

BS"D

To: parsha@parsha.net  
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON **VAYAKHEL** - 5768

In our 13th year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to [subscribe@parsha.net](mailto:subscribe@parsha.net) Please also copy me at [cshulman@gmail.com](mailto:cshulman@gmail.com) A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net> It is also fully searchable.

---

This week's Internet Parsha Sheet is sponsored by:

**Jonathan Fiskus** jnf28@aol.com in honor of his parents **25th wedding anniversary - Rachel and Michael Fiskus** of Jamaica Estates. Mazal tov!

To sponsor an issue (proceeds to Tzedaka) email [cshulman@gmail.com](mailto:cshulman@gmail.com)

---

TorahWeb <[torahweb@torahweb.org](mailto:torahweb@torahweb.org)> to [weeklydt@torahweb2.org](mailto:weeklydt@torahweb2.org)  
date Feb 28, 2008 4:18 PM subject Rabbi Michael Rosensweig - The Relationship between Shabbat and the Construction of the Mishkan  
[http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2008/parsha/rros\\_vayakhel.html](http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2008/parsha/rros_vayakhel.html)  
TorahWeb.org Homepage

**Rabbi Michael Rosensweig**

**The Relationship between Shabbat and the Construction of the Mishkan**

The parshiyot beginning with Terumah and culminating at the end of sefer Shemot are devoted to the construction of the mishkan. The objective of hashraat ha-Shechinah, providing a physical framework for Hashem's spiritual presence, is crystallized in the pesukim in Tezaveh (29:45-46): "ve-noadeti shamah le-Venei Yisrael ve-nikdash bikvodi... veshachanti betoch benei yisrael ve-hayiti lahem Leilokim ve-yadeu ki ani Hashem Eloikeihem asher hozeyti otam mei-Eretz Mitzrayim leshachni betocham. Ani Hashem."

Shlomo ha-Melech (Melachim 1:8:27), upon completion of the Beit ha-Mikdash articulated the obvious paradox when he queried how a physical abode might enhance the infinite and incorporeal presence of Hashem: "ki ha-annam yeishev Elokim al haaretz hineh ha-shamayim u-shemei ha-shamayim lo yechalkeluchah af ki ha-bayit ha-zeh asher baniti." The midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Shemot ,365) registers a parallel conversation between Moshe Rabbeinu and Hashem. The midrash records that Hashem affirms the significance of the mishkan and its construction, although He does not explicate the mystery.

While the mystery remains, the Torah does hint at the perspective that can contribute to the attainment of such a lofty goal. Twice (Ki Tissa- 31:12-17; Vayakhel 35:1-3) the Torah integrates the mitzvah of Shabbat observance into its account of the fashioning of the mishkan. Chazal derived from this juxtaposition of the two themes that Shabbat may not be desecrated even for the sake of the mishkan. At the same time, the mishkan construction constitutes the paradigm for prominent activity that defines the prohibition of melachah on Shabbat (Shabbat 49b). It is possible that the Torah's linking of Shabbat and the mishkan conveys an additional crucial theme: physical activities and structures may facilitate and enhance Hashem's presence only when a Shabbat perspective is applied. In both contexts, the Torah emphasizes the active work week that precedes the Shabbat. Chazal emphasize that the whole active week revolves around Shabbat. Shamai ha-Zaken was constantly cognizant of the need to prepare for the forthcoming

Shabbat (Beitzah 16a). The Ramban notes that Jews count days on the basis of proximity to Shabbat. The Ohr ha-Chayim (Vayakhel) posits that the Torah refers to the active work week in Ki Tisa and Vayakhel in order to establish that it is Shabbat observance alone that provides its justification and that accords it even spiritual significance- "ki Shabbat hi nefesh kiyum ha-olam". The pursuit of spirituality must be relentless and ubiquitous if kedushah is to be invested in the physical realm.

The midrash frequently compares the building of the mishkan with the act of creation. Shabbat serves as the telos of creation, as we note in our Shabbat evening prayers- "tachlit maaseh shamayim va-aretz" (based on "va-yechulu hashamayim ve-haaretz"). Though the world was created six days earlier, Man's first full day on earth was actually on Shabbat (see, also Shabbat 69b-mehalech ba-midbar...) Thus, it is axiomatic that the mishkan, too, demands a single-minded spiritual focus. It follows that a mishkan born by means of Shabbat violation would be inherently flawed.

The mefarshim (Siftei Hachachamim, Keli Yakar etc.) were troubled by the repetition of the Shabbat-mishkan connection in two different parshiyot. Furthermore, they were puzzled by some discrepancies between the two accounts. In Ki Tissa, Shabbat follows upon the conclusion of the mishkan, while Moshe Rabbeinu's communication to Kelal Yisrael in Vayakhel registers Shabbatmishkan (See Keli Yakar, Vayakhel). prior to the

Perhaps the intervening episode of the egel ha-zahav may explain the different emphasis. The mishkan is viewed by Chazal as an antidote for the egel transgression precisely because the egel episode exemplifies the disastrous consequences of misplaced emphasis in harnessing physical vehicles for the attainment of spiritual goals. In the aftermath of the egel calamity, the Torah needed to further accentuate that the spiritual objective alone invests meaning in concrete symbols. It was no longer sufficient to locate Shabbat following the mishkan; it was crucial to establish that the Shabbat objective is omnipresent and directs every detail of the mishkan.

This approach might explain other changes in the Torah's presentation of Shabbat in the two parshiyot. Prior to the egel episode the Torah barely refers to the weekdays and only in the aftermath of Shabbat observance, while in Vayakhel the Torah's treatment of Shabbat begins with and underscores the weekdays that introduce Shabbat. Perhaps this shifted emphasis was designed to reinforce the notion that the weekdays themselves are defined and justified by the goal of Shabbat and invested with significance only because of that anticipated objective. Still it is important to underscore that only the Torah itself could determine that Shabbat might have this profound effect.

The pre-egel verses in Ki Tisa speak about Shabbat observance and desecration in more general terms- "et shabtotai tishmoru... mechaleha mot yumat... kol ha-oseh bah melachah", while the post-egel reiteration of Shabbat in Vayakhel specifies one of the melachot: "lo tevaru eitz bechl moshveteichem be-yom ha-Shabbat". The gemara (Shabbat 70a) derives from this reference that each form of melachah constitutes a distinct violation of the sanctity of Shabbat, requiring separate sacrifices for atonement (chiluk melachot be-Shabbat). Many of the mefarshim also note that by referring to the prohibition of fire, the Torah signals here that Shabbat does not share the yom tov allowance of heter ochel nefesh (food preparation). The doctrine of chiluk melachot and the exclusion of even cooking etc. preclude the notion that Shabbat, and by proxy, other institutions and concepts of kedushah merely convey a general theme or didactic message that might be adapted or substituted in other circumstances. These elements feature the intrinsic and ontic sanctity of Shabbat and establish unequivocally that halachic categories and spiritual values are governed by strict principles; they are not merely disposable or interchangeable vehicles for avodat Hashem. The reformulated presentation of Shabbat, then, may address important dimensions of the severe miscalculation implicit in the egel transgression, reintroducing the construction of the mishkan as an effective antidote to the egel and as an even more effective model of a physical framework for kedushah.

While the capacity of concrete structures like the mishkan to facilitate Hashem's presence remains a challenging concept, we can be confident in Hashem's affirmation that when implemented scrupulously we will attain the goal of "veshachanti betocho".

Copyright © 2008 by The TorahWeb Foundation. All rights reserved.

from **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** <ryfrand@torah.org ryfrand@torah.org, genesis@torah.org to ravfrand@torah.org date Feb 28, 2008 3:05 PM subject Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayakhel mailed-by torah.org

Rabbi Yissocher Frand To sponsor an edition of the Rabbi Yissocher Frand e-mail list, click here Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayakhel

Shabbos -- Commemoration Of Creation And G-d's Involvement In History

In Parshas Vayakhel, the Torah mentions the laws of Shabbos: "Six days you shall do work, but the seventh day shall be holy for you, a day of complete rest for G-d..." [Shmos 35:2]

The 39 categories of labor that are prohibited on Shabbos are derived from the labors that were needed in the Mishkan. Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch explains that the 39 categories of work represent man's mastery over the physical world. Therefore, by resting on Shabbos, I am making the statement that there is a greater Master over this physical world than myself.

If by working six days, I proclaim my mastery over the physical world, then by resting on the seventh day, I am saying "but there is a greater Master over the physical world, and that is HaShem [G-d]". Therefore, observing the Shabbos is giving testimony that we believe in HaShem's creation of the world.

This works well for 38 of the 39 categories of work. However there is one type of forbidden work that does not seem to fit in with this philosophical framework. The prohibition of carrying does not seem to show mastery over anything. The object remains the same as it was before. One has not shown mastery over anything by transporting an object between a private domain and a public domain or within a public domain. Carrying seems to be the exception to the rule.

The prophet Yirmiyahu seems to confirm this [Yirmiyahu 17:19-27] by repeatedly distinguishing between "performing labor" and "carrying burdens out of your houses" when bemoaning the lack of Shabbos observance in Yerushalayim [Jerusalem].

If the 38 labors represent man's mastery over the world, what is the philosophical implication of the labor of carrying?

Rav Hirsch says that 'Carrying' represents social interaction -- taking from the private domain into the community and taking from the community into the private domain. This is the social interaction of human beings.

The sum total of all human social interactions can be called 'history'. When I refrain from carrying on Shabbos, I am making the statement that not only is G-d Master over the physical world, but G-d is Master over social interaction. G-d is Master over history.

This is what Yirmiyahu told the Jews of Yerushalayim:

"If you refrain from carrying..." (Meaning: If you recognize G-d's mastery over history...) "...then I will make My Divine Providence (Hashgocha Protis) felt and Yerushalayim will have fame and glory." "However if you refuse to listen to Me and you do carry on Shabbos... (Meaning: If you refuse to acknowledge G-d's place in history), the result will be that I will remove myself from history and, (Rachmana l'tzlan [May the All Merciful spare us]) Yerushalayim will be destroyed."

This, says Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, is what we say in the Shabbos Kiddush. Shabbos is "in commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt" and it is "in commemoration of the Act of Creation". By abstaining from 38 types of labor, we acknowledge that Shabbos is in commemoration of the Act of Creation. By refraining from carrying (the 39th category of labor), we

acknowledge the Exodus from Egypt, which represents the Hand of HaShem in the history of human beings.

This dvar Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion: Tape # 90, Melacha of Carrying. Good Shabbos!

Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information.

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

RavFrand, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org.

Join the Jewish Learning Revolution! Torah.org: The Judaism Site brings this and a host of other classes to you every week. Visit <http://torah.org> or email [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) to get your own free copy of this mailing.

Torah.org: The Judaism Site Project Genesis, Inc. 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 250 Baltimore, MD 21208 <http://www.torah.org/> [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) (410) 602-1350 FAX: (410) 510-1053

---

Young Israel Weekly Dvar TorahFrom: 11325-return-223-10500539@lb.bcentral.com on behalf of National Council of Young Israel [YI\_Torah@lb.bcentral.com] Sent: Friday, March 24, 2006 10:42 AM To: Shulman, Charles Subject: NCYI Dvar Torah: Vayakhel-Pekude Parshat Vayakhel/Pekude 25 Adar 5766 March 25, 2006 Daf Yomi: Pesachim 67

Guest Rabbi: **Rabbi Herschel Kurzrock**  
Young Israel of Kensington, NY

VAYAKEL The Baal Haturim mentions a very interesting Masoretic text in this Sedra regarding a particular word referring to Bezalel and Ahaliav, the chief builders of the Mishkan. This first word of the verse, "Ul'horos nawsan b'lebo - and the ability to teach hath the Al-Mighty put in his heart" (Chapter 35:34) - is also descriptive of Aharon Hakohen in Vayikra (Chapter 10:11). The verse in Vayikra reads: "Ul'horos es Bnei Yisrael - and to teach the children of Israel." The verse in our Sedra utilizes the word "Ul'horos" to denote koach, potential for and ability to teach. The verse in Vayikra uses the expression "Ul'horos" to mean "to teach the children of Israel all the statutes, etc." A Masoretic text linking a particular phrase found in different contexts and different places in the Torah conveys a direct and at times an implied message or lesson to every Jew.

It seems to me that this Masoretic text conveys a most profound admonition to all. There are many chachamim, wise people, who, although very erudite, are not capable of teaching and imparting to others. Bezalel and Ahaliav who were extremely learned and wise in all areas of the Torah (Berachot 58a) were capable of teaching others (see Ibn Ezra 35:34). This explains why Shlomo Hamelech was praised in Kohelet (12:9). Even more than the fact that Kohelet was scholarly (himself), he was able to impart knowledge to the people and make them wise (Metzudos Dovid Kohelet 12:9). The Talmud says in Pesachim 87a: Rabbi Jonathan states "this alludes to Elam who was privileged to "learn" (lilmod) but not to "teach" (lilamaid). In Sanhedrin 24a, Rabbi Johanan makes a comparison to Bavel where there was a great deal of teaching. The Gemara alludes to the difference between Daniel and Ezra. Whereas the latter was privileged to be Marbitz Torah, to disseminate his scholarly achievements to Klal Yisrael, the former was not so privileged (see Rashi Sanhed. 24a). Thus, not every chacham was blessed with the ability to impart knowledge to others. The Masoretic text in this week's Sedra implicitly stresses the connection of the key word Ul'horos used in our Sedra in the context of the potential to be a teacher of Torah, to Ul'horos in Vayikra, actual teaching. It shows that it is a holy obligation to put this ability for the benefit of Klal Yisrael, signified by the second statement "Ul'horos es Bnei Yisrael," and to teach the children of Israel. It is incumbent upon any individual who has this ability to utilize this "gift" for the Al-Mighty, despite his social background. Note that

this verse in our Sedra mentions both Bezalel and Ahaliev. Ahaliev came from a lowly tribe; Bezalel from a more esteemed tribe (see Rashi 35:35). Yet, Ahaliev was Bezalel's equal. A person who has the ability must be ready willing and able to answer the call of "L'horos es Bnei Yisrael."

But the lesson encompasses much more. Many people have diverse abilities. Some have beautiful voices, other have an ability to write and speak. When one is given such a gift from the Al-Mighty, he must endeavor to be of service to his people: "L'horos es Bnei Yisrael," to go forth and transform "mikoach el hapoal," "from potential to actual," imparting those blessings to Klal Yisrael.

This is inherent in the well-known Rashi in Mishlei: "Honor the Al-Mighty from your wealth," Rashi states, "Don't read the words "Mayhoncha," from your wealth; it should be read "Maygroncha," from your throat (if you possess a beautiful voice). This means that a person should honor the Al-Mighty by spiritual endeavors from any and all the blessings that the Al-Mighty has bestowed upon him.

What better way is there to serve the Al-Mighty than by sharing with Klal Yisrael the blessings He bestows upon us? Let us pinpoint the areas where we have Divine gifts, "BI'Beinu" in our hearts (potential) and endeavor to put them into practice, L'horos es Bnei Yisrael, to teach our fellow Jews and impart those gifts to our children. In this we shall be "zocheh" (worthy) of raising the standards of observance of Torah Judaism throughout the world and to merit a speedy redemption for Klal Yisrael.

**PEKUDE** It is interesting to note that there are two verses in this week's Sedra that use two different words to mention the completion of the Mishkan. The verse states: "In accordance with everything with which G-d commanded Moshe, so did the children of Israel accomplish all the work" (39:42). The verse uses the Hebrew expression "Avodah" for work. The following verse says: "And Moshe looked upon all the 'work' and behold he had accomplished it as G-d commanded, even as they had done it; then Moshe blessed them" (39:43). Here the work of the Mishkan is represented by the word "melacha." Both of these words, avodah and melacha can be translated as work. Yet, there must have been some reason for the variation in the verses quoted above.

The act of performing a mitzvah is composed of two parts: the "Kavanas Halaiv" (proper intention and concentration of thought for the sake of Heaven) and the physical performance of the mitzvah. The Ramban says (Exodus 23:35) that the term "avodah" can refer to "work of the heart." Our sages in the Gemara Tannis 2a say that "Avodah Sheblaiiv" is prayer. Proper prayer is permeated with the purest of intentions, concentration and devotion. When the Jews built the Mishkan, the Torah labels the work "avodah." The work was done "b'laiv shalaim," with perfect heart and purest of intentions. A person's true intentions, however, can only be known to the Al-Mighty. Thus, when the next verse states, "And Moshe looked upon all the work and behold they had accomplished it as G-d had commanded," Moshe uses the term "melachah" for work. Moshe saw the actual physical work and labor necessary for the building of the Mishkan. One may ask: How did Moshe know that they had accomplished it as G-d commanded? He didn't know their true thoughts. The Hatam Sofer says: since the work was done by shlichai tzibbur (agents of the Jewish people,) "the wise heart" headed by Betalel and Ahaliav and the work was done to physical perfection, it proved to Moshe that their intentions were also pure. In this context, one finds the Gemara in Berachot 34B that if the prayers of the shaliach tzibbur (leader of the services) are fluent and flow without hesitation or error, it is a good sign for the congregation he represents.

In spiritual matters, the performance of the representatives of the people manifests the worthiness and the purity of intention of the people themselves. Afterward it states: Then Moshe blessed them (39:43). The people merited this blessing because this unique combination of proper intention and perfect performance was accomplished. The blessing as Rashi states (39:43) was, "May it be the well [of the Al-Mighty] that the Divine presence be present in the work of your hands." The simple meaning is that it refers to the Al-Mighty. The Kitav Sofer says, however, that since it does

not mention the Al-Mighty's name in the Bracha, just the words "May it be the will," one may apply it to the Jew people themselves; may it be "your" will that the Divine presence be found in "your" activities. Only with the purest of intentions, coupled with perfect performance, can one truly merit the blessings of the Al-Mighty.

The concept of pure intentions for the service of the Al-Mighty should even permeate our mundane activities. In this manner, performance of activities with the intent of using them for serving G-d, transforms the mundane activities in Mitzvot. This is inherent in the meaning of Moshe's blessing to the Jewish people, the manner in which this command was properly fulfilled. By linking our actions with the proper holy intentions and perfection of physical performance, we will truly merit the blessing of "and I will dwell in their midst."

NCYT's Weekly Divrei Torah Bulletin is sponsored by the Henry, Bertha and Edward Rothman Foundation - Rochester, New York; Cleveland, Ohio; Circleville, Ohio To receive a free e-mail subscription to NCYT's weekly Torah Bulletin, send an email to: YI\_Torah@lb.central.com National Council of Young Israel. All Rights Reserved.

---

The Destiny Foundation <newsletter@jewishdestiny.com> date Feb 26, 2008

subject **Rabbi Berel Wein's Weekly Columns** - February 26

Weekly Parsha

VAYAKHEL

Friday, February 29, 2008

The haftorah for this week's parsha describes the efforts of the great King Shlomo in the construction of the First Temple. King Shlomo himself is a great and tragic figure. The attitude of the Talmud towards him is an ambivalent one.

On one hand, he is the builder of the Temple, the expander of the kingdom, the builder of great fortresses, and the administrator of twelve districts of his country. He is also the wisest of all men who understands even the sounds of animals and birds, the author of three of the great books of the Bible and someone upon whom the Divine Spirit itself has rested.

And yet on the other hand, the Talmud questions his right to immortality, criticizes his excesses and hubris, condemns his tolerance of the public support of idolatry by his foreign wives and even attributes the rise of Rome and the subsequent destruction of the Second Temple to his marrying the daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh.

Jewish legend actually has him driven off of his throne by a demon and having to wander in exile for part of his life. All of this naturally dims the luster of his great earlier accomplishment of building the Temple.

The haftorah parallels the parsha in the description of the work in constructing the mishkan and its artifacts, with the same type of artisanship in the creation of the Temple and its artifacts.

Shlomo, so to speak, becomes the second Moshe in supervising the building of the house of God. But, in the case of Moshe, the building of the mishkan was only one of his career's accomplishments and was dwarfed by his major accomplishment of teaching and instilling Torah within the people of Israel. The building of the Temple by Shlomo was the highpoint of his career and afterwards he slipped off of the mighty pedestal of greatness that he had attained.

The Talmud teaches us that "happy are those whose later years do not shame their earlier accomplishments." My old law school professor taught us that every lawyer makes a bad mistake at least once in his professional career. He also stated that those who are fortunate enough to make that mistake early in their career are truly blessed because they can recover and advance.

Making it late in one's professional life can be disastrous to one's reputation and life. The reverse trend may be true of accomplishments.

Early accomplishments can be very dangerous because they set a standard and inspire a sense of self aggrandizement that will prevent any further achievements. Only a gradual ascent and mature considerations, which usually are part and parcel of advancing years, can guarantee that those early achievements become lasting and untarnished by later behavior.

The comparison between the two great builders of God's house – Moshe and Shlomo - is illustrative of this truth.

Building God's house is a great achievement in itself. Maintaining it and using it for greater spiritual influence and instruction to the people of Israel is an even greater achievement.

Shabat shalom.

Rabbi Berel Wein

---

YatedUsha Parshas Vayakhel 23 Adar I 5768 Halacha Discussion by  
**Rabbi Doniel Neustadt**

### **Pet Care in Halacha**

**Question: Does one have to check the ingredients of dog, cat or bird food to make sure it is kosher?** Discussion: While pet food need not be kosher, it may not contain basar b'chalav — a mixture of cooked meat and dairy products — since the Torah forbids one to derive benefit from basar b'chalav. [If it happened that meat and dairy were inadvertently cooked together in one's kitchen, it would be prohibited to serve that mixture to the household pet (or to give it as a gift to a non-Jew). The mixture must be disposed of.] There are, however, some basar b'chalav mixtures which are strictly forbidden for human consumption yet are permitted to be fed to pets [or given as a gift to a non-Jews]. Among them: 1 Meat and dairy products that were mixed together but were not cooked, 2 smoked 3 roasted or fried 3 together, may be fed to a pet. 4 2 Meat of fowl (e.g., chicken, turkey) cooked together with milk, or meat of a chayah (non-domestic kosher beast, e.g., deer, bison) cooked together with milk, may be fed to a pet. 5 2 Meat of non-kosher species of animals, e.g., horse or hog meat, cooked together with milk may be fed to a pet. 6 But kosher species meat that was rendered non-kosher, either because the animal was terminally ill at the time of its slaughter (treifah) or because it was not slaughtered properly (neveilah), may not be fed to a pet if it was cooked with dairy. 7 2 Meat that was cooked with whey may be fed to a pet. 8 The majority of the poskim agree that a mixture which cannot be served to one's own pet cannot be fed to another person's pet either, or even to a stray animal. 9 It follows, therefore, that one has to check the ingredients of pet food to determine whether or not it contains a mixture of kosher-species domesticated animal meat cooked together with dairy. Similarly, on Pesach one must check for any chametz ingredients before purchasing pet food, since one may not derive any benefit from chametz on Pesach. If a forbidden mixture of basar b'chalav was inadvertently purchased or otherwise obtained, one should get rid of it as soon as possible. It may not be given as a gift or sold to a non-Jew. It should be disposed of in a manner which will render the mixture inedible and unusable for anyone else; the mixture should be buried, thrown into a river or flushed down the toilet. 10

**Question: Are pets muktzeh on Shabbos and Yom Tov?** Discussion: The Talmud 11 states that it is forbidden to move animals on Shabbos. In halachic terms, animals are considered like sticks and stones which have no permissible Shabbos use and are muktzeh machmas gufo, severe muktzeh, which may not be moved for any reason. This ruling is quoted by Shulchan Aruch 12 and most of the later poskim, and no distinction is drawn between farm animals and households pets; all are considered severe muktzeh. Some poskim expressly include "playful animals" in this prohibition. 13 There are, however, other poskim who do distinguish between farm animals and household pets. In their opinion, a pet is considered like a household item, similar to a toy or a picture, and is not classified as muktzeh at all. 14 While it is advisable to follow the majority opinion and not carry or move pets on Shabbos, 15 those who are lenient have a halachic authority upon whom to rely. 16 Certainly, if the pet is in distress, one may be lenient and move it or

carry it. 17 All opinions agree that it is permitted to touch (without moving) or feed one's pets on Shabbos. It is also permitted to hold onto a leash and walk a dog in an area which is enclosed by an eiruv. 18 It is permitted to place a leash on a dog on Shabbos. 19

**Question: Does the halachah that prohibits an animal owner from eating a meal before feeding his animals, apply only to the first mealtime in the morning or to any mealtime?** Discussion: In order to avoid tza'ar ba'alei chayim, cruelty to animals, the halachah 20 mandates that the owner of an animal feed those animals which are dependent on him for their food 21 before taking food 22 for himself. This law applies not only to farm animals, but also to pets, birds and fish. It applies to all mealtimes — whether the owner is at home or away, on Shabbos 23 or weekday: If his mealtime coincides with the animal's feeding time, then the animal must be fed first. Some poskim hold that it is prohibited to eat even a snack before feeding one's animals, 24 while others permit the owner to have a snack first. 25 It is permitted to take a drink before one's animal. 26 There is no requirement that the animal actually eat before the owner does; as long as food was placed before the animal, or arrangements made for the food to be brought to the animal, the owner may proceed with his meal. 27 It is permitted for one to feed his small children who cannot feed themselves before he feeds his animals. 28

**FOOTNOTES** 1 "Cooked" regarding this halachah means that the meat and the milk were together in a keli rishon, either on the fire or off the fire; Rav Akiva Eiger, Y.D. 91:9, based on O.C. 318:9. 2 Pri Chadash, Y.D. 87:6. 3 A minority view (Chavas Da'as, Y.D. 87:1; Aruch ha-Shulchan 87:11) holds that meat and milk that were fried or roasted together are permitted to be fed to a pet, but the majority of the poskim disagree; Pri Megadim 87:1; Chochmas Adam 40:1; Rav Akiva Eiger 87:1. 4 Rama, Y.D. 87:1. This holds true even if the meat and milk were soaked together for longer than 24 hours and even if spices or other sharp ingredients were added to the mixture; Pri Megadim (Pesichah to Basar B'chalav, s.v. od adaber). 5 Y.D. 87:3. Similarly, meat cooked with chayah milk, is permitted to be fed to a pet; Pischei Teshuvah, Y.D. 87:7. 6 Y.D. 87:3. 7 Teshuvos Chasam Sofer, Y.D. 92; Pri Megadim (Mishbetzos 87:2); Chavas Da'as, Y.D. 94:4 and others. A minority view permits this type of mixture to be served to pets, and some poskim rely on this view under extenuating circumstances; see Dagul mi-Revavah, Y.D. 87:3 and Darchei Teshuvah 87:31. 8 There is disagreement on this issue among the poskim, but many are lenient; see Badei ha-Shulchan 87:75. 9 Mishnah Berurah, O.C. 248:27-28. See Sha'ar ha-Tziyun (75) who quotes a more lenient view. See also Sedei Chemed, vol. 1, pg. 62. 10 Entire paragraph based on Pri Megadim, pesichah to Basar B'chalav, s.v. hanahah; Pischei Teshuvah, Y.D. 87:2; Aruch ha-Shulchan 87:7. 11 See Shabbos 128b. 12 O.C. 308:39. 13 See Tosafos, Shabbos 45b, s.v. hacha; Shulchan Aruch ha-Rav 308:78; Da'as Torah, O.C. 308:39; Kaf ha-Chayim 308:235. 14 Minchas Shabbos 88:10, quoting Nezer Yisrael and Halachos Ketanos; Az Nidberu 8:36. 15 Minchas Shabbos, 88:10; Yabia Omer 5:26. 16 Harav S.Z. Auerbach; see Shulchan Shlomo, O.C. 308:74-4; B'tzeil ha-Chochmah 5:33-34. There are conflicting sources concerning Harav M. Feinstein's opinion on this subject; see Sefer Tiltulei Shabbos, pg. 119, and Igros Moshe, O.C. 5:22-21. 17 See Mishnah Berurah 305:70 and Chazon Ish, O.C. 52:16. 18 Under certain, very specific conditions, it is even permitted to walk a dog with a leash in a public domain; see O.C. 305:16 and Aruch ha-Shulchan 5. 19 O.C. 305:1, 8, 10. 20 Some hold that this is a Biblical prohibition, while others hold that it is a Rabbinical mitzvah; see Beur Halachah 167:6, s.v. u'mikol makom. 21 Thus one who owns a dog or a cat who scrounges around for its own food (and does not need to be fed by the owner), may eat before he feeds his pets; She'elas Ya'avetz 1:17, quoted in Sha'arei Teshuvah 167:2. 22 But it is permitted to eat food which does not belong to him but is given to him by others; Chasam Sofer, quoted by Kesav Sofer 32. 23 See Kaf ha-Chayim 167:54. 24 Magen Avraham 167:18 as explained by Pri Megadim; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 42:1; Mishnah Berurah 167:40; Kaf ha-Chayim 167:51. 25 Taz 167:7; Shulchan Aruch ha-Rav 167:19; Nishmas Adam 5:11. 26 Mishnah Berurah 167:40. See Har Tzvi 1:90 for an explanation. See dissenting opinion in Kaf ha-Chayim 167:50. 27 See Yad Efrayim and Eishel Avraham, O.C. 167:6 and Kaf ha-Chayim 167:52. 28 Igros Moshe, O.C. 2:52.

---

### **RABBI JOSH FLUG**

Halacha <noreply@yutorah.org> to InternetParshaSheet@gmail.com  
date Feb 22, 2008 11:14 AM subject Weekly Halacha Overview-  
Electricity and Shabbat  
**Electricity and Shabbat**

One of the most prominent prohibitions on Shabbat is the prohibition against activating and deactivating electrical devices on Shabbat. At the risk of overstating the obvious, use of electric devices is not included in the list of the thirty-nine melachot (prohibited activities) of Shabbat, nor is it mentioned in Shulchan Aruch. The prohibition against using electrical devices is the result of applying certain prohibitions of Shabbat to various electric devices. In this issue, we will explore some of the prohibitions that may apply to these devices.

### Introduction

The physics of electricity is fairly simple to explain. Electricity is defined as the flow of electrons capable of being converted into kinetic energy. An atom of any molecule consists of protons, neutrons and electrons. Protons contain a positive charge, neutrons a neutral charge, and electrons a negative charge. Electrons are easily detached from an atom, causing the atom from which it departed to be positively charged and the atom to which it attaches to become negatively charged. A negatively charged atom will be attracted to a positively charged atom as the atoms seek out a neutral status. Thus, the positively charged atom seeks an electron, while the negatively charged atom desires to rid itself of the extraneous electron.

Electricity is harnessed by taking a conductive material, such as copper and connecting one end to a positively charged area and the other end to a negatively charged area. When this is done, the electrons on the negative end all become attracted to the atoms on the positive end, which is lacking electrons. If the electrons are met with resistance, energy is created in the form of heat, light, or mechanical energy. Thus, the resistance can cause a light filament to glow, an electric range to become red hot, or a motor to oscillate. The switch, which is used to activate or deactivate an electrical device, works (in most cases) by completing the circuit when the switch is in the "on" position and breaking the circuit when the switch is in the "off" position.

One of the questions that arose during the popularization of electricity is: what is the prohibition against completing a circuit on Shabbat? Suppose we were to discuss activating a fan on Shabbat. If one were to spin a fan manually, there certainly is no prohibition. What then is the nature of the prohibition against operating a fan using electrical current?

### R. Yitzchak Schmelkes' Opinion

R. Yitzchak Schmelkes, Beit Yitzchak, Hashmatot to Y.D. 2:31, is of the opinion that completing a circuit constitutes a violation of molid, the prohibition against imbuing an object with a new property. The Gemara, Beitza 23a, states that one may not add a new scent to a garment because this constitutes molid. Beit Yitzchak asserts that introducing electricity into a device constitutes molid. Molid is a rabbinic prohibition and thus, R. Schmelkes would consider completing a circuit on Shabbat a rabbinic prohibition.

R. Shlomo Z. Auerbach, Minchat Shlomo 1:9, questions the application of molid to electricity. He explains that in the case of adding scent to a garment, the garment attains a new property that it never had before and therefore, when it receives that scent, it is viewed as if it is a new garment. Regarding an electric device, the device was created to be activated and deactivated. The activation of the device does not give it new properties that it never had before, nor should one view it as a new entity when it is activated. Nevertheless, R. Auerbach defers to the halachic precedent established by R. Schmelkes and rules that one should be concerned for the prohibition of molid in dealing with the activation of electrical devices.

### Chazon Ish's Opinion

R. Avraham Y. Karelitz, Chazon Ish, Orach Chaim 50:9, rules that completing a circuit constitutes a violation of the melacha of boneh, building. Accordingly, deactivating a device by opening the circuit would constitute a violation of sotet, destroying. What emerges from a correspondence between Chazon Ish and R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach

(See Minchat Shlomo, Tinyana no. 25) is that Chazon Ish is of the opinion that it is not the switch alone that contributes to the violation of boneh. The connecting of two pieces of metal for the purposes of harnessing a force that gives new character to the entire system constitutes a violation of boneh. It is important to note that according to Chazon Ish, activating or deactivating an electric device automatically constitutes a biblical violation.

### Electric Lighting

The dispute between Beit Yitzchak and Chazon Ish is limited to devices where there is no other prohibited activity resulting from the activation of the device. Activation of some electric devices constitutes an additional prohibition. The most common example of such a device is an incandescent bulb. Incandescent bulbs and halogen bulbs contain filaments that can get as hot as 4500° F. The Gemara, Shabbat 42a, discusses the concept of gachelet shel matechet, a glowing hot piece of metal. R. Avraham Borenstein, Avnei Nezer, Orach Chaim no. 229, notes that according to most Rishonim, heating a piece of metal to the point that it is glowing hot constitutes a biblical violation of the melacha of havarah, kindling. R. Auerbach, Minchat Shlomo 1:12, notes that since activating an incandescent bulb involves igniting a glowing hot metal filament, its activation would constitute a biblical violation of havarah.

Regarding deactivating an incandescent bulb, the Gemara, Shabbat 42a, implies that extinguishing a gachelet shel matechet is only a rabbinic violation. Accordingly, R. Auerbach, Minchat Shlomo 1:12, suggests that deactivating an incandescent bulb would not constitute a biblical violation of kibui, extinguishing. Nevertheless, R. Auerbach suggests that perhaps the reason why extinguishing a gachelet shel matechet only constitutes a rabbinic violation is that the metal is only storing heat that it receives from a heat source. However, regarding an incandescent light bulb, the heat is produced by its own resistance to the flow of electrons. Therefore, it is arguable that extinguishing the filament by deactivating the light would constitute a biblical violation of kibui.

There are other types of lights whose activation does not constitute a violation of havarah. Light emitting diodes (LED's) are one example of lights that do not use a glowing hot filament in order to produce light.

Fluorescent lights do not use heat to produce the actual visible light. However, in order to activate a fluorescent bulb, a starting system must be employed to excite the mercury inside the bulb. Many fluorescent bulbs use a glowing hot filament (cathode) in order to start the bulb. Activation of those bulbs constitutes havarah.

### Practical Applications

According to Chazon Ish, activation of any electric device constitutes a biblical violation of boneh. According to Beit Yitzchak, there are many devices whose activation only constitutes a rabbinic violation of molid, while activation of devices that involve use of heat constitutes a biblical violation of havarah.

There are a number of important differences between a biblical violation and a rabbinic violation on Shabbat. First, in "Treating a Non-Life-Threatening Illness on Shabbat," we discussed violation of certain rabbinic prohibitions in order to treat a non-life-threatening illness. Second, in "Davar She'aino Mitkavein," we discussed certain leniencies that apply to unintended but unavoidable results (pesik reishei) when those results normally constitute a rabbinic violation. Third, in "Amira L'Nachri Part II," we discussed certain leniencies regarding asking a non-Jew to perform an activity that constitutes a rabbinic violation for a Jew when this will enable one to perform a mitzvah or alleviate a pressing situation.

R. Joshua Flug is the Rosh Kollel of the Boca Raton Community Kollel, a member of the YU Kollel Initiative and senior editor for the Marcos and Adina Katz YUTorah.org, a division of Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future. To access the archives of the Weekly Halacha Overview click here. To unsubscribe from this list, please click here.

from Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>  
Feb 28 to Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com> date Feb 28, 2008  
6:25 AM

## Peninim on the Torah

by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

- Parshas Vayakhel mailed-by shemayisrael.com

PARSHAS VAYAKHEL On six days, work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy for you, a day of complete rest for Hashem. (35:2) Interestingly, whenever we find the prohibition against labor on Shabbos, there is always some mention of working on six days of the week, i.e., "On six days, work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy for you." This is also true in the Aseres HaDibros, Ten Commandments, "For (in) six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth, and He rested on the seventh day." (Shemos 20:11) Horav Avraham Schorr, Shlita, explains that kedushas Shabbos, the sanctity of Shabbos, is greatly dependent on the manner in which one acts during the six days of the "work" week.

Harov Schorr supports this statement with a principle from the Rishonim. In the aforementioned pasuk from the Aseres HaDibros, the Torah writes, "For (in) six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth." The way the pasuk is read, Ki sheishas yamim asah, it should be translated as, "For six days Hashem made." In order to coincide with the popular translation of the pasuk, it should have written, Ki b'sheishas yamim asah, "For in six days Hashem made." It almost sounds as if Hashem created "six days." The Teshuvos Ha'Rashba writes that the Torah is telling us just that: the actual entity of time, i.e., "six days," was created by Hashem. The problem with this approach is that it implies that Hashem created only six days-- and not seven. How does Shabbos fit in to this construct? Was it a creation?

Rav Schorr cites the Bris Avraham, who quotes a Rishon that originally the day had been twenty-eight hours long. Hashem created the first six days, and then He took four hours from each day, and those hours combined to constitute Shabbos. The sefarim explain that the "six days" decided among themselves to select a rosh, head, over themselves. They chose Shabbos.

This is why Shabbos is referred to in the tefillas, Shabbos service, as chemdas ha'yamim, the most coveted of days. According to the above approach, this is a reference to Shabbos being created from the "select" hours of each day of the week. The "six times four equals twenty-four," of which Shabbos is comprised, is the chemdas, the most coveted of the days of the week. Alternatively, we can say that the days of the week "chose" as their rosh, head, the Shabbos, which became the symbol of their chemdah, love, for it.

Rav Schorr concludes with an inspiring thought for us to carry through the "work" week. Shabbos is a creation of the six work days. Thus, one's Shabbos is the result and outgrowth of his actions during the weekdays. Every day gives its hours to Shabbos. If we view Shabbos as the rosh of our week, we must make our week worthy of the Shabbos. A yeshivah has a "rosh" yeshivah, who reflects the character of his yeshivah. A community has a Rav or Av Bais Din, rabbi or leader of its judicial court, selected by the community. He is their representative, and thus, a reflection of themselves. The mafia, l'havdil, also has its don, its rosh who characterizes the activities of his henchmen. Our Shabbos reflects our weekdays. The type of Shabbos we observe is largely based upon the way we act during the week. What a powerful thought to carry around all week.

And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him. (35:21)

The Mishkan was a Divinely inspired architectural masterpiece. The construction of this Sanctuary required individuals who were talented and skilled craftsmen, artisans who were highly proficient in fashioning intricate designs in metal work and wood work. Clearly, the time the Jewish People spent in Egypt was not dedicated to honing their skills in these intricate areas of craftsmanship. Therefore, how were they able to execute

the construction of the Mishkan? They really had no experience whatsoever in Egypt. The Ramban understands nesius ha'lev, "one whose heart stirs him," as the key to the Mishkan's exemplary work force. The ish asher nesao libo, "one whose heart stirred him," was an unusually motivated individual who offered his services to Moshe Rabbeinu. Their attitude was characterized by such responses as, "Here, let me do it." "What can I do?"

Although none of these people had received any formal training or guidance in the required skills, they found "within themselves" the inherent capability to perform these tasks. The Ramban concludes, "And because they uplifted their hearts to serve Hashem," i.e., they were spiritually inspired, they therefore volunteered for the job.

Apparently, according to the Ramban, these men did actually possess natural talent, but for some reason they lacked the motivation to come forward and offer their services. What about this mitzvah stirred them to come forward? And how did this motivation overcome whatever had previously impeded them?

Horav Henach Leibowitz, Shlita, explains that just because one is endowed with talent, it does not mean that he is qualified to undertake an important task. One may have all that it takes to succeed at a specific endeavor, yet there still may be something missing. There are two essential ingredients that are requisites for success: talent and experience. Without training under the supervision of an individual who guides from personal experience, one may err in his work and not even be aware of his mistakes. Natural ability is wonderful, but-- without experience-- it is of little value.

Under normal conditions, the craftsmen who constructed the Mishkan should have refrained from undertaking the awesome responsibility of building Hashem's Mishkan. Despite their considerable genius and skill, they still had no teacher to guide them, to mentor them in the do's and don'ts of this task. To err in such a holy undertaking was very dangerous. This is where nesius ha'lev, the stirring of their hearts, played a critical role. It took them beyond their fear of the unknown. It guided them past their lack of experience.

The Rosh Yeshivah cites the Orchos Tzadikim, who defines "uplifting one's heart" to serve Hashem as one's constant quest for spiritual achievement. He is not satisfied with his spiritual status quo - regardless of its exalted status. He wants more! No one else had the experience, but this did not deter them from offering their service. They gathered the courage to understand this enormous responsibility, trusting that Hashem would ultimately guide them.

There is a powerful lesson to be derived from here - and it is not limited to physical craftsmanship. Every endeavor must be approached with caution. Whether it is educational or organizational -- especially when it serves the community-it carries enormous responsibility. A mistake can hurt the community, set back an organization, or worst of all: cause a chillul Hashem, desecration of Hashem's Name. Nonetheless, if we always worry, we would never get anything done.

Therefore, we must first examine our qualifications. Are they sound? Next, do we have a mentor, someone to tell us when we are beginning to err, someone whom we respect and whose opinion we value? If the answer to these questions is negative, then it would be best that we rethink our initiative. If so, why did the Jewish artisans go forward? They had no experience. They had no idea that Hashem would ultimately guide them.

Their circumstances were different. They had received a direct communication from Hashem to construct the Mishkan. He was asking for volunteers who felt they had it in them to succeed. Thus, their desire to perform the mitzvah justified their volunteering, despite their lack of experience. Do we have a clearly defined mandate to go forward - or is it something that we often convince ourselves to do? There is only one clear way to know: consult our Torah leaders. They will guide us on the right path to follow. They will tell us if it is the correct thing to do - or not. From them we can gain the crucial training and guidance necessary to serve the community properly and with distinction. They will tell us when it is wise to demur, and when we should rise to the occasion.

And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him. (35:21)

Essentially, the Torah is teaching us that after a call went out for those who could give of themselves to construct the Mishkan, a number of individuals, whose heart stirred within them, came forward, and they were the Mishkan's builders. This must have been an incredible undertaking, especially since these artisans had no prior experience. It is not as if building sanctuaries was their favorite pastime in Egypt. These people were used for slave labor and nothing else. They were, however, highly motivated by the opportunity to build Hashem's Mishkan, and this motivation catalyzed them to go forward. When we think about it, this phenomenon is not uncommon. Many people are inspired to move forward, to dedicate themselves to a higher cause, but something happens along the road to success. Well, it is not really "something," but "someone." Whether it is someone whose jealousy is concealed in his skepticism or it is a well-meaning friend who just does not want to see us get hurt, our dreams and aspirations are often pinpricked before the balloon can ascend to great heights. Perhaps the following episode will give us a deeper insight.

The Lubliner Rav, as he was referred to reverently and affectionately, Horav Meir Shapiro, zl, was certainly a great man. He was a distinguished Rosh Yeshivah, a respected diplomat for his people in the halls of the Polish Parliament and a world class Torah leader. His distinction to us and to most Jews at the time was his innovative plan to have the entire Torah world literally on the "same page" of the Talmud: his Daf Yomi, folio a day, plan of Torah study. Rarely has an idea been so universally accepted and mushroomed to such success as the Daf HaYomi learning program.

His work on behalf of Klal Yisrael brought him to many Jewish communities in Europe. This incident took place as he arrived in one of the cities along his route. As he alighted from the train, people lined up to see and greet the distinguished visitor. They introduced themselves and vied for his attention. One of the individuals in the crowd was a young rav who introduced himself as the son-in-law of the Shotzer Rebbe, the town where Rav Meir had grown up.

Rav Meir looked at him and asked, "Is your rebbetzin here with you?"

"In fact, she is," the young rav replied.

"Could I possibly speak with her?" Rav Meir asked.

"Certainly," the rav answered. "I will go and get her."

When the woman came over, Rav Meir addressed her with the following question, "Do you remember that, as a child, I would learn with your father in your home?"

"Yes, I remember," she replied.

This time, when Rav Meir asked the next question, there was a slight tremor in his voice, "Do you recall my grandiose plans to unite all the Jews in the world in the study of the same daf, page in the Talmud, daily? This way all of Klal Yisrael would be united through Torah." Then his voice dropped an octave, when he asked, "Do you also remember how all the children would laugh at the idea and mock it, deriving great satisfaction from putting down my idea?"

This time the woman remained still. She did not reply.

Rav Meir continued. "Do you know that I came seriously close to giving up my plan? I was losing confidence in my ability to successfully maneuver through the various obstacles I faced. Those taunts almost pushed me over the edge. This is why I asked to speak to you. I just wanted to share one thought with you: Never laugh at the dream of a child!"

Now that we have read the story, we must ask ourselves: How often have we been the victim of such taunts? How many times have we wanted to move forward with a great idea only to have someone knock it out of the realm of possibility either for selfish or foolish reasons? How often have we been the perpetrators of such an impediment to success? Last, how many of those times have we justified our self-centered actions by asserting that we really were doing the other fellow a favor? Perhaps, we will just leave it with the questions.

Every man and woman whose heart motivated them to bring for any of the work, the Bnei Yisrael brought a free-willed offering to Hashem. (35:29)

The parsha commences with a description of the tremendous outpouring of generosity toward the construction of the Mishkan. Anybody who has ever had to make an appeal or address a fundraising effort knows that only a percentage-- and usually a small percentage of those assembled-- will respond favorably - or even at all. Yet, Moshe Rabbeinu's appeal for the thirteen materials to be used for the Mishkan was so successful that he had to ask the people to halt their donations. They were so motivated to give that their response was unprecedented. This is what the pasuk is relating to us. If so, why does the pasuk conclude simply, "Bnei Yisrael brought a free-willed offering to Hashem?"

Horav Avraham Pam, zl, cited by Rabbi Sholom Smith in his book, "Shabbos With Rav Pam," suggests that the very fact that the Mishkan was constructed through the talented craftsmanship of the people, using their money or materials, might lead them to feel a sense of pride or arrogance. After all, it was their donation; it was their ability; it was their nedivus. Those whose donations were significant might allow this notion to elevate their heads into the clouds - a certainly not uncommon phenomenon. It did not, however, and they did not. Nothing of the kind occurred. The people gave and were enthusiastic about it for its own sake. They were giving for the Mishkan. This was all that counted. If they were fortunate enough to be able to participate in this exalted mitzvah, they were ecstatic. The people were motivated by only one concern: How would it lead to greater kavod Shomayim, honor of Heaven? This is why the pasuk emphasized that although each Jew brought his own unique, individual donation to the Mishkan, he viewed it and himself as part of the greater collective Bnei Yisrael, a unified entity - not an individual in his own right. He cared about the focus of his contribution - not about his involvement in it.

The Rosh Yeshivah cites the Malbim, who explains that the purpose of the Mishkan was to create a komah sheleimah, an all-encompassing entity, of a unified Klal Yisrael comprised of: all of the various maalos, attributes/qualities; kochos, individual strengths and talents; and levels of kedushah, sanctity of the different members of the nation. This goal would be achieved via each one's individual contribution for the common goal of creating a sanctuary for the Shechinah. Everyone felt and understood that it was not only his efforts alone that created this holy abode, but the work of everyone together in a cumulative effort that achieved this komah sheleimah.

This can be achieved only when each Jew views himself as part of the large body of Klal Yisrael. Just as the body is comprised of many organs and limbs, each with its unique function, each with its own individual task that impacts the entire body. True, some organs play a leading role, while others play a supporting role, but they are all part of one body. Thus, if the toe is hurt, the entire body is held captive by the pain. Just as one organ is not envious of another organ, because they are all in this together as components of the body which needs all of them, so, too, should one Jew not be jealous of another Jew who has been endowed with special talents and acumen. Indeed, one's heart should swell with pride in the knowledge that Klal Yisrael possesses such talented people. The healthier the body, the healthier are all of the organs.

Rav Pam cites a powerful thought from Horav Simchah Bunim, zl, m'Peshischa which encapsulates this idea. One should be happy for the collective nation that includes within its ranks individuals who have been endowed with extra special Heavenly blessings. The Rebbe was once asked if he would like to change places with Avraham Avinu, such that Avraham would receive the Rebbe's special talents, and the Rebbe would be bestowed with Avraham's unique capabilities. The Rebbe smiled and said, "I would not want to change places with Avraham because what would Hashem derive from the exchange? There would still be one Avraham and one Bunim."

This is a statement from a person who lived for one purpose: to serve Hashem. Everything that he did reflected this purpose, or else it was not worth doing. If one thinks of the collective Klal Yisrael and its function in this world, does it really matter who it is that is blessed with unique talents?

To live for one purpose: to serve Hashem. One expends every bit of strength in his body to serve the Almighty. In one of the last Eluls of his life, when he was already weakened with illness and advanced age, the legendary Mashgiach, Horav Yechezkel Levinstein, zl, felt a great desire to speak once again to his beloved students, to impart to them the meaning of the month of Elul, the imperative of serving Hashem on an even higher level than usual. He slowly, painstakingly, and with great effort made his way to the front of the study hall and ascended to the lectern. This act of walking across the room was the result of great mesiras nefesh, personal self-sacrifice. Upon reaching the lectern, he no longer had the strength to speak. He was totally spent. So, he slowly returned to his seat. As far as his students were concerned, this was the Elul shmues, ethical discourse, for which they had hoped. They learned that one must continue in one's avodas Hashem, service of the Almighty, to the extreme limits of one's strength.

A wealthy friend of the family of Horav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zl, urged Rav Yosef Chaim to permit him to build a beautiful, spacious home for the Rav. Rav Yosef Chaim thanked him for the generous offer and led him over to the window of his modest dwelling. "Look out the window, my friend," said Rav Yosef Chaim wistfully. "See how the house of Hashem, our Bais HaMikdash, lies in ruin, occupied by Arabs. Do you really want to build a mansion for me? It is enough for the servant to be like his master. As long as the palace of the King is destroyed, this dwelling will suffice for me."

Va'ani Tefillah Yehi kavod Hashem l'olam, yismach Hashem b'maasav. May the glory of Hashem endure forever, let Hashem rejoice in His works.

The Talmud in Chullin 60A comments that this pasuk was initially recited by the Sar Ha'Olam, the angel into whose hands the entire world had been given. The Talmud explains that this declaration was prompted by the following incident. When Hashem commanded the trees to emerge from the earth, "each after its kind (l'mineihu)," without an intermingling of species, the different types of herbage raised the logic of kal v'chomer, a priori, regarding themselves, reasoning, "If Hashem desires a confusion of species, why did He tell the trees to grow, 'each after its own kind?' Clearly, He desires a distinction among the species, and logically this applies to us (herbage) as well. Furthermore, this can be supported with a kal v'chomer: 'If even concerning trees, which by nature do not emerge from the earth in confusion, Hashem still said, l'mineihu, we, (herbage) who are of the manner to emerge from the earth in confusion, certainly should do so separately, each according to its own kind.'" Immediately, each and every type of herbage sprouted forth, each according to its own kind. Upon witnessing this, the Sar Ha'Olam began to praise Hashem saying, Yehi kavod.

Horav Moshe Feinstein, zl, derives a powerful lesson from here. The herbage were not commanded directly how to sprout forth. They applied logic to ascertain what really was the tzivui Hashem, command of Hashem. This teaches us to delve into a matter, seeking out the underlying motif of Hashem's or asking, "What does Hashem want from me? What is He telling me?" The very act of seeking out the meaning and the essence of Hashem's command is in itself the greatest and most sublime avodah, service, of Hashem. One who does not suffice with simply fulfilling the revealed and distinct mitzvos, but looks deeper to discover what really is the will of Hashem, he is the one about whom Hashem rejoices.