then he is punished with Tzara'as. If he did not actually kill, but rather he embarrassed someone, an act tantamount to killing (see Bava Metzia 58b), then the Kesones atones. Similarly, Tzara'as is a punishment for one who

is promiscuous. One who commits an act which is merely compared to promiscuity (see Shabbos 55b) receives atonement from the Kohen's wearing of the Michnasayim.

Similarly, the SHITAH MEKUBETZES quotes the ROSH who answers the same question regarding Gasei ha'Ru'ach. This sin is listed as a cause for Tzara'as, and it is also listed as a sin for which the Mitznefes (of the Kohen Gadol) atones. The Rosh says that the reason why the Gemara does not ask about this double atonement is similar to the reason given by Tosfos. If a person became haughty and sinned as a result of his arrogance (as did Uziyah ha'Melech when he attempted to offer the Ketores), then he is punished with Tzara'as (like Uziyah). A person who merely feels haughty but does not actively sin as a result receives atonement from the Kohen Gadol's wearing of the Mitznefes. This explanation is also given by the RASHASH.

(c) The MAHARSHA here gives a different explanation. When the Gemara in Erchin says that the Bigdei Kehunah atone for such serious sins as murder and promiscuity, it means that they atone for these sins only when they were committed unintentionally. If they were committed knowingly and willfully (and are not subject to punishment by Beis Din, such as when there is no proper warning), the sinner is punished with Tzara'as. This is why the Gemara asks only about Lashon ha'Ra, since one cannot transgress the sin of Lashon ha'Ra unintentionally. Since both atonements for Lashon ha'Ra involve Lashon ha'Ra spoken willfully, the Gemara asks why both atonements are necessary. (Y. Montrose)

Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting most of the following items.

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
<info@jewishdestiny.com>
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Weekly Parsha :: TETZAVEH :: Rabbi Berel Wein

One of the main garments that the High Priest of Israel donned was the jewel-bestudded breastplate – choshen – that he wore upon his chest. This breastplate contained twelve precious jewels of different colors and on each of the stones was engraved the name of one of the tribes of Israel.

In addition to these stones there were two large elongated diamond stones that were embedded in the shoulder straps of the apron – eiphod – that the High Priest wore. Engraved on those shoulder strap stones were the names of the Patriarchs of Israel and a reference to all of the tribes of Israel. Thus all of the twenty two letters of the Hebrew alphabet were to be found on these stones in the breastplate and on the shoulder straps.

This allowed these stones and their engraved letters to serve as the urim v'tumim – the means of prophecy by which important national issues could be decided with Divine help and intervention. Though the letters of the answer shone on the stones, the ability to string the letters together correctly and coherently into the necessary words and message depended upon the prophets of Israel who “read” the urim v'tumim accurately.

This was symbolic of the symbiotic relationship, so to speak, of God and the Jewish people in pursuit of the national and spiritual goals of Israel. Only by this interaction of Heaven and humans could the message of the urim v'tumim have any constructive meaning. Heaven alone never completely determines our future. We must also work

and strive, interpret and analyze, study and act in order to see our future realized successfully.

In the pocket of the choshen there was inserted a piece of parchment with the ineffable name of the Lord written upon it. This was the engine that powered the miracle of the urim v'tumim. Without its presence the choshen was a lifeless collection of jeweled stones. This significance is part of Jewish tradition.

Beauty and expensive value are only relevant when they are somehow inspired and created for a lofty purpose of spirit and service. King Solomon wisely said that "if the Lord builds not the city then those that have constructed it have toiled in vain."

In Second Temple times the choshen was present on the breast of the High Priest. But the urim v'tumim was no longer in effective operation. The human element of service and dedication was already lacking. There were no longer prophets present amongst Israel and the choshen therefore was merely an ornament, part of the uniform of the High Priest but no longer a Godly guide to the future and a source of instruction to the people of Israel.

Because of this, the great men and rabbinic leaders of Second Temple times in the Land of Israel recognized early on that this Temple was ultimately doomed to be destroyed. The necessary interplay of Heaven and earth, of God and His creatures were no longer present. In such an environment, no matter how beautiful the structure or how handsome the jewels may have been, the whiff of eternity upon which all Jewish life is based was absent. It is our task to somehow restore the very same urim v'tumim in our personal and national lives. Shabat shalom.

From Shema Yisrael Torah Network

<shemalist@shemayisrael.com>

To Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com>

Subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Parshas Tetzaveh

Now you should command Bnei Yisrael. (27:20)

The name of Moshe Rabbeinu is glaringly absent from this parshah. When Moshe interceded on behalf of the Jewish people following their egregious debacle with the Golden Calf, he said, "And now if You would but forgive their sin! But, if not, erase me now from this book that You have written!" (Shemos 32:32) Hashem forgave Klal Yisrael, but Moshe's utterance had to be fulfilled. His name had to be omitted somewhere in the Torah. Since Parashas Tetzaveh always occurs in the week of the seventh of Adar, Moshe's birth date and yearzeit, it was the logical place to omit his name. Horav Zalman Sorotzkin, zl, explains that Chazal are stressing the essential purity of the Jewish faith by emphasizing the fact that Moshe did not become an object of their worship.

In other religions, it is common practice to transform the anniversaries of their founder's birth and death into holidays. The birthday of their founder is the most important holiday, followed by the anniversary of his death, with fast days added on days when he reportedly suffered. This creates the impression that everything was created in his honor, such that all of their faith focuses on him alone. He even glorifies himself by claiming that whoever touches the corner of his garment will have a share in Paradise, as if he has something to say about that. And when he is no longer, his priests make a business out of selling absolution from sin and heavenly portions to the highest bidder.

This is in direct contrast to the ways of our Patriarchs and the Torah. In the Jewish tradition, the lawgiver remains in the background. He is

humble, seeking no acclaim. While it is true that Chazal have taught that Moshe was born on the seventh of Adar and died on that day, one hundred and twenty years later, this was not common knowledge, not printed in any Jewish calendars and, certainly, not celebrated. Our lawgiver was the quintessence of modesty. His greatest appellation was his humility. He sacrificed his life for the nation that he shepherded, and not once did he request gratitude in exchange for his toil. In order to receive the Torah, he ascended Har Sinai amid the fire. He could have died. Thus, the Torah is called Toras Moshe. Moshe was prepared to give up everything for the Torah. When the Jewish people sinned with the Golden Calf, he once again put his life on the line and interceded on their behalf. Hashem was inclined to destroy the nation and rebuild it from Moshe. Our leader refused to hear of it. Time and again, he relinquished his glory for the people. He made no demands. He had no airs about him. Furthermore, he "cursed" himself by asking Hashem to erase his name from the Torah. Therefore, during the week of Moshe's birth and death, when we read Parashas Tetzaveh, the parshah from which his name has been "erased," we are compelled to acknowledge that Hashem is the true Lawgiver, and that the Torah is not man-made, but Divinely authored. Concomitantly, we are filled with esteem and awe for the man through whom the Torah was given and for his boundless love of the Jewish People.

Now you should command Bnei Yisrael that they should take for you pure, pressed olive oil. (27:20)

The Midrash cites the pasuk in Yirmiyahu 11:16, where the Navi compares Klal Yisrael to the olive. "A leafy olive tree, beautiful with shapely fruit, Hashem has called your name." The Midrash questions the comparison, ultimately arriving at three explanations. First, as the olive does not produce its oil until it has been crushed and pressed, likewise, Klal Yisrael repents and does teshuvah, returning to Hashem only after it has been persecuted by its gentile oppressors. Second, as oil does not mingle with other liquids, so, too, is the Jewish nation distinct, unable to blend with other nations. Third, just as when oil is mixed with other liquids it invariably rises to the top of the mixture. When Klal Yisrael adheres to Hashem's dictates, it distinguishes itself among the nations, rises to the top, and achieves distinction.

Horav Zev Weinberg, Shlita, offers a homiletic rendering of this Midrash. The three areas in which the Jewish People do not coalesce with the outside world may be likened to three types of Jews. There are those Jews who lamentably have alienated themselves, or -- as a result of their backgrounds -- grew up in a totally assimilated environment. These Jews are Jews by birth, but otherwise have no clue about their heritage. They have no idea concerning the significance of being Jewish. They acknowledge their heritage and align themselves with their people once they have become the victims of anti-Semitism. When the goy reminds such a Jew that he is Jewish, "something" within him awakens, his Jewish soul begins to stir, and he begins to identify with his "long lost" brethren. The Jewish soul within him has arisen from its self-imposed slumber.

A second group of Jews are those who do not seek assimilation as a way of life. The thought of one of their descendants marrying out of the faith is a terrible anathema which they refuse to countenance. Yet, they still mix with the outside world, but "carefully." This Jew is like the oil that does not mix at all with other liquids. Last, are those Jews who, regardless of the circumstances, always rise to the top and maintain a marked separation from the outside world. It is these Jews to whom we look to represent the future of our nation.

And they should take for you pure, pressed olives for illumination. (27:20)

Rashi comments that the requirement of kassis, crushed, applies only la'maor, for lighting. For Menachos, the pan-offering, a component in

the offering, there is no stipulation which requires that the oil be kassis. To succeed in serving Hashem, one must be kassis, crushed, broken, maintain feelings of inadequacy. Otherwise, arrogance takes hold of him. There is no place for arrogance in serving Hashem. One must view himself as puny, begging Hashem for mercy. Indeed, one who is kassis always feels that he has not yet fulfilled what is demanded of him. This motivates him to move on, continue forward. He is not "there" yet.

There is one drawback with being kassis: one might lose control, reject himself and refuse to go on. Crushed is not depressed. Crushed is a feeling of inadequacy - not despondency. Horav Aharon, zl, m'Karlin remarks, "Merirus, bitterness, acrimony is acceptable," because one feels that he has so much further to go. In fact, his inadequacy serves as a motivating force, "Atzvus, depression, however, is the worst middah, character trait, that there is." The gap between bitterness and depression is the width of a hairbreadth. Yes, the one who feels inadequate in mitzvah performance can grow from his feelings. The one who is depressed has regrettably lost all potential for growth. The one who is bitter feels, "I have yet done nothing. I have so much more to do." In contrast, the one who is depressed has given up hope. He feels, "I am lost, I can do no more." How careful should one be not to permit his humility and feelings of incompetence from spreading and becoming the illness of depression. The Chidushei Ha'Rim, thus, explains kassis la'maor, crushed for light. One should apply the feelings of "crushed" as motivation for illuminating the world, for acting positively, for "doing." V'lo kassis l'menachos, kassis should not serve as an excuse to rest, to give up. Menachos and menuchah have a commonality between them. One should not allow his kassis feeling to prevent him from surging forward in his service to Hashem.

We live in a generation in which depression is regrettably not that uncommon. Feelings of inadequacy, spurred on by a declining economy, is taking its toll on many a household. Added to this is the tension that people experience when they are not in control, when success or failure does not depend on their input, hard work, or acumen. (Not that it ever does, but people tend to make that mistake.) There are those who, as mentioned before, take the "kassis" experience too far. Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, writes, "Judaism never considered pain, sorrow, self-affliction or sadness to be valid goals. In fact, the opposite is true. One should pursue happiness, cheer, joy and delight. For the Shechinah does not dwell in a place of sadness; it dwells only in a place where happiness reigns." The Zohar in Parashas Yisro posits that sadness has within it elements of idol worship, since one's depression indicates that he prioritizes his own desires over those of Hashem. Last, is the famous dictum of Horav Nachman, zl, m'Breslov, "It is a great mitzvah to be perpetually happy, and to overcome and reject feelings of sorrow and melancholy."

How does one succeed in addressing his feelings of inadequacy and depression? The Baal Shem Tov, zl, suggests that we address the source of our sorrow by changing the way that we think. In fact, he feels this is alluded to by the fact that rearranging the letters of the word "thought," machshavah, results in the word, b'simchah, with happiness.

The source of much depression is unachieved goals, which results in low self-esteem. This can be countered by setting realistic goals, or, if that is too late, by setting short-term goals that are easier to achieve and by empowering the individual to develop longer, more significant goals. Economic depression, resulting from feelings that one does not have everything he desires, can be checked by learning to be content with what Hashem determines he should have. Last, is the sadness that envelops us when bad things happen in our lives. One way to mitigate this problem is by contemplating the good

within the bad, until we realize that it really is not as bad as we think. Everything that takes place in our lives is from Hashem, Who determines what, when, and how we should be affected. When we cogently accept that He makes the decision, then living within these decisions becomes much more palatable.

In the Likutei Moharon, Horav Nachman Breslover, zl, who expended much energy promoting joy and fighting sadness in the world, has a prayer of a personal nature which is both poignant and inspirational. I have taken the liberty of excerpting and translating parts of it. "Ribono shel olam, loving G-d, Master of happiness and joy: in Your Presence there is only joy and no sorrow. Kind and loving G-d, help me to be happy at all times... A Jew comes to holiness through joy, and the primary reason that people become distant from You, and thus succumb to material cravings, is sadness that leads to depression.

"But You know how far I am from true joy after everything that has occurred in my life. Therefore, I come before You, to appeal to You to help me find happiness... Do not permit depression to take hold of me at all. If at anytime in my life I begin to become depressed over the wrong that I have done, let me rejoice over the fact that You still love me. You have kept me alive... You made me a Jew. I have the privilege of carrying out numerous mitzvos every day: Tzitzis, Tefillin, Shema, Shabbos, Yom Tov, Kashrus... You have shown Your People such goodness and kindness... Despite our deep exile and separation caused by our sins, Your love is still bound to us. No matter how persistently the voice within me attempts to depress me with negative thoughts about my sins, I tell myself that, on the contrary, this is precisely why I should be happy, considering that someone as distant as I am has the privilege of touching such holiness... but a spirit of vitality within me, to guard and protect me from my kind of pain and illness, physical or spiritual, because the root cause of all affliction is sadness and depression."

The bottom line is that as bad as life might appear, we do not realize how good we really have it.

And they shall take for you pure, pressed olive for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually. (27:20)

In a number of places, Chazal reveal to us that the Menorah and its oil are symbolic of the Torah. The Kohanim represent the keepers of the flame who are to see to it that even the darkest crevices within the spiritual world of the Jewish People are illuminated. With regard to the kindling of the Menorah, the halachah is clear: the Kohen must light the wick until, shalheves oleh mei'elehah, "the wick continues burning on its own." Horav S. R. Hirsch, zl, derives from here that the holy mission of a Torah educator is such that, if he is successful, he will have rendered his future services unnecessary. In other words, he is to establish students who become independent in their thinking, in their ability to study Torah, to go at it on their own.

Understandably, while this may be the teacher's responsibility, the student's obligation is to maintain a lasting relationship with his rebbe, turning to him for counsel and guidance.

Moshe Rabbeinu, the nation's quintessential teacher, appears to have had a contrasting approach to education. The Torah (Shemos 21:1) teaches: "And these are the ordinances that you shall place before them." In explaining the words, asher tasim lifneihem, "that you shall place before them," Chazal relate a dialogue which took place between Moshe and Hashem. "Hashem said, 'It should not enter your mind that I simply teach them a halachah or two until they are able to repeat it; but I will not trouble myself to explain every reason, delve into the underlying logic, and the hidden esoteric implications of each halachah.' Therefore, it is written, 'that You shall place before them,' like a table set and prepared for the individual who comes to eat." Just as one does not invite someone for dinner, put the raw ingredients before him and tell him to go at it alone, so, too, must

Moshe teach the Torah in its entirety, explaining every aspect of it, so that the nation will properly digest it."

Clearly, Moshe comes across in disagreement with shalheves oleh mei'eilehah Was he really not willing to give Klal Yisrael a full Torah education? Horav Chaim Kamil, zl, explains that it might have entered Moshe's mind not to explain the underlying reasons for the Torah's laws. Why? Because the Torah is not given to explanation through conventional methods. The Torah is not like other bodies of knowledge. In order to understand the Torah, one must work at it, studying it diligently, with toil. Only then will he be blessed with understanding. Torah is Divinely authored and, thus, is not given to standard educational procedures. Moshe was to teach the Torah to the best of his ability. This is the manner in which a rebbe transmits Torah to his student. He explains it according to his derech, approach, thereby imparting to the student the skills needed to understand and, eventually, go approach it by himself.

Horav Simchah Wasserman, zl, adds that a rebbe does not explain the Torah, because Torah cannot be given over in the usual manner like any other discipline. A rebbe's function is to catalyze the student's understanding, to light the fire that will burn on its own.

Spoon-feeding the students will ill-prepare them for later on in life. A rebbe should motivate, inspire, encourage the student to delve deeper, to think, to ruminate over the lesson until he is fluent and fully understands the material. This applies to mussar, the study of ethical character development, as well as halachah. The student who does not stimulate his own quest for perfection will be availed very little from lectures and ethical discourses. While these words of inspiration do inspire, they are, regrettably, short-lived. Their significance is primarily to motivate the listener to think about his life, where he is going, and what he should do to right his course. We are given the tools and the skills. We have to utilize them to develop our lives.

In the Ohel Moed...Aharon and his sons shall arrange it from evening until morning, before Hashem. (27:21)

The whole idea of lighting a menorah before Hashem seems superfluous. Does Hashem need the light? He is the Source of all illumination. The Midrash addresses this question and explains that, indeed, Hashem does not need the light of the Menorah. Rather, He commands us to light for Him, just as He provided illumination for us in the wilderness. Sort of a "tit for tat." He is giving us the opportunity to repay the favor. It is a well-known Midrash, but it takes someone of the caliber of Horav Yeruchem Levovitz, zl, to view the Midrash as teaching us a lesson in etiquette. When we receive a favor from someone, the usual reaction is to want to repay our benefactor. What if he shrugs off the favor: "It was nothing," "Don't bother," "Anytime." "I do not want anything in return." It does not always happen this way, because some of us thrive on recognition, but is refusing payback appropriate?

Chazal teach us that, in fact, it is proper that the benefactor allow the beneficiary to pay him back, to return the favor. Someone who is truly sensitive to his friend's feelings will not want him feeling beholden to him. He will not want him to feel he is indebted to him. This is not mentchlech. He should give him the opportunity to return the favor, regardless of its significance or lack thereof.

In his Orchos Chaim, the Rosh states that this idea applies as well when someone offends us and wants to excuse himself. Allow him to explain. Do not say, "Forget about it." If he acted horribly and has a reason for his ignoble behavior, let him clear his chest and wipe the slate clean. By forgiving him and ignoring his reason, one is only adding to his heavy heart. Hear him out, even if his excuse is nonsensical. Allow him the satisfaction of thinking that he settled his debt, that he has made amends.

Some of us thrive when others are in our debt - regardless of its negative impact on the debtor. It is all part of the game of manipulating people to satisfy an intemperate ego, the result of insecurity activated by low-self esteem. Chazal are teaching us a way of life that ultimately leads to personal contentment that is not at the expense of another person.

And you shall speak to all the wise-hearted people whom I have invested with a spirit of wisdom. (28:3)

Ramban explains that Moshe Rabbeinu specifically had to be the one to speak to the artisans, because only he was capable of evaluating who had been endowed by Hashem with Divine wisdom. The Chasam Sofer, zl, cites the Chovas Halevavos who remarks that wisdom is planted within the hearts of men. The individual who can inspire them by awakening their potential will succeed in catalyzing their wisdom to see light. If not, it will lay dormant within the person, like a seed that is placed in the ground, but is left unfertilized, untilled and uncared for. It will not properly germinate. This is what Hashem intimated to Moshe. The individuals who are to become the artisans have been imbued with incredible wisdom, but someone must activate this wisdom by stimulating the individual, making him aware of his G-d-given gift. V'atah tadaber - "and you shall speak" - what should you say? Asher mileisiv ruach chochmah, "that I have invested them with a spirit of wisdom." Let them know what they possess. Make them aware of their potential. Stimulate their creativity and motivate their minds, so that their latent talent will sprout forth and bear fruit.

This concept applies to young people - as students and as children- as well. Once he has undergone self-evaluation, his self-esteem determines his eventual success. One who feels good about himself, who likes what he sees, will invariably work at succeeding in life by cultivating the talents which he feels he possesses. One who has low self-esteem will flounder, rarely seeking the opportunity to grow. Hashem was instructing Moshe to encourage the artisans by informing them about -- and praising -- their Heavenly-endowed wisdom.

Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, says that a student who is unaware of his talent, acumen, and ability to succeed is much like the craftsman who does not recognize the tools of his profession. Without tools, one cannot succeed. What makes it more lamentable is that the tools are in plain sight, but the craftsman cannot identify them.

Praise and positive reinforcement are critical parts of child-rearing and education. They reinforce self-esteem and encourage positive growth and development. It would be a grave error, however, to generalize that success and failure are determined by praise and criticism. Inappropriate praise can be as harmful to a child (or an adult) as inappropriate criticism. Psychologists and educators have categorized four forms of ineffective praise.

First, is generalized praise whereby the specific deed or endeavor is not singled out. A simple "well done" leaves the child wondering what was actually praised. In contrast, is the overblown praise of, "You did the best job in the world! You are absolutely the most incredible worker!" While this may sound good, it may actually be counter-productive, because the child knows that he is not really that great. A child becomes so used to receiving acclaim, he actually can become addicted to accolades, feeling rejected when they do not come. Obviously, the best form of praise is specific, factual and descriptive. This allows room for the child to think and comprehend what the praise really means. This form of praise promotes independence and allows for free-thinking.

The opposite of praise is criticism. A child who is frequently criticized soon learns to have self-doubt. This leads to the ultimate destroyers of young lives: lack of self-esteem; lack of self-confidence, lack of self-worth

Some children who receive a minimum of praise often learn to reject or minimize any praise they receive. One who is constantly rejecting praise may indicate an unconscious belief that he is not a worthy or important person. A child should be taught to accept the praise he receives, not to minimize or over blow it. Not all praise is equal, but neither are people. Different people react differently to praise. This is an idea about which an astute parent or teacher should be cognizant. While receiving praise is not common in adults, it is necessary. The beneficiary should learn to make the most of it.

Zeh Keili v'anveihu

This is my G-d, and I will beautify Him.

Beauty seems alien to the spirit of the Torah. Beauty is tzurah, form, while the Torah stands for chomer, content; beauty seems to emphasize the external, while Torah stresses the internal, the intrinsic. On the other hand, we find beauty playing a significant role in the Mishkan and, especially, in the Priestly vestments.

Additionally, the Gaon, zl, m'Vilna points out that the fact that the Torah sees fit to relate that the Imahos, Matriarchs, were physically attractive, as well as spiritually admirable, indicates that beauty is an asset that should not be ignored. Shlomo Hamelech's expression: Hevel ha'yofi, "Beauty is vain," (Mishlei 31:30) refers to beauty alone - without its integration with ethics and morality.

Horav Aharon Soloveitchik, zl, explains that the Torah's attitude toward beauty is poignantly expressed in the above pasuk: "This is my G-d, and I will beautify Him." In the Talmud Shabbos 133b, Chazal dissect the word, v'anveihu into two words: ani, v'hu, "I and Him," meaning that one should emulate the Almighty. Hence, the meaning of real beauty is to follow Hashem's ways; "As He is merciful and compassionate, so should we be merciful and compassionate." Beauty goes hand in hand with sanctity. Beauty embodies morality, sanctity with honor and beauty, the extrinsic with the intrinsic. It forms a harmonious synthesis of all good qualities blended to perfection - almost G-d-like."

L'zechar nishmas ha'isha ha'chasuva Glicka bas R' Avraham Alter a"h niftara b'shem tov 8 Adar II 5760

In loving memory of MRS. GILKA SCHEINBAUM BOGEN by her family

From Rabbi Yissocher Frand ryfrand@torah.org &
genesis@torah.org
To ravfrand@torah.org
Subject Rabbi Frand on Parsha

Rabbi Yissocher Frand on Parshas Tetzaveh

Many Can Have "Urim" - Power; But Few Have "Tumim" - Power

A large part of Parshas Tetzaveh is devoted to the Bigdai Kehunah [Priestly Garments]. One of the Bigdai Kehunah is the "Choshen Mishpat." The Choshen Mishpat, or Choshen as it is commonly called, is a Breastplate that contains the names of the shevatim [Tribes] of Israel, engraved on twelve stones.

The Urim V'Tumim is a writing of the Shaim HaMif'or'ash [Explicit Name] of G-d, that was placed into the Choshen. The Urim V'Tumim gave the Choshen the ability to convey communications from HaShem [G-d].

The Choshen, which the Kohen Gadol [High Priest] wore, served an invaluable role. Whenever the Jewish nation was faced with a critical issue affecting their national welfare (for example, a question of whether to go to war or not), the Kohen Gadol would seek the advice from HaShem and the answer would appear on the Choshen.

I remember as a child, thinking that this was the greatest thing in the world. "If only I had my own Urim V'Tumim, I would pass all my

tests and I would know if the Yankees would win" - it was a wonderful dream. Of course, the Urim V'Tumim was not used for such frivolous matters. It was used for matters of utmost importance. The Ramba'n gives us an insight into the workings of the Choshen and the Urim V'Tumim: The word Urim means 'lights'. Whenever the Kohen Gadol needed to receive an answer, the letters (of the names of the Tribes, inscribed on the twelve stones of the Breastplate) would illuminate. That was the 'Urim' part. But the letters would be scrambled. It was not as simple as reading out: G-O T-O W-A-R. One needed to break the code—what were the lights of the letters of the Breastplate saying? The Ramba'n explains that there are secondary holy names called the 'Tumim'. These 'Tumim' gave the Kohen Gadol the ability to interpret the 'Urim'. The ability to use the 'Tumim' to interpret the lights of the 'Urim' was a form of Ruach HaKodesh [Divine Inspiration].

The Talmud says [Berachos 31a] that, in fact, there were times when the Kohen could not figure out what the letters were saying. There is a famous Gemara about the High Priest Eli, who misread the letters of the Urim v'Tumim regarding Chana. Eli read the letters appearing on the Breastplate to be Shin-Cof-Reish-Hay (Shikorah—drunken one) when in fact the correct reading was Cof-Shin-Reish-Hay (Kesheira—worthy one). At that precise moment, Eli lacked the power of 'Tumim'.

The sefer Bais Av, by Rav Elyakim Schlesinger, mentions that nowadays there are people who are blessed with the power of 'Urim'. What is the power of 'Urim' nowadays? Orach [Light] -- This refers to Torah. There are people who are steeped in Torah, have knowledge of Torah and can bring proofs from Torah. But not everyone who has the power of 'Urim' - - who looks at the Torah and sees the light of the Torah - also has the power of 'Tumim'. It does not immediately follow that most anyone has the power to interpret what the Torah is in fact saying. The people who have the power of the 'Tumim' are a few treasured individuals in each generation.

That is a special ability. Many people have Urim. They see the Torah and can proclaim something is HaShem's will and this is "the opinion of Torah" (Da'as Torah). But that is not always the case. To truly perceive Da'as Torah, one needs the power of 'Tumim'. Many times, people sincerely and honestly say "This is the 'Urim'—this is what the Torah wants," but sometimes these people do not have the power of 'Tumim'.

A profound example of this is found in the Haftorah from Parshas Zachor [Samuel I; Chapter 15]. We see an unbelievable thing in this Haftorah. Shmuel HaNovi [Shmuel the Prophet] told Shaul HaMelech [King Shaul] to go and eradicate Amalek. Shmuel HaNovi was extremely explicit. Shaul was instructed to have no mercy. He was to kill man, woman, and child. He was to kill out all the animals—camels to donkeys!

Shaul HaMelech went to war and smote Amalek, but he had mercy on the King of Amalek and on the animals. HaShem became angry with Shaul and ordered Shmuel HaNovi to strip the monarchy from him. When Shmuel came to deliver this message to Shaul, the King came out to greet the prophet. Shaul HaMelech's first words to Shmuel HaNovi were "I have fulfilled the word of HaShem." How is this possible? Shaul HaMelech could not bring himself to kill them all. He had mercy. So the first words out of his mouth should have been, "Shmuel, I am sorry. Shmuel, I blew it—I have a soft heart." However, that is not what Shaul said. Shaul HaMelech bragged about fulfilling the letter of the law!

HaShem made a clear inventory of what he wanted accomplished. Shaul was supposed to kill all the animals. He did not kill all the animals. How could he claim he fulfilled the word of HaShem? There can only be one answer. Shaul HaMelech believed that this was the Will of HaShem. He believed that by saving the animals and

eventually sacrificing them, that would be a sanctification of HaShem's Name. Shaul believed that this is what HaShem *really* intended. This was Shaul's understanding - based on the power of the 'Urim'.

This is a classic example of having the power of 'Urim' but not the power of 'Tumim'. A person can sometimes be blinded, whether it is for reasons of personal motive or out of fear of people or for any other reason. For some reason, Shaul HaMelech misinterpreted the 'Urim'. He looked at the words of the Torah and said, 'This is what HaShem means; this is what HaShem wants' - - and yet was completely wrong.

The power of 'Tumim' is reserved for the select few. That is why we need a leader, a Gadol [a Great Torah personality]; that is why we need a Rav; that is why we need a Rosh Yeshiva [Dean of a Yeshiva]. As much as we think we may be able to figure out the 'Urim' on our own, we still need guidance—because we do not always know the 'Tumim'.

We can be well intended and think we have textual proofs, but if we do not have the guidance of a person who is gifted with the insight of 'Tumim', we can make tragic errors.

The end of the book of Shoftim contains one of the most sordid incidents in Jewish history, that of Pelegesh B'Givah [the Concubine in Givah]. The aftermath of that incident was that the other shevatim gathered against Benyamin. They were justifiably outraged. They wanted to fulfill the will of HaShem and ensure that justice was served.

However, after the fact, they realized that they had gone too far. They repented, they offered sacrifices, and they tried to make amends to preserve the Tribe of Benyamin. If their intentions had been noble, how did it happen that they became so carried away with their actions?

The last pasuk [verse] of the book of Shoftim provides an answer. "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did as he saw fit in his own eyes." That is the bottom line. One can be well intended. He can act for the sake of Heaven. He can prove that "this is what it says to do in the Torah". He can see the lights of the 'Urim' as clear as day. But if he does not have the 'Tumim,' he will not know how to interpret the 'Urim'. He will not know how far to go and what to do. He will not know when to stop and when to go.

When do such things happen? When there is no 'king' in Israel. Unless we have a bona fide leader, the worst of things can happen. The power of the 'Urim' and the 'Tumim' combined is reserved for the few of a generation. HaShem should have Mercy upon us and direct us to the guidance of the people who not only have the power of the 'Urim' but also the power of the 'Tumim.'

Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD

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Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb

Parshas Tezaveh - The Stigma of Fame

People are motivated by many things. The search for pleasure is certainly one of the great motivators of human beings. So are the search for power and the search for riches. There are also those among us who seek to be liked by others, to the extent that the search for adulation is their primary motivation in life.

Others, and this is particularly true with religious people, hope for a place in the World to Come. For them, a vision of eternity is a major

motivation. Still, others devote their lives to the search for meaning, wisdom, or spiritual enlightenment.

For me, while all of the motivations listed above are interesting and deserve study, there is yet another human motivation that is more noteworthy: the search for fame.

We all know individuals who are devoted, sometimes even obsessed, by their urge to become famous. For them, just to be mentioned in a newspaper article or to be glimpsed on television for a fraction of a minute is a powerful reward.

This particular motivation is hard to understand. Fame does not necessarily bring material rewards. Not every famous person is rich, nor is he powerful. Famous people are often not popular people; indeed, they are often disliked. And there are certainly no spiritual or intellectual achievements that come with fame. Furthermore, fame is notoriously fleeting. Yesterday's famous person often dwells in oblivion today.

Since the beginning of the Book of Exodus, we have been reading about Moses. Surely he is the most famous person in the Jewish Bible. Yet for him, fame was of no consequence whatsoever. He was not motivated by a need to make headlines, to be immortalized for all eternity, or even to be popular and well-known. He would be the last to be concerned if a weekly Torah portion did not even contain his name.

This week's Torah portion, Tezaveh, is the only one, since we are introduced to the newborn Moses, in which he is not mentioned by name. Tezaveh, a Torah portion rich in all sorts of particulars and details, fails to mention Moses.

Long ago, some keen Torah scholar noted this fact and attributed it to a verse in the next week's parsha, Ki Tisa. There, we read of how Moses pleads to God to forgive the Israelites who worship the Golden Calf. He says, "If You will forgive their sin [well and good]; but if not, erase me from the book which You have written."

"Erase me from the book!" I have no need for fame. Insightfully, this keen scholar found Tezaveh to be the book from which Moses was indeed erased.

I suggest that Moses learned how unimportant fame is from his personal experiences with stigma. For you see, just as fame is no indication at all of the genuine worth of the famous person, so too negative stigma do not reflect the genuine worth of the stigmatized individual.

One of the most perceptive observers of human relations was a writer named Erving Goffman. Almost fifty years ago, he authored a classic work entitled *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. There, he describes the psychology of stigma and of how society assigns negative labels to people, spoiling or ruining their identities as valuable members of that society.

A person who has suffered from being stigmatized learns how meaningless the opinions are that other people have of him. Should he shed these stigmas and gain the positive opinions of others, he would know full well how meaningless those opinions are.

Moses was a stigmatized individual earlier in his life. Goffman distinguishes three different varieties of stigma, and all three were experienced by the young Moses.

The first of these conditions, Goffman termed "abominations of the body". Physical deformities result in such a stigma. Moses had such a physical deformity; he stammered and stuttered.

The second condition, Goffman called "blemishes of individual character". In the eyes of the world, Moses was a fugitive, a criminal on the run, who was wanted by the pharaoh for the murder of an Egyptian citizen.

Finally, the third source of stigma: "tribal identities". Moses was a Hebrew, a member of an ostracized minority.

In contemplating what the life of Moses was like in the many decades he spent as a refugee before returning to Egypt as a redeemer, it's clear that he suffered from a triple stigma: fugitive, stutterer, and Jew. I suggest that one of the greatest achievements of Moses, our teacher, was his ability to retain a sense of his true identity, of his authentic self-worth, in the face of the odious epithets that were hurled at him. This is how, in his later life, when fame and prestige became his lot, he was able to retain his self-knowledge and eschew fame. This is what enabled him to say, "Erase me from the book..." This is why he was able to not only tolerate but to value this week's portion, where his name is not mentioned.

"The man Moses was humbler than all other humans." (Numbers 12:3) The deeper meaning of Moses' humility was his ability to understand himself enough to remain invulnerable to the trials of stigma and insult, and to remain equally unaffected by the temptations of glory and fame.

When we refer to Moses as Rabbenu, our teacher, it is not just because he taught us the law. Rather, it is because he told us how to remain impervious to the opinions of others and to value our own integrity and character. Would that we could be his disciples in this teaching.

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A Thought for the Week with Rabbi Jay Kelman Parshat Tetzaveh - Clothing

One of the key ways by which groups self-identify is through the medium of clothes. Almost all religions have some form of dress code and uniforms, which aim to foster a sense of uniformity in action and sometimes in thought, are the norm among such diverse groups as the police force, athletes, fast-food workers and airlines. The more casual business attire now widely accepted reflects the desire for individuality in the workplace, as society becomes much more attuned to quality of life issues. As styles of clothing reflect the cultural mores of the time, it is to be expected that, often, the first sign of rebellion against the accepted norms of one's environment is through a change of dress. Yet it should be obvious that clothing is no more than an external garment and does not necessarily reflect the essence of the person.

"These are the vestments that they shall make; a breastplate, an ephod (vest), a robe, a knitted tunic, a turban and a sash" (28:4). The Torah is quite insistent that those who worked in the Temple be appropriately dressed. Failure to do so made one liable to "death at the hands of heaven".

Clothes originated in the aftermath of the sin of man's disobedience to G-d in Gan Eden. As a consequence of using our physical body for sin, we were instructed to cover much of it with clothes.

If clothes are the outgrowth of sin, they must also serve as a vehicle for teshuva, a return to man's original state of purity. Our Sages saw each of the eight garments that adorned the high priest as facilitating atonement for particular sins (Erchin 16a). For example, the tzitz, the plate of gold the Kohen Gadol attached to his turban, atoned for the sin of arrogance. The Kohen was enjoined from raising his hands above the tzitz constantly reminding us that all are subservient to G-d. The michnasaim, pants, worn by the Kohen Gadol atoned for sins of sexual immorality. Coming to the Temple and reflecting on the elegant clothes of the priests was a means to moral improvement. The first piece of clothing mentioned is that of the choshen, the breastplate, worn by the high priest. Our Sages state that the choshen had the ability to atone for the sins of miscarriage of justice; it is

referred to in the Biblical text as the choshen hamishpat, the breastplate of justice. The path to G-d begins with ensuring monetary justice for all. Contained within the breastplate were the Urim vTumim, literally the lights and perfection, whereby G-d "communicated" to the high priest regarding issues of national importance. In other words, G-d's relationship to the people of Israel is predicated upon our monetary integrity.

Not by chance did Rav Yosef Karo-author of the standard code of Jewish law, the Shulchan Aruch -codify the vast corpus of monetary law in the section entitled Choshen Mishpat . Many of the commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch took their titles from the description of the choshen hamishpat ; classic rabbinic works such as the Ktoz Hachoshen , the Avnei Milueem and the Urim VTumim . The centerpiece of the choshen hamishpat is the four rows of stone, the arba turim ; this is also the name of the code on which Rav Yosef Karo based his Shulchan Aruch.

The Torah makes mention of the choshen hamishpat even before it describes the ephod that served as an atonement for idolatry, specifically for the sin of the golden calf. G-d can and does forgive idolatry but He is much less forgiving when one takes monetary advantage of another. G-d is effectively "unable" to forgive sins inflicted upon our fellow man, a notion reflected in the fact that our teshuva on Yom Kippur is meaningless if we continue to sin against our fellow man.

Clothes may reflect our values and beliefs, but they are only a means to an end. In order to ensure that our clothes are "for splendour and beauty", we must see beyond the clothes in order to come closer to G-d and our fellow man.

Rabbi Kelman, in addition to his founder and leadership roles in Torah in Motion, teaches Ethics, Talmud and Rabbinitics at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

From Rabbi Chanan Morrison <ravkooklist@gmail.com>
reply-To rav-kook-list+owners@googlegroups.com
To Rav Kook List <Rav-Kook-List@googlegroups.com>
Subject [Rav Kook List]

Rav Kook List Rav Kook on the Torah Portion Tetzaveh: The High Priest's Clothes and the Convert

The Talmud (Shabbat 31a) tells the story of three Gentiles who wished to convert. In each case, they were initially rejected by the scholar Shamai, known for his strictness, but they were later accepted and converted by the famously modest Hillel.

The Convert Who Wanted to be High Priest

In one case, a Gentile was walking near a synagogue when he heard the Torah being read and translated:

"These are the clothes that you should make: the jeweled breast-plate, the ephod-apron..." (Ex. 28:4).

His interest was piqued. "For whom are these fancy clothes?" he asked. "They are special garments for the Kohen Gadol, the High Priest." The Gentile was excited. "For this, it is worth becoming a Jew. I'll go convert and become the next High Priest!"

The Gentile made the mistake of approaching Shamai. "I want you to convert me," he told Shamai, "but only on condition that you appoint me High Priest." Shamai rebuffed the man, pushing him away with a builder's measuring rod.

Then he went to Hillel with the same proposition. Amazingly, Hillel agreed to convert him. Hillel, however, gave the man some advice. "If you wanted to be king, you would need to learn the ways and

customs of the royal court. Since you aspire to be the High Priest, go study the appropriate laws.'

So the new convert began studying Torah. One day, he came across the verse, "Any non-priest who participates [in the holy service] shall die" (Num. 3:10). "To whom does this refer?" he asked. Even King David, he was told. Even David, king of Israel, was not allowed to serve in the holy Temple, as he was not a descendant of Aaron the kohen.

The convert was amazed. Even those born Jewish, and who are referred to as God's children, are not allowed to serve in the Temple! Certainly, a convert who has just arrived with his staff and pack may not perform this holy service. Recognizing his mistake, he returned to Hillel, saying, "May blessings fall on your head, humble Hillel, for drawing me under the wings of the Divine Presence."

Shamai's Rejection and Hillel's Perspective

A fascinating story, but one that requires to be examined. Why did Shamai use a builder's measuring rod to send away the potential convert? What did Hillel see in the Gentile that convinced him to perform the conversion?

Shamai felt that the man lacked a sincere motivation to convert. By chance, he had overheard the recitation of the High Priest's special garments. The garments, beautiful though they may be, represent only an external honor. His aspirations were shallow and superficial, like clothing that is worn on the surface.

Furthermore, the chance incident did not even awaken within the Gentile a realistic goal. How could conversion to Judaism, with all of the Torah's obligations, be based on such a crazy, impossible fancy - being appointed High Priest? The foundations of such a conversion were just too shaky. Shamai pushed him away with a builder's measuring rod, indicating that he needed to base his goals on solid, measured objectives.

Hillel, however, looked at the situation differently. In his eyes, the very fact that this man passed by the synagogue just when this verse was being read, and that this incident should inspire him to such a lofty goal - converting to Judaism - this person must have a sincere yearning for truth planted deeply in his heart. He was not seeking the honor accorded to the rich and powerful, but rather the respect granted to those who serve God at the highest level. The seed of genuine love of God was there, just obscured by false ambitions, the result of profound ignorance. Hillel was confident that as he advanced in Torah study, the convert would discover the beauty and honor of divine service that he so desired through the sincere observance of the Torah's laws, even without being the High Priest.

Both Traits Needed

Once, the three converts who were initially rejected by Shamai and later accepted by Hillel, met together. They all agreed: "The strictness of Shamai almost made us lose our [spiritual] world; but the humility of Hillel brought us under the wings of God's Presence."

Rav Kook noted that the converts did not talk about Shamai and Hillel. Rather, they spoke of the "strictness of Shamai" and the "humility of Hillel." These are two distinct character traits, each one necessary in certain situations. In order to maintain spiritual attainments, we need the traits of firmness and strictness. On the other hand, in order to grow spiritually, or to draw close those who are far away, we need the traits of humility and tolerance. The three converts recognized that it was Hillel's quality of humility that helped bring them "under the wings of God's Presence."

(Gold from the Land of Israel, pp. 152-154. Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. III, pp. 144-147.)

Comments and inquiries may be sent to: <mailto:RavKookList@gmail.com>

From Jeffrey Gross <jgross@torah.org>
reply-To neustadt@torah.org, genesis@torah.org
To weekly-halacha@torah.org
Subject Weekly Halacha - Parshas Terumah
by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt (dneustadt@cordetroit.com)
Yoshev Rosh - Vaad HaRabanim of Detroit

Weekly Halacha by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

Chalav Yisrael: Is it Required?

In order to protect the inadvertent consumption of non-kosher milk, the Rabbis enacted a strict ordinance: The milking of every [kosher] animal must be supervised[1] by a Jew[2] in order for the milk to be kosher. The Rabbis' fear was not that one might mistakenly drink non-kosher milk, since horse or camel's milk look altogether different from cow's milk[3], but rather that a non-Jew might mix a small, undetectable amount of non-kosher milk into the cow's milk, rendering it non-kosher for the unsuspecting kosher consumer. While the Rabbis realized that such an occurrence is unlikely, they were still concerned about it even as a remote possibility[4]. Thus, they prohibited drinking all unsupervised milk[5].

The prohibition against unsupervised milk, known as chalav akum, is a rabbinic prohibition like any other. Thus:

It is prohibited to drink chalav akum even when no other milk is available or when supervised milk is very expensive[6].

A utensil in which chalav akum was cooked is prohibited to use unless it undergoes a koshering process[7].

A utensil in which cold chalav akum is stored for twenty-four hours is prohibited to use unless it undergoes a koshering process[8].

Chalav akum is nullified, bateil, if it is inadvertently mixed into a permitted food or liquid whose volume is sixty times greater than it[9].

Question: Is chalav akum ever permitted?

Discussion: Several hundred years ago, the Peri Chadash ruled that it is permitted to drink unsupervised milk if there are no non-kosher milk-producing animals in the entire vicinity. His argument was that since there is no reasonable possibility that a non-Jew could mix non-kosher milk into the kosher milk, supervision is no longer required. Several other poskim also agreed with this ruling[10].

But almost all of the poskim who followed the Peri Chadash disagreed with his view[11]. They all reached the conclusion that the ordinance against drinking unsupervised milk is the type of a decree which can be classified as a "permanent ordinance," which, once enacted, can never be abrogated. There are two schools of thought as to why this ordinance remains in force even when there is no non-kosher milk to be had:

Some explain that since the rabbinic decree was issued originally only because of a remote possibility - since non-kosher milk was hardly ever mixed with kosher milk - the fact that no such milk is available in the vicinity is of no consequence. Milk can be certified as completely kosher only if it is supervised[12].

The Chasam Sofer[13] explains that the ban on unsupervised milk was pronounced regardless of the availability of non-kosher milk.

Even if it could be ascertained beyond all doubt that there was no possible access to non-kosher milk, it is still prohibited to drink unsupervised milk. Only milk which comes from animals whose milking was supervised by a Jew is exempt from this ban.

Whether for the first or the second reason[14], it is agreed by almost all of the poskim[15] that the Peri Chadash's leniency cannot be relied upon. Some poskim add that even if the halachah were to be

decided according to the Peri Chadash it would be of no consequence, since it has already been accepted by all Jews as binding custom – which has the force of a vow – not to drink unsupervised milk even if there are no non-kosher milk-producing animals in the entire vicinity. One must, therefore, be stringent in this matter [16].

In more recent times, another argument for leniency was advanced by several poskim [17]. They argued that since government authorities in the United States and other developed countries closely monitor the dairy industry and strictly enforce the law against mixing other milk with cow's milk, government regulation should be tantamount to supervision [18]. According to this argument, the fear of being caught by government inspectors who are empowered to levy substantial fines serves as a sufficient deterrent and may be considered as if a Jew is "supervising" the milking. Based on this argument, several poskim allowed drinking "company milk" (chalav stam [19]), i.e., milk produced by large companies, without supervision.

But many others oppose this position as well:

Based on the aforementioned view of the Chasam Sofer, who maintains that the rabbinic ordinance against unsupervised milk applies even when there is no possible access to non-kosher milk, there is no room for leniency just because of government regulation. Nothing short of actual supervision by a Jew renders milk kosher [20].

Some poskim argue that government regulation does not totally and unequivocally preclude the possibility of non-kosher milk getting mixed into cow's milk. This is because dairymen can, if they wish, cheat or bribe the government inspectors. Some may choose to risk getting caught and paying a minimal fine rather than conform to the law. While it is highly improbable that this would happen, it has already been ruled upon by all authorities, in opposition to the Peri Chadash, that the rabbinic ordinance applies even concerning remote possibilities [21].

What is the practical halachah? Years ago, when supervised milk was hardly available [or was of inferior quality] and it was truly a hardship to obtain chalav Yisrael, almost everyone relied on the leniency. Many people continue to rely on this lenient opinion even nowadays when supervised milk is readily available [22]. Indeed, many leading kashrus organizations in the United States confer kosher certification on dairy products (and milk) that contain no non-kosher additives or ingredients, but which are produced from unsupervised "company milk."

Many other people, however, no longer rely on this leniency, since conditions have radically changed and chalav Yisrael is so readily available. It is important to note that while Rav M. Feinstein agreed in principle with the lenient ruling and permitted drinking "company milk" according to the basic halachah, he himself would not rely on the leniency and advised scrupulous individuals, ba'alei nefesh, and bnei Torah [23] to refrain from drinking unsupervised milk. He recommended that schools strain their budgets in order to purchase chalav Yisrael. The following letter [24] gives us an idea of how he felt on this issue (free translation):

"Regarding the milk of government-regulated dairies in our countries, there are definitely grounds for permissibility to say that they are not included in Chazal's prohibition, as we see that many are lenient in this due to dochak (extending circumstances) in many places. However, in a place that chalav Yisrael is obtainable, even though it requires a bit more effort or is a bit more expensive, it is not proper to be lenient in this. One should purchase chalav Yisrael."

In recent years, a question has arisen concerning the kashrus of some milk-producing cows due to surgical procedures performed on their stomachs for various reasons. According to the available information,

many chalav Yisrael companies are now using only cows which do not undergo this procedure.

1. "Supervised" means either watching the actual milking or standing guard outside the milking area to make sure that no other milk is brought in from the outside; Y.D. 115:1.
2. Even a minor over the age of nine may supervise; Aruch ha-Shulchan 115:8. [Nowadays, when the chance of mixing non-kosher milk into cow's milk is remote, even a non-believing Jew may be trusted with the supervision since only non-Jews were included in the original decree; Igros Moshe, Y.D. 1:46; 2:47.]
3. Cow's milk is pure white, while non-kosher milk is greenish; Avodah Zarah 35b. Some hold that they taste different as well (Rav Akiva Eiger on Shach, Y.D. 118:8), while others hold that they taste the same (Beis Meir, ibid.)
4. As explained by Chochmas Adam 67:1.
5. Powdered milk, too, was included in this ordinance; Chazon Ish, Y.D. 41:4; Teshuvos Rav Yonasan Shteif 159. See, however, Har Tzvi, Y.D. 103-104 who is lenient, and his ruling is followed by the Israeli Chief Rabbinate which certifies unsupervised powdered milk as chalav Yisrael (Daf ha-Kashrus, December 1997).
6. Darchei Teshuvah 115:
7. Rama, Y.D. 115:1.
8. Taz, Y.D. 115:7.
9. Shach, Y.D. 115:17; Chochmas Adam 67:5.
10. See Teshuvos Radvaz 4:74 and Peri Toar 115:2.
11. See Pischei Teshuvah 115:3, Aruch ha-Shulchan 115:5 and Darchei Teshuvah 115:6.
12. Beis Meir, 1; Chochmas Adam 67:1; Avnei Nezer 103; Igros Moshe, Y.D. 1:49.
13. Teshuvos Chasam Sofer, Y.D. 107, quoted by Pischei Teshuvah 115:3.
14. Some additional arguments against this leniency are: 1) There are hardly any locales, especially in rural areas, where such animals do not exist; Beis Meir, Y.D. 115:2) Chazal did not always divulge all of their reasons for any particular edict; sometimes even when the obvious reason does not apply there are other, concealed, reasons which may apply; Aruch ha-Shulchan 115:6.
15. The view of the Chazon Ish 41:4 is somewhat unclear on this.
16. Chochmas Adam 67:1; Chasam Sofer, Y.D. 107; Birkei Yosef, Y.D. 115; Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:46.
17. Chazon Ish 41:4; Kisvei Rav Y.E. Henkin 2:57; Igros Moshe, Y.D. 1:47, 48, 49.
18. As mentioned earlier, "supervision" also includes standing guard outside the milking area so that no non-kosher milk is being brought in from the outside.
19. This became known colloquially as chalav stam ("plain milk"), which refers to its status as being neither expressly prohibited chalav akum nor expressly permitted chalav Yisrael. Note that only large milk companies are included in this leniency; there is no leniency for milk that comes from small farms, etc.
20. Zekan Aharon 2:44; Minchas Elazer 4:25; Har Tzvi 103; Minchas Yitzchak 10:31-15; Kinyan Torah 1:38, quoting Rav Y.Y. Kanievsky.
21. Chelkas Yaakov 2:37-38.
22. Even today there are situations where chalav Yisrael is not available, e.g., for business travelers or hospital patients. Under extending circumstances they may rely on the lenient opinion; Rav Y. Kamenetsky (Emes l'Yaakov, Y.D. 115:1).
23. Igros Moshe, Y.D. 2:35.
24. Dated 5716 and printed in Pischei Halachah (Kashruth), pg. 107. For unspecified reasons, this responsum was not published in Igros Moshe.

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Rabbi Neustadt is the Yoshev Rosh of the Vaad Harabbonim of Detroit and the Av Beis Din of the Beis Din Tzedek of Detroit. He could be reached at dneustadt@cordetroit.com