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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON YISRO - 5762

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From: Kerem B'Yavneh Online [SMTP:orlian@netvision.net.il]
Parshat Yitro
THE REWARD FOR HONORING PARENTS AND ERETZ
YISRAEL

ROSH HAYESHIVA RAV MORDECHAI GREENBERG SHLITA
Honor your father and your mother, so that your days will be lengthened upon the land that Hashem, your G-d, gives you. (Shemot 20:12)

One may ask: It is understandable that the reward for agricultural mitzvot will be in Eretz Yisrael. However, honoring parents is a rational, humanistic mitzvah, which other nations also observe due to its moral ethic, and which applies equally in Eretz Yisrael and outside of the Land. Why, then, is the reward specifically determined to be in Eretz Yisrael?

The answer to this question is rooted in a comment of the Ramban on Parshat Acharei Mot, where he asks a similar question, but in the opposite direction. It says there, in the section of the arayot, "Let not the Land disgorge you for having contaminated it, as it disgorged the nation that was before you." (Vayikra 18:28) The Ramban asks: Arayot are sins between man and G-d, which are incumbent upon the person's body, and are not linked specifically to Eretz Yisrael. Why, then, is the punishment for these sins greater in Eretz Yisrael than outside of the Land?

The Ramban explains there at great length the special quality of Eretz Yisrael, that is constantly guided by G-d in a direct manner, unlike other lands, where the Divine guidance is through officers and kings and G-d rules only in an indirect manner. Therefore, it is impossible to draw close to Him other than in Eretz Yisrael -- the Land that is "before Hashem," about which it says, "the eyes of Hashem are always upon it," and which is called, "the gate of Heaven" and "G-d's Sanctuary." Clearly, it is impossible to compare one who sins in G-d's Sanctuary to one who sins in the street. So, too, regarding the mitzvot -- which draw a person close to the Creator -- closeness to the King in His palace is far greater than closeness to Him outside.

Therefore, the Ramban writes, "The mitzvot are primarily for those who sit in the Land of Hashem," and there the mitzvot achieve their special value. Hence, the sin of arayot in Eretz Yisrael is entirely different than arayot outside of Israel.

In regards to honoring parents, the Torah introduces a novel concept. Even though it is a rational, humanistic mitzvah, still, it is connected -- like all other mitzvot -- specifically to Eretz Yisrael. Therefore, the Torah emphasizes that even mitzvot such as these apply especially to Eretz Yisrael -- "so that your days will be lengthened upon the land that Hashem, your G-d, gives you."

The GR"A's disciples add a collective dimension to this mitzvah. Besides honoring parents in the simple sense, there is a collective mitzvah on Am Yisrael to honor its parents, its elders from previous generations, and to guard above all the tradition of its ancestors, until the earliest patriarchs of Am Yisrael. When they observe the early tradition, they will be worthy of the rightful privilege of the early ones. What is their rightful privilege? -- That which was said to Avraham initially, "Go forth from your land ... to the land that I will show you ... To your offspring I will give this land (Bereishit 12:1-7); "For all the land

that you see, to you I will give it, and to your descendents forever" (13:15). This commitment was repeated to all the patriarchs.

This is what is promised here. If Israel will honor the heritage of the patriarchs, the Divine promise regarding their connection to Eretz Yisrael will be fulfilled, and they will live long lives, "upon the land that Hashem, your G-d, gives you."

From: Rabbi Ben Kelsen [SMTP:benish@att.net]
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Subject: Maran HaRosh Yeshiva, zt"l on Parshas Yisro
Maran Rosh HaYeshiva HaGaon HARAV CHAIM YAAKOV
GOLDVICH, ZT"L Rosh Yeshiva, YESHIVAS KEREM B'YAVNEH
12/7/91 (the following is based upon a "shiur lishka", a private shiur given to small groups of talmidim by the Rosh Yeshiva, zt"l in his study)

The passuk tells us that "Shlach Lachmicha Al Pnei Hamayim Ki Birov Hayamim Timtzeenu" (Koheles 11:1), this, we are taught, refers to Yisro who had told his daughters to bring Moshe Rabbeinu back to their home after he saved them from the other shepherds at the well in the center of town.

Why does the Torah not start with the giving of the Ten Commandments? The Medresh equates this with the case of a king who travels to another land to become king of that place. In order to win over the population of this new land the man does many things for them. In thanks for all of his actions which demonstrate his devotion and loyalty to his new people he is coronated and made the new ruler. This, according to Chazal, is what HKB"H did for Klal Yisroel.

HKB"H took Bnei Yisroel out of Mitzrayim, split the Red Sea, gave them water and the Mann, and only then did He bring them to Har Sinai to give them the Torah, in essence His coronation as king.

And yet there seems to be a difficulty with this analogy. Despite whatever the man might do in the hopes of being accepted by the people as king, should he not be fit for the throne the people will most likely not elevate him to that level. This being the case why would a person try to do things for the people before he is so obligated?

Chazal teach us that kabbolah m'ratzon, an acceptance of subjugation made through free will, is on a higher level than kabbolah m'ones, subjugation imposed against the will of the subjugated. And yet, as the Bavli in Maseches Shabbos (88a) tells us regarding the phrase "kimu v'kiblu", Bnei Yisroel only accepted the Torah and its inherent subjugation to the will of the Ribbono Shel Olam after Har Sinai was held aloft over them and they were threatened with death - "kafah aleihem k'har kagigis". Why was this done?

The Rosh Yeshiva, zt"l explained that it is natural for a person to repay debt quicker than he gives a gift. Why? Because a person does not like to owe another. This is the "p'shat" in the Medresh. While HKB"H "k'vayachol" wanted Klal Yisroel to make their acceptance of Him through free will, as only a "kabbolah m'ratzon" is, metaphysically, a real kabbolah, the attack on the Jews by Amalek frightened the people and held them back from accepting the Torah willingly. HKB"H held the mountain over the Jewish people in order that the people would accept his kingship over them at the predestined time for Matan Torah and not later as would have been required had He waited for Bnei Yisroel to be re-inspired to reach the level the kabbolah m'ratzon.

And yet we are still presented with the problem of why this sedra is named after Moshe's father-in-law. While it may very well be that Yisro was deserving of being granted immortality through the naming of a section of the Torah in his honor, why is it that it is the section containing Matan Torah that is so named? The Rosh Yeshiva explained that it is because of the fact that Yisro gave thanks to HKB"H with the use of the word "baruch" and in so doing reignited the flame of love of HKB"H in the hearts of Klal Yisroel. In so doing Yisro was able to repair the damage caused by Amalek and Klal Yisroel was able to approach Har Sinai on the day of Matan Torah and say "na'aseh v'nishmah" "we shall do and we shall hear" (which is indicative of a willingness on the part of Bnei Yisroel to do whatever the Ribbono Shel Olam asks of us without question) signifying that we had once again attained the level of kabbolah m'ratzon.

How did Yisro reach the level of being able to inaugurate the use of the word "baruch" when all the great leaders of Klal Yisroel did not do so? Because, as the Rosh Yeshiva taught, Yisro always practiced and taught his family the concept of hakoras hatov, and of doing so in the best way possible. This is seen in that Yisro, upon learning of Moshe's act of chesed to his daughters, not only thanked Moshe and granted him the hand of Tziporah, he also made a great seudah in Moshe's honor. This is the lesson of Yisro and the reason the parsha is named in his honor.

Mazal Tov and Yasher Koach to my dear friend Rav Daniel Zvi Feldman on the publication of his new sefer of chidushei Torah today. Copies will be available at the SOY Seferim Sale which starts this Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at Belfer Hall at YU.

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]
"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Yisro
Let Us Keep Idolatry Away From Our Homes

This week's reading contains the first time that the Torah prohibits idolatry. The second of the Asseres Hadibros [Ten "Commandments"] states: "You shall have no other gods before Me. Do not represent [such gods] by any carved statue or picture of anything in the heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below the land." [Shmos 20: 3-4] This is the first of many varieties of prohibitions in the Torah relating to Avodah Zarah [literally: foreign worship]. The Torah is replete with such warnings.

Anyone with even a superficial knowledge of Tanach is aware that the problem of 'Avodah Zarah' plagued the Jewish people throughout all of their existence -- up until the time that, as recorded in the Talmud [Sanhedrin 64a], the Men of the Great Assembly prayed for the destruction of the desire, the evil inclination (Yetzer HaRah), for Avodah Zarah. In our day and age, it is very difficult for us to contemplate how anyone could be attracted to graven images, never mind going to such extremes as burning their children for the sake of Avodah Zarah. The abominations that were performed in the name of Avodah Zarah are mind boggling to us.

If we wish to understand an inkling of the strength of the natural urge that existed in Biblical times for Avodah Zarah, we should compare it to the urge that exists today for forbidden sexual relations (Arayos). This, it is said, can be a starting point for our imagining the power of the craving for Avodah Zarah in Biblical times.

Given the fact that no such Yetzer HaRah exists today, it would seem that all of the Torah's many prohibitions relating to Avodah Zarah do not really apply to us. We never find ourselves 'tested' in this area.

In so many areas, we can find ourselves 'tested'. Sometimes we find ourselves 'tested' regarding something prohibited on Shabbos. Sometimes we find ourselves tempted with immoral acts. We are constantly tempted with the urge to gossip (Lashon HaRah). We know that we can be tempted regarding monetary prohibitions. But ostensibly, in our lifetime, we are never going to be tempted with any moral dilemma relating to idolatry.

The Radziner Rebbe (1839-1891) comments that in all likelihood, we will indeed be 'tested' in the area of Avodah Zarah. The Talmud teaches [Shabbos 105b] "Any person who loses his temper, it is as if he worshipped idols." The Gemara derives this from the pasuk [verse] "Lo Yiheyeh becha el zar" -- "There should not be in your midst a foreign god" [Tehillim 81:10]. What foreign god is in a person's own midst? This foreign god is the person's own ego. When a person becomes angry, that is a form of Avodah Zarah.

Part of the reason why a person becomes angry is because things are not going "his way". A person becomes angry when he wants something to happen or someone to listen to him and it does not happen. Why do I become so angry? Because my will has been thwarted. I feel that things should go "my way". The underlying reason why a person becomes angry is because his image of himself is too great. This is a subtle form of Avodah Zarah.

The only being for whom everything goes His way is the Master of

the World. If we truly believed that fact, then we would not become angry. We would realize that we do not call the shots. He calls the shots! Therefore, the Talmud teaches that if someone becomes angry, it is as if he worshipped foreign gods. Which foreign god did he serve? He served himself, the exaggerated self-image, the exaggerated ego.

The Radziner Rebbe advises that the next time a person is about to become angry, he should remember that he is becoming involved in a subtle form of Avodah Zarah. When one avoids becoming angry, although so tempted, he has successfully withstood the "test" -- in our time -- of avoiding Avodah Zarah.

An incident is told about the Vizhnitzer Rebbe (1860-1938), that he once went to bake matzos on Erev Pesach [the day before Passover]. Baking matzos Erev Pesach is a very tricky business. If anything goes wrong, one can encounter a problem of Chometz [unleavened bread]. One of the people who was baking the matzos did something wrong and someone else became very angry with him. The Rebbe asked, "Why are you becoming so angry?" The person responded, "But Rebbe, Chametz is prohibited in even the smallest quantity (b'mah-shehu)." The Rebbe responded (in Yiddish) "The smallest quantity of anger is worse than the smallest quantity of chometz". We fail to realize the severity of the sin of losing one's temper. The Gemara equates it with Avodah Zarah. The Gemara does not equate just 'any' prohibition with Avodah Zarah.

Therefore, no matter what the situation, we must remember this week's Parsha. Whether the children do not behave as well as we think they should, or when we do not receive the honor that we thought we deserved... When we are about to become angry, we must remember this week's Parsha. "Do not have other gods before Me." Let us make a pledge: This Week, we will not have any Avodah Zarah in our homes!

The Zohar Points Out -- There Are No Pauses In The Pasuk Prohibiting Falsehood

There is a fascinating Zohar in this week's parsha. The Zohar points out that in the commandments: "Do not murder; Do not commit adultery; Do not steal", the note 'tipcha' is used each time that the word "Lo" [Do Not] is used. [There are notes associated with entire Torah. These notes indicate the precise "trup," or melody, used when reading from the Torah in public.] The note 'tipcha' indicates a pause. In other words, the Zohar says that we are commanded: Do Not... pause... Murder! Do Not... pause... Commit Adultery! Do Not... pause... Steal!

The Zohar says that the reason for the pauses is because there are occasions when for the welfare of the world, the Torah sanctions murder, adultery, and theft. Is it ever permissible to kill? The answer is yes. When one sees someone running after his friend to kill him, he should take the initiative and kill the pursuer. Mind-boggling as it may seem, the Torah says (of course under the strictest of conditions) that murder is permitted. Therefore, there is a pause between 'Do Not' and 'Kill'.

The Zohar applies the same rationale and says that if 'Niuf' [adultery] were always forbidden, one would not even be allowed to engage in the marital act with one's own wife, even for the purposes of procreation. Of course, that is not technically adultery because it is with one's own wife. But the Zohar is indicating that the Torah is pointing out here that unlike certain other religions, the Torah does not forbid all sexual relationships. The Torah says, "Yes, husband and wife must engage in the marital act - for the sake of mitzvah, for the sake of pleasure." That form of "Tinaf" is separated by a pause from the word "Lo" [Do Not].

"Do Not" (Pause)... "Steal". Sometimes stealing is, in fact, permitted. If two people come to a judge for adjudication of a court case, the judge must try to ascertain who is telling the truth and who is lying. A smart judge may attempt to determine the truth by setting the person up, by asking the type of questions that will sometimes trick one of the parties. In other words, sometimes the judge must use "Geneivas Da'as" - (literally: 'theft of the mind'), misleading a person with cunning and trickery. There are occasions when there is a pause between the "Do Not" and the "Steal".

However the Zohar points out that in the next commandment, "Do not bear false witness against your fellow man", there is no pause between the negation (lo) and the rest of the commandment. Outright lying is never permitted. Yes, one can "change for the sake of peace". This, however is failing to tell the whole truth, which is not the same as "lying for the sake of peace", which is never permitted. Falsehood is so fundamentally wrong and destructive that the Torah does not allow any pause that might indicate that it would sometimes be permitted.

I once heard from Rav Pam (zt"l, 1913-2001) that he attributed his sense of honesty to his mother. His mother lived to be a very old woman. Never, in her entire lifetime, did Rav Pam hear his mother say the word 'Sheker' [lie]. It was such a dirty word in the Pam household, that she would refuse to use it. If someone told a lie, at most she would say, "He is not telling the truth". That may be part of the 'secret formula' for raising a child to grow up to be on the caliber of a 'Rav Pam'.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, WA

DavidATwersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 360, Dolls and Statues: Problem of Avodah Zarah? 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. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350

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THE PRACTICAL TORAH

BY RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES

Parshas Yisro: THE VALUE OF WORK

No definitive Halacha LeMa'aseh conclusions should be applied to practical situations based on any of these Shiurim.

When Yisro advises Moshe Rabbeinu as to how to effectively lead Bnai Yisrael and minister to their needs, he tells him that he must make the people aware of the path that they must follow and the actions they must do (Shemos 18:20). The Gemara in Bava Metzia (30b) derives from one phrase in the Posuk (Ibid.) that Yisro instructed Moshe to teach the people "Beis Chayeiheim" which may be loosely translated as "a way of life." Rashi (Ibid. s.v. Zeh Beis Chayeiheim) explains this to mean that people must be taught a trade or a profession by which to earn a living.

Chazal in a number of places speak of the value of the involvement in work. In Pirkei Avos (1:10), we are taught to love work; Rashi (Ibid. s.v. Ahuv), referring to a Gemara in Pesachim (113a), explains that one should never consider himself too great or too important to work, and adds that by working, a person will not have to become involved in theft or dishonesty, and will also not have to depend on gifts from Tzedakah to survive. Later in Pirkei Avos (2:2), we read that even continued success in Torah depends on one's being engaged in work as well. The Gemara in Gittin (67b) praises hard work because it "warms one up," meaning that it is healthy for the body, an idea echoed by the Klei Yakar (on Bereishis 3:19) who affirms that it is healthy to work before eating. He backs this idea up with a Posuk from Tehillim (128:2) which praises one who eats the fruits of his own hard work; the Gemara in Berachos (8a), quoting this same Posuk, suggests that in a certain respect, one who benefits from his own hard work is greater than one who is a Yira Shomayim, a G-d fearing person. Some of these ideas are codified in the Shulchan Aruch by the Ramo (Yoreh Deah 246:21).

The Beraisa in Avos DeRabbi Nosson (Perek 11 Halachah 1) greatly praises work, indicating that work was presented as part of a covenant, just as the Torah was, that it can save one from death, that Hashem did not allow His Shechinah to dwell within Bnai Yisrael until the people had physically worked to build the Mishkan, and that one must always try to find some work with which to occupy one's time. This last point is followed by the notion that idleness leads one to death; the Mishnah in Kesubos (59b) indicates that idleness can lead to insanity, or, as some understand it, depression. The Gemara in Nedarim (49b)

asserts that work brings honor to the one who does it, and the Tosefta in Kiddushin (Perek 1 Halachah 9) also documents the value of having a trade. The Pardes Yosef, on the above Posuk in this Parsha (Ibid.) lists, as do others, many of the Tannaim and Amoraim who had professions which they were involved with, including many who were engaged in physical labor.

The Rashbatz, in his commentary on Pirkei Avos entitled Magen Avos (Perek 1 Mishnah 10), writes that pursuing one's profession is a Mitzvah from the Torah. This view may be based on the opinion quoted in the Mechilta DeRabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, based on the language of the Posuk later in this Parsha (Shemos 20:9), that just as there is a Mitzvah to rest on Shabbos, there is a Mitzvah to work the rest of the week. The Mordechai in Shabbos (Siman 258, 70b in the Rif) quotes Rabbeinu Tam who apparently agrees; he thus allows one to travel on Erev Shabbos, which is generally restricted MideRabbanan, if it's for the purpose of one's livelihood, because that is considered a Mitzvah. This view is quoted and accepted by the Tur (Orach Chaim Siman 248); the Beis Yosef (Ibid. s.v. L'Inyan), however, writes that not everyone agrees, citing the Rivash (Sheilos U'Teshuvos HaRivash Siman 101) who disagrees with Rabbeinu Tam about this. The Ra'avyah, though, in his commentary on Maseches Shabbos (Siman 198), agrees and goes a step further, suggesting that even if one has enough to live on and wants simply to earn more, that too is still considered a Mitzvah. In the Shulchan Aruch, the Ramo (Orach Chaim Ibid. Sif 4) rules that going someplace for business purposes is considered a Mitzvah; the Magen Avraham (Ibid. Sif Katan 19) extends the Mitzvah even to the case where one is looking just to increase one's profit, as stated above. He also hints that the Mechaber, based on his ruling elsewhere (Ibid. 531:4), may likewise agree to this. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Igros Moshe Orach Chaim Chelek 2 Siman 111) writes as well that one is obligated to involve oneself in business in order to earn a living.

Based on all of the above, it is not surprising that the Gemara in Kiddushin (29a) states that one of the obligations of a parent regarding his child is that he must teach him or see that he learns a trade. One Tanna even asserts that if a parent does not do this, it is as if he taught the child to be a thief. The Ramo in the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah Ibid.) accepts this position. The Yerushalmi in Kiddushin (Perek 1 Halachah 7, 19a) actually states that the Torah's directive "U'Vacharta B'Chaim", meaning choose life (Devarim 30:19), refers to choosing a profession; this is why a parent must teach his child a trade. The Gemara later (30b) derives this obligation from a Posuk in Koheles (9:9) where Rashi explains that one's professional pursuits should accompany one's Torah study; both Torah and a profession must thus be taught to the child. The Gemara in Shabbos (150a) allows one to discuss teaching a child a trade on Shabbos because it is a Mitzvah (See Ibid. Rashi s.v. L'Lamdo), and it is thus not improper Shabbos conversation. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 306:6) rules accordingly.

At the end of Kiddushin (82a), the Mishnah says that one should teach one's child an easy and clean profession, and then lists certain professions to be avoided because they are dangerous, leading one to either sexual immorality or dishonesty. The Gemara (Ibid. 82b) elaborates on some of this, distinguishing between certain dignified and undignified professions, urging that one avoid the latter. The Gemara in Erchin (16b) suggests that one should pursue the profession of one's parents. The Chovos HaLevavos (Sha'ar HaBitachon, end of Perek 3) discusses different means of earning a livelihood and recommends that one pursue the profession which he desires and for which he is physically fit.

One Tanna in this aforementioned Mishnah (Ibid.) appears to hold, however, that one should teach one's child only Torah, because unlike any other profession, involvement in Torah brings one everlasting rewards, while excellence in it can be achieved even at an advanced age. This opinion seems to be contrary to the above documented idea that one should pursue a profession and indeed fulfills a Mitzvah by so doing. Many Meforshim, though, hold that there is no dispute here. The Maharsha (Chidushei Aggados L'Kiddushin 82a s.v. L'Olam) understands that the only issue is how much time and effort one

designates to teaching a trade; this Tanna is merely stressing that the emphasis on teaching must be on Torah, but that teaching Torah should be along with, not to the exclusion of, teaching a trade. The Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Hilchos Talmud Torah Perek 3, in Kuntres Acharon s.v. V'Hani) likewise asserts that there is no dispute; one must first teach one's child Torah, but he must then teach him a trade as well. The Sdei Chemed (Pe'at HaSadeh, Ma'areches HaAlef Klallim Siman 160) quotes a view that people who rely on this Mishnah (Ibid.) not to teach their children a trade make a serious error and bring about a Chillul Hashem.

It is worth noting that there is a notion that one may pursue Torah as one's "career" (Toraso Umnoso). The Gemara in Berachos (16b) formulates a Tefillah to request the ability to do this, and the Gemara in Shabbos (11a) cites some examples of people who achieved this. The Rambam (Hilchos Shmittah V'Yovel 13:13) seems to allow and even praise one who dedicates himself to Torah alone and avoids the mundane activities of this world. It appears, however, that even one at this level is not necessarily free of having a profession as a means of support. The Rambam himself writes elsewhere (Hilchos Talmud Torah 3:10) that it is a Chillul Hashem not to work in order to learn Torah and then live off of Tzedakah; the Kesef Mishneh (Ibid.), however, makes some important comments there, offering an alternative approach to this issue, but the Ramo cited above (Yoreh Deah Ibid.) appears to accept the position of the Rambam (Ibid.). The Rosh (Sheilos U'Teshuvos HaRosh Klal 15 Siman 8) actually defines a person for whom Toraso Umnoso as one who has work, but makes it of secondary importance, while the Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. 243:2) rules that one who works in order to support himself (See Ibid. in Shach Sif Katan 7) but learns Torah whenever he is not busy with his work still has the status of one for whom Toraso Umnoso. The Perishah, in his commentary on the Tur (Orach Chaim Siman 106 Ot 5) distinguishes between different definitions of the concept of Toraso Umnoso. The Maharsha (Chidushei Aggados L'Kiddushin 30b s.v. Im Ishah) writes that even one who learns Torah all the time must have some work; Rav Yaakov Emden, in his Lechem Shomayim on Pirkei Avos (1:10) concurs. Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch (to Beresheis 48:3) writes that when Jews involve themselves in many different professions, the message is shown clearly that Torah applies to all, regardless of one's calling or talent.

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2001/parsha/ryud_yisro.html
TorahWeb.org [from last year]

RABBI BENJAMIN YUDIN

THE ALL-EMBRACING NATURE OF SINAI

There is a dispute in the Gemora Zevachim (116A) whether Yisro came together with Moshe's wife and sons prior to matan Torah, as is written in the Torah, or did he come after matan Torah. (The Ramban is of the opinion that Yisro came, as it is presented in the text, before mattan Torah, while Even Ezra is of the opinion that Yisro came a year later, after the Mishkan was built). One of the main points of dispute in the Gemora is whether B'nai Noach offered the korban shelamim. Since we are taught that B'nai Noach did not offer shelamim, and Yisro offered shelamim, as it says in Shemos (18:12), "And Yisro, the father-in-law of Moshe, took and olah and zevachim". The term zevachim following the term olah, explains the Maharsha, means Shelamim. Thus Yisro's offering the korban shelamim demonstrates his joining B'nai Yisroel (who, as taught in Shemos (24:5), offer shelamim at Sinai) after kabalas hatarah.

The notion that a Ben Noach can not bring a shelamim is discussed further by the Seforno who cites Naaman, the captain of Aram, who, when cured from his tzoraas by the prophet Elisha, proclaimed his intention for geirus by saying (Kings II 5:17), "For your servant will never again offer a burnt olah offering or any zevach sacrifice to other G-ds, but only to Hashem". Here too the "zevach" following the olah refers to shelamim, and the opportunity that he would first now himself thereof.

Why might it be that prior to Sinai, only olos (burnt offerings) were brought, and after Sinai, B'nai Yisroel were given the opportunity to

bring shelamim?

Rav Hirsch zt"l in his commentary on the Torah explains that a shelamim, of which the greater part of the animal has first been sacrificed to Hashem, is also enjoyed by the one who brought the Korban himself. This establishes the truism that worthwhile material enjoyment can itself become a divine service. Moreover, the Torah is a Toras Chaim, and as such can be mekadesh (sanctify and elevate) all of life. It is therefore understandable that there is a mitzvah to eat three meals on Shabbos, for the very act of eating is not looked upon as an end in itself, but rather a type of, "M'shulchan gavo'a ka-zachu" (one is benefiting from the table of G-d). Those partaking of the meals can experience the presence of Hashem, through b'rachos, divrei Torah, and zemiros.

It is interesting to note that the Gemora in Pesachim (68b) which presents a dispute between R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua. R' Eliezer holds that on Yom Tov an individual has a choice of either eating and drinking or studying Torah. R' Yehoshua is of the opinion that the day is to be divided, half of the day should be devoted to eating and drinking, and half of it to Torah study. While they argue regarding Pesach and Sukkos, the Talmud teaches, "both agree that Shavuos (Atzeres) requires the component of food, as it the day that the Torah was given." (Similarly, on Purim one of the reasons for Purim Seuda (festive meal) is that on Purim there was a re-acceptance of Torah on the part of the Jewish Nation.) Torah provides us with the know-how and ability to sanctify the mundane and hence the offerings of shelamim commenced with matan Torah. The notion of sanctifying the mundane is unique to Am Yisroel, and foreign to the Ben-Noach.

I would like to suggest another reason for Yisro's bringing of shelamim after Sinai. The Meshech Chochma (Shemos 18:12) suggests that the korban shelamim that Yisro brought was that of a korban todah, a thanksgiving offering. This offering was in appreciation for his being accepted as a convert into the Jewish nation. It is for this reason that the Torah identifies the menu, that Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread with the father-in-law of Moshe before Hashem." The Meshech Chochmah says that the bread represents the 40 loaves (30 matzoh and 10 chametz) that the Torah prescribes (Vayikra 7:12) as an accompaniment to the korban todah. Moreover, perhaps Aaron's presence is noted to teach us that he came in the official capacity of kohain to receive his share of the four loaves that had a status of terumah and were forbidden to the non-kohain.

Regarding the korban todah, the Netziv, in his commentary on Parshas Tzav, suggests an explanation as to why it is that on the one hand this korban is like kodshim kalim (the lesser sanctified offerings) in that it could be eaten throughout Yerushalayim, and yet, like the kodshei kodshim (more sacred offerings) could only be eaten for one day and one night. (Kodshim kalim can be eaten for two days and one night.) He suggests that the Torah realized that an individual offering a thanksgiving offering could not consume it in its entirety in one day. Therefore, by necessity, he would have to invite others to share his offering with him.

Perhaps this is another unique characteristic of shelamim. It is a vehicle through which one may reach out to others to share a religious experience. At Sinai, when the Jewish nation recited "Naaseh" (Shemos 19:8) it was a communal commitment to Torah. The Meshech Chochmah notes that it was impossible for any single individual to observe all 613 commandments. Some apply only to a kohain, king, or the body of Sanhedrin. It is only together that we can keep all of Torah. To the Ben Noach, olos represent man's absolute devotion to G-d. This they can understand. However, that idea of a religion incorporating bein adam lechavero, a direct responsibility between fellow men, was something initiated at Sinai.

<http://www.koltorah.org/ravj/korbanottoday.htm>

Parshat Yitro [From last year]

CAN WE OFFER KORBANOT TODAY?

BY RABBI HOWARD JACHTER

Introduction In Parshat Vayetzei, Yaakov promises that when he returns to Eretz Yisrael, he will build a Bait Elokim, a house of G-d.

Now that the Jewish People have returned to Israel, we may be obligated to fulfill Yaakov's promise and rebuild the Bait Hamikdash and offer Korbanot.

This question takes on even greater urgency considering the current situation in Israel. With the Palestinian Authority denying our connection to the Temple Mount, we must reaffirm our connection by focusing our attention on issues relating to Korbanot and the Bait Hamikdash.

This idea was vigorously debated in the nineteenth century, when Rav Tzvi Hirsch Kalinscher strongly urged that an effort be made to offer certain Korbanot. His proposal was disputed by the great authorities of the time such as Rav Akiva Eiger, Rav Yaakov Ettlinger, and Rav Moshe Sofer. We will review the basic issues that they discussed.

Building the Bait Hamikdash Many sources indicate that it is not appropriate to build the Bait Hamikdash today. First, Rashi and Tosafot (Sukkah 41a, s.v. Ee Nami) cite the Midrash that states that the third Bait Hamikdash will not be built by human hands but will miraculously land from Heaven as a fully built edifice. The Rambam (Hilchot Bait Habechira 1:1), however, clearly indicates that the third Bait Hamikdash will be built by human hands. Nevertheless, he writes that Mashiach will build the Bait Hamikdash (Hilchot Melachim 11:1). Moreover, the Pasuk Hokol Biketav Miyad Hashem Hasechel Al Col Malachot Hatavnit (Divrei Hayamim 28:10), where King David states that he received direction from Hashem on how to build every aspect of the Bait Hamikdash, teaches that divine guidance is necessary to build the Bait Hamikdash.

However, the Mishna (Eduyot 8:6) states, Amar Rabi Yehoshua Shamati Shemakravin Af Al Pi She'ain Bayit, that Korbanot may be offered even in the absence of the Bait Hamikdash. The Rambam (Hilchot Bait Habechira 6:15) codifies this Talmudic statement.

The following question remains: How can Korbanot be offered if we are all Tamei Mait and cannot become Tahor due to the lack of the availability of a Para Aduma? Rav Kalischer, accordingly, limited his proposal of offering Korbanot to those Korbanot that can be offered even when Kohanim are impure, namely, the Korban Pesach and communal offerings. Regarding these Korbanot, the rule is: Tuma Dechaviya Betzibur, the Korban may be offered in a state of Tuma if at least half of the community is Tamei (for the parameters of this rule see Encyclopedia Talmudit 19:559-641).

Kohanim Since Mekabla Va'elech Mitzvat Kehuna, beginning from the act of collecting the blood of the Korban the activity in the Bait Hamikdash must be performed by a Kohen, the lack of the type of Kohen that is qualified to work in the Bait Hamikdash can make it impossible to offer Korbanot today. In the Bait Hamikdash, only a Kohen Meyuchas, a Kohen about whom witnesses can testify that he is a descendant of a Kohen who performed the Avoda on the Mizbeach can do the Avoda in the Bait Hamikdash. Rambam (Hilchot Issurei Biah 20:1) writes, however, that today all our Kohanim are Kohanei Chazaka, they are not authenticated Kohanim but merely presumed to be Kohanim because of a family tradition. Although Kohanei Chazaka are generally regarded as full fledged Kohanim regarding Pidyon Haben, Nesiat Kapayim, and forbidden marriages (see Aruch Hashulchan Yoreh Deah 305:55), for service in the Bait Hamikdash a higher standard is required: they must be Kohanim Meyuchasim. Hence, the absence of Kohanim Meyuchasim appears to preclude the Korbanot until the time of Mashiach, when Kohanim will be certified by Eliyahu Hanavi as Kohanim Meyuchasim (see Rambam Hilchot Melachim 12:3). Rabbi Kalischer tried to demonstrate that in our days, the service in the Bait Hamikdash may be performed by Kohanei Chazaka. However, his view was rejected by the leading authorities of his time, such as Rav Akiva Eiger and Rav Yaakov Ettlinger.

Another problem is that a Kohen may not perform the Avoda if he is not wearing the Bigdei Kehuna (priestly garments, see Zevachim 2:1). Wool dyed with Tichelet is required for garments of the regular Kohen as well as the Kohen Gadol (Shemot 28:5), and without wool dyed with Tichelet the garments are not acceptable. Any Avoda performed by a Kohen wearing unacceptable garments (Mechusar Begadim) is invalid (Zevachim 2:1). The problem is that we require the Tichelet to come

from an animal known as the Chilazon (see Rambam Hilchot Tzitzit 2:2 and compare with Hilchot Klei Hamikdash 8:13). The Rambam, though, notes that Tichelet is no longer available (Peirush Hamishnayot Menachot 4:1). Recently, great efforts have been made to demonstrate that the Chilazon is a snail known as the "murex trunculus" (see Techumin 9:423-446) and is now available for use in Tzitzit and potentially in Bigdei Kehuna as well. Although Rav Aharon Lichtenstein and Rav Hershel Schachter regard many of these arguments as persuasive, only time will tell if this Tichelet will be widely accepted within the community. Indeed, in some circles Tichelet has been accepted, but in others it has not. Even Rav Schachter regards this Tichelet as Safek Tichelet, which may be acceptable for Tzitzit but would be unacceptable for Bigdei Kehuna.

The Mizbeach Although Korbanot may be offered absent the Bait Hamikdash, the presence of the Mizbeach is an absolute necessity. The Mishna refers to the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood (Zrikat Hadam) on the Mizbeach to be a Matir, it permits the Korban to be offered on the Mizbeach and to be consumed (see Zevachim 2:3). The Rambam (Hilchot Bait Habechira 2:1) writes, Hamizbeach Mekomo Kivan Beyoter, "the Mizbeach must be placed in an extremely precise location." Since it is so difficult to place the Mizbeach exactly in its proper location, when the second Bait Hamikdash was built, a Navi was consulted to tell the people exactly where to place the Mizbeach. Accordingly, it seems that a Navi is required to determine the location of the Mizbeach, and without a Navi the Mizbeach cannot function. Rabbi Kalischer argues that since the walls of Har Habayit are still standing, one need only follow the measurements found in Masechet Midot to determine where the Mizbeach should be placed. A Navi was required for the building of the second Bait Hamikdash only because the walls of the first Bait Hamikdash were destroyed. Others disagree because the walls we see today may be the walls of the Azara (Temple courtyard) and not the Har Habayit (Temple Mount) and also because of the uncertainty of the size of an Ama, cubit (the unit of measurement used by the Mishna in Masechet Midot; see the many opinions cited in the Encyclopedia Talmud II:29). For a summary of these and other aspects of this issue, see Rabbi J. David Bleich's Contemporary Halachic Problems I:224-269, especially note 1.

Other Considerations Other authorities point out that the lack of resolution of key Halachic issues constitutes an impediment to offering Korbanot. Rav Akiva Eiger asserts that we must consider the opinion of the Raavad that Har Habayit is no longer holy, and according to his opinion Korbanot cannot be offered on Har Habayit before the arrival of Mashiach who will re-sanctify the area (see Raavad to Rambam Hilchot Bait Habechira 6:14). Rabbi J. David Bleich points out the general inability to resolve Halachic disputes concerning the Bait Hamikdash due to the lack of a tradition on how to conduct the Temple ritual. Only with the arrival of Mashiach will this tradition be renewed (see Tosafot Pesachim 114b, s.v. Echad Zachar, which says that Moshe and Aharon will instruct us on how to offer the Korbanot in the third Bait Hamikdash).

Rav Bleich presents the following example of an unresolved question: There is a disagreement between Rambam and Raavad (Hilchot Korban Pesach 10:11) whether the Gid Hanashe is roasted as part of the Korban Pesach. This is a particularly compelling example, as it is not possible just to rule strictly on this issue because if one does not cook the Korban Pesach with the Gid Hanashe, one has failed to properly prepare the entire animal according to the Rambam, and if one does cook the Gid Hanashe the animal is not Kosher according to the Raavad.

Conclusion It seems that the Rambam (Hilchot Melachim 11:1) may provide a clear answer to this question. He writes that Mashiach will build the Bait Hamikdash and Korbanot will be offered. It is possible that the Rambam is telling us a fact: that only when Mashiach comes will Korbanot be offered. In fact, when this author asked Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, zt"l, what he felt about this subject, the Rav responded immediately by quoting this Rambam that Mashiach will build the Bait Hamikdash. Interestingly, Rav Soloveitchik told this author (in 1984) that this Rambam shows that those who want to build the third Bait Hamikdash today are incorrect.

In addition, when this author asked Rav Yehuda Amital's opinion regarding this question, the latter responded by citing Rav Kook's assertion that Hashgachah Haborei, Divine Providence, works through the Halacha. Therefore, if there currently exist Halachic impediments from rebuilding the Bait Hamikdash, this indicates that the Divine Will does not wish the Bait Hamikdash to be built today through human hands. Rav Amital, though, recently stated at Yeshivat Har Etzion that it is profoundly wrong for the Israeli government to relinquish sovereignty over the Temple Mount. Although we are unable to offer Korbanot today, we should take steps to reaffirm our connection to the Bait Hamikdash. We may do so by studying the Halachot pertaining to the functioning of the Bait Hamikdash either in Mishnayot (Seder Kadshim) or in the Rambam's Mishna Torah. In addition, it is highly worthwhile to study the underlying Torah attitude toward the Bait Hamikdash and Korbanot. Rav Joshua Berman's *The Temple* (Jason Aaronson) imparts a powerful presentation of the Torah's Hashkafa regarding the Bait Hamikdash.

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org]
Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz
Yitro: What Does It Take to Change?

Sponsored by Irving and Arline Katz in memory of father Chaim Eliezer ben Avigdor Moshe Hakohen Katz a"h

Our parashah opens: "Yitro, the priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moshe, heard all that Hashem had done for Yisrael." The gemara (Zevachim 116a) asks: What specifically did Yitro hear that made him come to join Bnei Yisrael? The gemara offers three answers: Rabbi Yehoshua says, "The war with Amalek." Rabbi Elazar Ha'modai says, "The giving of the Torah." Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov says, "The splitting of the sea."

R' Moshe D. Tendler shlita explains that these three Sages are answering the question: What motivates a person to make a complete break with his past and begin life anew? Amalek, according to Rabbi Yehoshua, demonstrates the potential for evil which is within all men. When the world did not protest Amalek's unprovoked attack on a defenseless Bnei Yisrael, Yitro severed his ties to that world.

No, says Rabbi Elazar. The realization that man can be evil is more likely to depress and paralyze a person than to uplift him. For man to improve requires the realization that there is a higher purpose that is within man's reach. It was the giving of the Torah which moved Yitro.

Rabbi Eliezer does not accept the view of either of his colleagues. A "Torah," i.e. a code of conduct, alone is not enough to uplift a person. Every group has its "Torah"; in a debased society, however, that code of conduct can itself become the tool of evil. What inspired Yitro was the splitting of the sea, for here finally was a Law-Giver - Hashem - who uses His laws towards the ends of justice. (Pardes Rimmonim p.5)

"And they stood at the bottom of the mountain." (19:17)

The gemara interprets this verse to mean that Hashem lifted the mountain above Bnei Yisrael and told them, "If you accept the Torah - fine. If not - this will be your burial place." This implies that Bnei Yisrael did not accept the Torah willingly.

Numerous commentaries note that this appears to contradict the verse (Shmot 24:7), "[Moshe] took the Book of the Covenant and read it in earshot of the people, and they said, 'Everything that Hashem has said, na'aseh ve'nishmah / we will do and we will obey!'" This verse suggests that Bnei Yisrael did accept the Torah willingly.

R' Baruch Rabinowitz z"l (Munkatcher Rebbe; later, Chief Rabbi of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Holon, Israel; died 1999) offers the following explanation: If Hashem wanted to force Bnei Yisrael to accept the Torah, why did He have to do it by holding the mountain menacingly over their heads? The gemara says that Hashem created the world conditionally and that He would have destroyed it if Bnei Yisrael had not accepted the Torah. Wasn't this knowledge sufficient to force Bnei Yisrael to take the Torah?

The answer is that Bnei Yisrael's knowledge that the world's existence depended on their accepting the Torah did not force them to

accept the Torah. We have to breathe to live, but we do not say that we are "forced" to breathe! We enjoy breathing. We have to eat, but we do not say that we are "forced" to eat! We enjoy eating. Similarly, we had to accept the Torah or the world would be destroyed, but because we enjoy studying and observing the Torah, we do not think of ourselves as forced to do so.

Why then did Hashem have to use any kind of force to give the Torah? Because what we have said above is only true of the nation as a whole. There are individuals who think that they can get by without Torah (just as some people do not eat properly). This explains our Sages' teaching that the Jewish People accepted the Torah anew after Haman's downfall, this time willingly. Haman had planned to kill all Jews without differentiating the individual from the group. Thus the Jewish People realized that all Jews share the same fate, and every Jew needs the Torah. (Divrei Nevoim)

R' Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook z"l (1865-1935) offers the following explanation for why Hashem forced Bnei Yisrael to accept the Torah after they said na'aseh ve'nishmah: The Midrash Tanchuma states that Bnei Yisrael willingly accepted the Written Torah, but they had to be forced to accept the Oral Law. Why? R' Kook explains that, in this context, the "Written Torah" refers to the fundamental beliefs of Judaism that were passed down to us from our Patriarchs, while the "Oral Law" refers to the mitzvot, whose details are primarily found in the Oral Law. Bnei Yisrael willingly accepted the former, which were their heritage from Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. However, Bnei Yisrael were reluctant, so soon after Amalek's unprovoked attack on them, to accept the mitzvot. Bnei Yisrael feared that agreeing to act so differently from other nations would only fan the flames of Amalek's and other nations' hatred.

This, too, explains why Bnei Yisrael reaccepted the Torah after Haman's downfall. Haman's very ascent to power began with the Jews' sharing in the feasting and revelry of the other nations. Thus, the Jewish people realized that their attempts to fit in were useless and even counterproductive, and they therefore willingly accepted the Oral Torah, the mitzvot. (Me'orot Ha'reiyah: Parashat Zachor)

R' Aryeh Laib Hakohen Heller z"l (died 1813) adds another answer: G-d's forcing us to accept the Torah was not intended to coerce us, but, so-to-speak, to coerce Him. Because G-d forced us to "marry" Him, He can never divorce us. [See Devarim 22:29] (Shev Shemaita, Introduction)

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From: RABBI LIPMAN PODOLSKY [SMTP:podolsky@hakotel.edu]
Parshas Yisro 5762
MALBIM VS. DARWIN

"Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it... for in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth... and He rested on the seventh day... (Shmos 20:8-11)." Shabbos is the quintessential testimony that the universe was created ex nihilo. Though until the 1960's the vast majority of scientists believed in the steady-state theory of the universe -- i.e. that the universe had been around forever -- Shabbos observers had a few millennia headstart.

The Malbim presents a most profound paradox. Exactly how does Shabbos indicate that the world was once created? To one to whom the veracity of Torah is unequivocal, the Shabbos-proof is unnecessary. The first Parsha of the Torah already describes in great detail the manner in which the world was created! Certainly the evidence that G-d created for six days is stronger than the fact that He stopped on the seventh. And as for he who is doubtful regarding the Truth of Torah, Shabbos can in no way convince him of Creation! Why then does our Parsha point to Shabbos as the cardinal commemoration of Creation?

Answers the Malbim: Had the universe forever existed, we would constantly and consistently encounter new and unusual species. Just as the myriad present species came into being, so should the pattern continue unabated, ad infinitum. Yet we find no such evidence. Indeed, even a cursory glance at the fossil record proclaims unequivocally that never have new species come into existence. All we find are species that always existed, never having given rise to anything new. "The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks are not the evidence of fossils and... are never 'seen' in the rocks (Harvard Professor Steven J. Gould, "The Panda's Thumb" p. 151)."

This is what Shabbos represents. For six days Hashem created the heavens and the earth and all therein. Finally, on the seventh day Hashem brought all of this Creative activity to an abrupt halt. Since then, nothing new has come into being. "There is nothing new beneath the sun (Koheles 1:9)."

Had the universe been a result of random accident, we would expect the very same type of accident to recur on a somewhat regular basis. Why has there never been a repeat of the 'Big Bang'? Where is the purported evolution so many scientists would like to see? Despite the well-funded, round-the-clock efforts of thousands of scientists to reproduce in their laboratories the effects of 'accidental' evolution (which supposedly occurred with no manipulation and no laboratory), no one to date has yet to achieve any measure of success.

The reason: Hashem put a cap on Creation. In the words of the Medrash: "[Why is Hashem referred to as] E-I Sha-dai? For He said to His universe, 'Enough -- Dai!' (Medrash Seichel Tov, Breishis 43:14)." This sudden cessation of further Creative activity is the primary proof that there was, and is, a Creator directing the show. He who stopped it is He who created it.

It pays to ponder that the Malbim was a contemporary of Charles Darwin. As Darwin's theory of evolution began to gain in popularity, scientific circles jumped on it as if it were a cache of gold. Finally, there would be no need for a Creator. Darwin's mechanism of evolution 'satisfactorily' explained the origin of species.

There were, though, certain facts that most scientists chose to ignore. Firstly, Darwin himself was a religious man (just look at the length of his beard!). His second-choice career plan was the priesthood! Secondly, Darwin himself did not view evolution as a contradiction to a Creator. Indeed, in his "The Origin of Species", Darwin explicitly refers to 'the Creator' with a capital 'C' in most unscientific fashion. Evolution, in Darwin's eye, served merely as an implement through which his Creator formed life on earth.

And finally, Darwin himself was keenly aware of the extreme dearth of fossil evidence to corroborate his theory. He predicted that his theory would ultimately be borne out by the fossil record (On the Origin of Species pp. 287-288). Yet, he fully understood that should evidence not be found to verify his hypothesis, this would clearly demonstrate that his ideas failed to meet the criteria of scientific scrutiny. Perhaps ironically, he was the first to admit the truth (ibid. p. 336). Tragically, the vast majority of scientists who blindly perpetuated Darwin's theory throughout the last one hundred and fifty years were not.

Though the Malbim had no clearer picture of the fossil record than did Darwin, he had one very strong advantage -- he had Torah. Torah is truth. It needs no evidence. It requires no confirmation. It is simply Reality as seen through the eyes of our Creator.

This may serve as a poignant lesson to those of us who sit in doubt regarding the supposed contradictions between the latest scientific theories and Torah Truth. One by one, science has lost the battles; the Torah has yet to succumb. Based on the record of the past, we can only presume that so will it continue in the future. Science is finally catching up with what Torah has been teaching all along. Woe unto those who have forsaken the fresh, flowing waters of Torah for the empty wells of science. Not only have they gained nothing, they have only ended up right back where they started, suffering from intense spiritual thirst.

Let us conclude this vital lesson with a quote from a contemporary scientist: "For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by theologians who have been sitting there for centuries (Robert Jastrow, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, quoted in Time Magazine Feb. 5, 1979)."

A vital lesson indeed!

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From: Yeshivat Har Etzion [SMTP:office@etzion.org.il] To: yhe-sichot@etzion.org.il Subject: SICHOT62 - Special Sichas - From Commitment to Responsibility

Yeshivat Har Etzion's Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash
FROM COMMITMENT TO RESPONSIBILITY BY HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT" A

The gemara (Tamid 32a) recounts that Alexander the Great asked the Jewish Sages, "Who is wise?" They answered him, "One who foresees future trends." Foreseeing the future does not mean prophecy.

A wise person is one who examines the present situation, analyzes it and draws conclusions with respect to what may possibly take place in the future. Regarding the verse, "Happy is the man who fears always" (Mishlei 28:14), Rashi (Gittin 55b) explains that such a person fears because he "takes care always to take into account future consequences, ensuring that his actions in the present will not cause problems in the future." This teaches us that we should attempt to understand what the future will hold. "Happy is the man who fears always," and there is no harm in attempting to emulate the wise.

Let us therefore analyze the changes that Western society is currently undergoing, and through them to try to understand the trends and directions in Israeli society.

THE RETURN OF "WE"

Modern Western society revolves around three central values, all of which relate to the individual: individual rights, individual liberty and individual privacy. It appears at times as though these have attained the status of absolute values, which may not be violated under any circumstances. Their effect on society and culture is discernible in almost every sphere, from legislation, through education, literature and art to the prevailing everyday lifestyle.

"Privacy of the individual" occupies a special place, for it is most comprehensive and the attitude towards it borders on worship. In light of this value, a number of rules have been established which leave their mark on all social relationships. For example, any conversation between two people who are not members of the same family or close friends must be pragmatic and to-the-point, free of anything personal. Any personal comment or question, or even a show of interest in the personal condition or feelings of one's partner in conversation is regarded as rude, a desecration of the holy value of privacy and a vulgar violation of his private life. Every person is a closed world, and no one else has the right to penetrate it. As a result, there is a growing sense of alienation in Western society in general, and in the United States in particular. There is "I" and there is "he," but there is almost never a "we."

The social analysis presented above was valid until September 11, 2001. With the collapse of the Twin Towers, the barriers separating people also came crashing down. Obviously, the atmosphere of trauma and the invasive security checks that suddenly became part of the American routine contributed towards this feeling in no small way. But beyond this, the terrorist attacks seemed to bring about a fundamental change in the American way of life. Suddenly it became permissible once again to ask about the personal condition of other people, and the need to talk about one's feelings became obvious. I cannot say how long this atmosphere - the lack of alienation - that has prevailed in New York since September 11th will last, but what is clear is that the concept of individual privacy will not be held on as high a pedestal as it was previously. Having seen that this value cannot stand up to a crisis, the Americans will not continue to regard it as holy.

This development may influence the structure of Western society even more forcefully. While the emphasis was on individual privacy and alienation dominated human relations, society was witness to some inordinately individualistic phenomena. While every person is fiercely guarding his privacy, his relationships revolve around himself and he feels no responsibility for the fate of the people and the environment around him. After September 11th, when the walls of alienation between people collapsed, this exaggerated individualism may have started to recede.

In addition to the change that has taken place in the perception of the value of privacy, the collapse of the Twin Towers also dealt a mortal blow to post-modernism. The quotation marks that post-modernism

had placed around words like "evil" and "good" were suddenly removed, and good and evil again became absolute values. The hand of Divine Providence may be discerned in the fact that holding the Presidency of the United States is a man possessing basic human intuition, who makes repeated use of absolute moral concepts, calling Bin-Laden and other terrorists "evil." Perhaps if the President of the world's single superpower were a Democrat instead of a Republican, he would be using completely different terminology - "enemy" instead of "evil" - thereby leaving open the possibility of thinking that there is no absolute "good" or "evil." This development may also help to weaken the trend towards individualism: when there are no absolute values and everyone is free to mold his values in accordance with his own world-view, then individualism reigns supreme. But when values become absolute, then they are of necessity common to most people, and the individual feels part of a greater society that shares his values.

A similar change to the one brought about in the United States by the collapse of the Twin Towers has taken place in Israel in the wake of the present Intifada. Obviously, what we have experienced is not a grandiose one-time event that brought about immediate results. Nevertheless, the Intifada seems, slowly but surely, to be eating away at the individualism prevalent in our society. With the tragic multiplicity of terror attacks and their victims, and the recognition that nowhere is "safe," the principle of the collective "we" is strengthened at the expense of the individualistic "I."

IDENTIFICATION VS. RESPONSIBILITY

For the last two years I have spoken at the yeshiva's Chanuka banquet about how today's youth are tired of hearing about "obligation." [See the articles in Alei Etzion vol. 11.] In my opinion, however, there has been a turnaround in the attitudes of Israeli youth during the past year, in the wake of the security situation and the economic recession. The escape into personal, individual "identification" does not sit well with the atmosphere of crisis in the country, which emphasizes togetherness.

Indeed, the renewed sense of togetherness is a very positive development. The gemara discusses the importance of participation in communal distress:

Our Sages taught: When Israel is in distress and one person separates himself, then the two ministering angels that accompany the person, as it were, place their hands upon his head and declare, "Let So-and-so here who has separated himself from the community not witness the future comforting of the community." Another baraita teaches: When the community is in distress, a person should not say, "I am going to my house to eat and drink, and peace be upon my soul..." Rather, he should feel sorrow together with the community. So we find in the case of Moshe Rabbeinu, who identified with the suffering of the nation, as it is written, "And the arms of Moshe grew heavy, and they took a rock and placed it under him, and he sat upon it." Did Moshe not have a cushion upon which to sit? [He surely did,] but this is what he said: "Since Israel is suffering, so I will be with them in suffering." And whoever shares in the suffering of the community will merit to see the consolation of the community. (Ta'anit 11a)

In light of recent events, and in light of the reluctance of the youth to identify with "obligation," we need to raise the banner of "responsibility." To a certain extent, responsibility is even more binding than obligation, but on the other hand it is a gentler concept that also gives one a sense of satisfaction: if a certain responsibility is placed upon someone, it means that he is worthy of it. People tend to identify with the tasks allotted to them, and when they fulfill their tasks properly they experience satisfaction from their success.

Responsibility is required in many different spheres: responsibility for the psychological and spiritual strength and immunity of the public, responsibility towards people who need help, and responsibility to seek and find ways in which to contribute. In the words of the Sages, being responsible means being a guarantor: "All of Israel are guarantors for one another." This means that Am Yisrael is a living, human entity, in which every limb is concerned for the welfare of every other and is responsible to do its utmost to improve the other's situation. A sense of responsibility towards others means that a person doesn't look about for a cushion to sit on while his companions are suffering. Moshe Rabbeinu sat upon a rock because he felt himself a partner in the suffering of his brethren. Likewise, we are required to feel a sense of partnership and to assume the responsibility of doing what we can to improve society as a whole.

Concerning a person who restricts the sphere of his concern to his

own personal well-being - even if he is concentrating on his spiritual well-being - the gemara in Avoda Zara teaches that he is compared to someone who has no G-d. It is interesting to review the context and to note the broad scope of this statement:

Our Sages taught: When Rabbi Elazar ben Parta and Rabbi Chanina ben Teradyon were caught [by the Romans], R. Elazar ben Parta said to Rabbi Chanina ben Teradyon: "Happy are you, for you were caught for only one transgression; woe is me, for I have been caught for five." R. Chanina answered him: "Happy are you, for you have been caught on five counts and you will be saved; woe is me, for I have been caught on one count, and I will not be saved. For you engaged in Torah as well as acts of kindness, while I have involved myself only with Torah. And, as Rav Huna taught, a person who engages only in Torah is compared to one who has no G-d..." Did R. Chanina then not engage in acts of kindness at all? We learn that Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov said: "A person should not give money to a charitable cause unless it operates under the auspices of a Torah scholar like R. Chanina ben Teradyon," [thus proving that he engaged in charity!] ... Rather, R. Chanina engaged in acts of kindness, but not as much as he should have. (Avoda Zara 17b)

R. Chanina ben Teradyon died in the sanctification of G-d's Name when the Romans wrapped him in a Torah scroll and burned him to death. Yet he justified his fate on the basis of not having engaged in acts of kindness to the extent that he should have, devoting himself mainly to Torah study instead. He had not found the proper ratio between his devotion to Torah and his social concern, and for this reason he judged himself to be as "one who has no G-d." We must learn from this that we are obligated to engage in "gemilut chasadim" alongside our Torah study.

In these difficult times we must emphasize the responsibility that is placed upon each of us. Obviously, in accepting responsibility each person can express his own individuality; but every single person has an obligation to feel a partnership, to take responsibility, to assist, and - with G-d's help - to fulfill his role in mending society as a whole.

During Chanuka, we thank G-d at length for the miracles that He performed for us. It seems that our great praise of and appreciation for Divine intervention has dulled our consciousness of the merit of the Chashmonaim for the miracle that they helped bring about. Their readiness to raise the banner of revolt and to go out as a small band against a great and mighty army, to forge against the stream - this was the miracle that the Chashmonaim wrought, of their own free choice. When we speak of the miracles that G-d performs for us in our days, we must educate also towards the performance of miracles in the spirit of the Chashmonaim: to strengthen our resolve to act out of a sense of responsibility for the fate of the nation as a whole, in the hope that G-d will be with us and help us in all our endeavors.

(This sicha was delivered on Chanuka 5762 [2001]. Summarized by Yitzchak Barth. Translated by Kaeren Fish. The summary was reviewed by Harav Amital.) <http://www.vbm-torah.org>

Mark the Date! The 22nd Annual Dinner of the Etzion Foundation of Yeshivat Har Etzion will take place on Wednesday, March 13, 2002 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, NY. This year we are proud to be honoring our esteemed Rosh Yeshiva Harav Aharon Lichtenstein shlit"a. We look forward to seeing you there! For reservations, please contact the NY office Tel. (212) 732-4874 Email: etzion@att.net

From: Menachem Leibtag[SMT:tsc@bezeqint.net] Subject: [par-new]for Greater Teaneck area! I'd like to inform you re: a special lecture that will take place this motzei shabbat [Parshat Yitro /Feb 2nd] at 7:45pm. The shiur will be given (in Hebrew) by RAV YOEL BIN NUN on the topic of: The Morality of War in Sefer Yehoshua. Rav Yoel is not only one of the most outstanding Tanach teachers in Israel (and a senior faculty member of Michtele Herzog at Yeshivat Har Etzion), he is also a prominent community leader. He is the pioneer in what I like to call the 'macro' approach to Tanach study, and his methodology forms the backbone of my TSC shiurim. So if you have a chance to make it there, I'm sure that you'll enjoy the lecture.

The shiur will take place iy'h at 7:45 pm. at Congregation Rinat Yisrael 389 West Englewood Ave. , Teaneck, NJ. Lecture will be delivered in Hebrew.

From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] To: weekly@ohr.edu
* TORAH WEEKLY * Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshat
Yitro

Seeing The Sound Of Music "And all the people saw the voices"
(20:15)

One winter's day in a small village in Poland, there arrived a frail figure carrying a small black leather box. It was still early in the morning, the pale winter sunlight barely coloring the ashen faces of the houses. The man made his way to the town square. He rubbed his hands together and blew warm air between them. A cloud of mist emerged from the other side of his clasped palms and snaked its way upward, catching the rays of the rising sun as it faded away. He opened the box and assembled three black cylindrical sections of a clarinet. He started to play, at first slowly and hauntingly. The sound was so beautiful and compelling that very soon, yawning faces started to appear at the windows. Children were pressing their faces to the panes. He started to pick up the tempo. The sound was so delightful, so sweet, that very soon, people emerged into the street and spontaneously started to dance. The music crescendoed in wave after wave. The unbelievable sweetness of the sound gilded the faces of the dancers with delight. Into this scene stumbled a deaf man. He was quite convinced that everyone had taken leave of their senses. Here, for no reason whatsoever, was half the town dancing in the square at six o'clock in the morning! If he'd been a little bit more discerning, he would have realized that it was the voice of the clarinet and its beautiful music that was the reason for all this dancing. When the Torah was given at Sinai, the people 'saw' the voices. They experienced kinesthesia - the reversal of sensory perception. Seeing Sound. Hearing Sight.

When the Torah was given at Sinai, Hashem radiated the light of His Presence on the whole Jewish People as one. They experienced this as angels dancing. When they saw the angels dancing, they understood that it was because of the overwhelming sweetness and beauty of the Holy Torah. And, as it were, they craned their necks and strained their ears to hear its sublime melody. Compared to angels they were somewhat spiritually 'deaf' because they had never experienced such sounds. Nevertheless, they wanted to try and at least get a 'glimpse' of the sound. G-d opened their eyes, and they all saw this overwhelming joy, so that even if they could not experience the music itself clearly, they could experience its great happiness. Thus, they pressed themselves to hear the voice of the Torah itself. Maybe they would be able to reach that level and understand the exquisite light which is Torah...

Based on Degel Machane Ephraim

Written and compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair To subscribe to this list please e-mail weekly-subscribe@ohr.edu (C) 2002 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

From: Eretz Hemdah [SMTP:eretzhem@netvision.net.il] Parshat Yitro This edition of Hemdat Yamim is dedicated to the memory of R' Meir benYechezkel Shraga Brachfeld o.b.m.

Ask the Rabbi

Question: Am I correctly remembering that there were boys, before bar mitzvah, reading from the Torah at a local synagogue? I have an 9 year old who is anxious to participate. Is it "kosher" for a pre-bar mitzvah child to read from the Torah? Are there other parts of the service that he can do?

Answer: The gemara (Megillah 23a) states that a minor may be called for one of the seven aliyot which we have during the reading of the Torah on Shabbat. This view is even codified in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 282:3). However, there are significant limitations. According to the Magen Avraham (ad loc.:6) and Mishna Berura (ad loc.:13), he may only be called for an aliyah but cannot be the ba'al kriyah and enable the congregation to fulfill their obligation through him. This is because of the rule that one who does a mitzva on behalf of another must be as obligated in that mitzva as his friend. A child can have an aliyah only on Shabbat when there are at least seven aliyot (ibid.:11). Only a minority of the seven aliyot can be done by children (ibid.:14). Furthermore, the very widespread practice is that children under bar mitzvah do not receive any aliyot, except for maftir (which isn't common either) (ibid.:12). On a week where a special reading is done for maftir from a second sefer Torah, a minor may not receive that aliyah because it is a separate obligation (Aruch Hashulchan OC 282:10). As we mentioned, minors can have only "additional aliyot" and cannot be used for the core of obligations. Children can lead the services for P'sukei D'zimra, "Anim Zemiro" and the end of Shabbat morning services, and Kabbalat Shabbat. They can also do gelilah. Each synagogue (with its rabbi's guidance) should find the suitable balance between the needs of the adults and the crucial need to make the children feel that they are an important part of its present and future. It is possible that the local synagogue you refer to follows the ancient custom to allow children to have aliyot or that it was maftir which you heard. Could you be referring to a "junior congregation," where children say together much of the prayers (except those parts which require a minyan)? For some children this is positive, while others can do better

sitting with their parents. [Some of the terminology was changed from the original to reflect different levels of background.]

ERETZ HEMDAH Harav Shaul Israeli ztl"l Founder and President
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From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] Subject: Weekly Halacha - Parshas Yisro

By RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT Rav of Young Israel of Cleveland Heights
A discussion of Halachic topics. For final rulings, consult your Rav.
COOKING ON SHABBOS

In order to simplify a very complicated -but very relevant -halachic issue, we will list various situations which arise on Shabbos both at the table and in the kitchen.(1) The reader should be aware that due to the complex nature of the subject, even the slightest change from the exact case described below can change the halachah. In several instances, there is only a hair's-breadth difference between a permissible act and a Biblically prohibited one.

SOME GENERAL DEFINITIONS;

All temperatures are Fahrenheit. Cold -below 60-70 degrees Warm -between 70-80 to 110 degrees Hot -over 110 degrees(2) Scalding -about 140-150 degrees(3) Boiling -212 degrees Cooked -completely cooked, ready to eat. Dry food item -any food item which contains virtually no liquid, e.g., bread, meat, pasta. Liquid food item -e.g., water, soup, sauce, gravy.

SOME GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

No uncooked food items may be placed on or near a fire, or in a vessel that was on the fire so long as that vessel remains hot.

Once a dry food item is fully cooked, it may be reheated [see more details further]. A liquid item which was fully cooked may be reheated only if it is still warm from the previous cooking.

Davar gush, which is a dry, bulky item, e.g., a piece of meat or a potato, retains more heat than does a liquid. When a davar gush comes in contact with another food, the heat it has retained can heat other uncooked foods even after it has been removed from its heat source.

When we refer to items served on a plate, we are referring to items which were placed on the plate by means of a ladle, spoon, etc.

In the cases described below, we often refer to certain processed foods, such as instant coffee or salt, as "cooked". Note, though, that companies may change their manufacturing process and switch to procedures like freeze-drying etc., which are not considered, halachically, as "cooking."

AT THE SHABBOS TABLE IT IS PERMITTED TO... Pour ketchup, mustard or mayonnaise over any hot food served on a plate(4). Pour cold gravy or cold soup on any hot food served on a plate(5). Some poskim hold that unless the liquid is somewhat warm, it should not be poured over a davar gush(6). Pour lemon juice, which is generally cooked before processing(7), into a cup of hot tea(8). Add sugar or salt [or any other previously cooked spice] to any food served on a plate or in a cup(9). Add soup croutons to a bowl of hot soup(10). Add cooked noodles to a pot of hot soup which has been removed from the fire(11). Put pasteurized butter or margarine on a hot potato(12). Some poskim advise against this(13). Place an ice cube or cold water into a cup of hot tea or a bowl of hot soup(14). If the tea or soup is scalding, some poskim advise against this(15). Eat hot cholent, whether it is soupy or lumpy, together with cold cuts or other pieces of cooked, cold meat(16). Dip challah into hot soup or hot cholent(17).

AT THE SHABBOS TABLE IT IS FORBIDDEN TO... Dip a piece of cake or a cookie into hot tea or coffee(18). Place a pickle, or any other uncooked food item, on top of or underneath a hot davar gush. Place a slice of lemon into a cup of hot tea(19). Pour uncooked spices (cinnamon, pepper) on a davar gush(20).

IN THE KITCHEN IT IS PERMITTED TO... Place dry, cold(21) meat, chicken or kugel on top of a soup or cholent pot which is on the blech or in a crock-pot(22). If these items are wrapped in aluminum foil, the foil should be partially unwrapped to avoid the prohibition of hatmanah(23). Place dry, cold meat, chicken or kugel on top of a radiator(24). Place cold foods [dry or liquid, cooked or uncooked] near a fire so that they can be warmed, provided that the foods are placed far enough away from the fire so that they could never become hot(25). Pour hot water from an urn on a baby's cold milk bottle(26); Pour hot water from an urn into a vessel, then place the milk bottle into it(27). The bottle should not be submerged entirely so as to avoid the prohibition of hatmanah(28). Lift off the lid of an urn and replace it, if the water inside was previously boiled(29). Add hot water from the urn to the soup or cholent pot.(30)

IN THE KITCHEN IT IS PROHIBITED TO...(31) Place cold food [dry or liquid, cooked or uncooked] directly on the fire or on any area of the blech where the food could become hot(32). Place cold liquid, such as soup or gravy, near enough to a heat source which will cause it to become hot(33). Place a cold, wet ladle [either from tap water or from previously ladled soup which accumulated in the ladle] into a pot of hot soup, even if the pot is presently not on the fire or blech(34). Pour hot water from the urn directly into a cup containing a tea bag, cocoa or chocolate milk(35). Pour hot water from the urn directly into a cup containing instant tea, coffee or cocoa(36). Place a tea bag in a cup of hot water, or to pour hot water from a cup over a tea bag(37). Add sugar or salt to a pot of hot liquid which was on the fire or blech and then removed(38). Stir hot food in a pot which is on the fire or blech, even if the food is completely cooked(39). Stir hot food in a pot which has been removed from the fire or blech, if the food is not completely cooked(40). Dish out food from a pot which is directly on a flame(41), whether the food is completely cooked or not(42). Even if the

pot is too heavy to pick up and remove from the fire, it is still prohibited to dish out food from a pot which is directly on a flame(43). Cover a pot which is on the fire, unless it is clear beyond a doubt that the food inside is completely cooked(44). Wipe wet hands with a towel, and then drape the towel over an urn or oven(45).

FOOTNOTES: 1 To avoid confusion and for the sake of brevity, all explanations and definitions of technical terms, which are required for a fuller understanding of these halachos, appear only in the footnotes. 2 Contemporary poskim debate the exact intensity of heat for yad soledes bo. It is generally accepted, though, that 110 degrees is the minimum temperature which must be considered yad soledes bo. When yad soledes bo is used for a leniency (i.e., when an item is to be considered cooked before Shabbos so that it may be reheated on Shabbos), 160 degrees is required - Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-3. 3 This is referred to as yad nichveis bo, which, according to some poskim, is hot enough to cook food items even in a kli sheini or shelishi. Many poskim, however, do not agree with this stringency. 4 Since these items are precooked; Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-5. Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:267-8) permit this for other reasons. 5 Based on Igros Moshe, ibid. 6 Since a solid food is treated as a kli rishon, and cold gravy and soup are liquid items which have cooled off and are thus subject to the prohibition of cooking; Harav S.Z. Auerbach, Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:265-268). 7 Even if the lemon juice was not cooked there is room for leniency, since several poskim hold that no beverages become cooked in a teacup. 8 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 149); since it is permitted to reheat cold liquids in a kli sheini. 9 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-5; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 173); Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:257). 10 Many croutons are deep-fried, which is halachically considered as cooked and may be recooked. But this is permitted even for croutons which are baked, since we view the soup bowl as a kli shelishi. 11 Since it is permitted to recook dry items even in a kli rishon. 12 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-6. 13 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1:58). 14 Since water does not become cooked in a kli sheini; Shaar ha-Tziyun 318:68. 15 Chayei Adam, quoted by Mishnah Berurah 318:48. 16 Since the meat is already cooked. 17 Mishnah Berurah 318:47; since it is permitted to cook a baked item in a kli shelishi. Even if the challah is eaten with a davar gush it is permitted, since the davar gush can only "bake" the challah, which is permitted. 18 Rama O.C. 318:5; since it is prohibited to cook a baked item in a kli sheini. 19 Consensus of many poskim (Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-18; Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 150; Harav Y.S. Elyashiv, quoted in Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:221) unlike the Chazon Ish (O.C. 52:19) who tends to be lenient. 20 Since solid food is like a kli rishon. 21 This should not be done for frozen items which have ice crystals on them, since cooking ice is prohibited; Minchas Yitzchak 9:31. 22 O.C. 253:5 and Be'ur Halachah 253:3. See Chazon Ish 37:14 for an explanation of why this does not constitute roasting after cooking. 23 The poskim disagree over whether er hatmanah is a problem in this case: Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-3 and Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Me'or ha-Shabbos 1:86) are stringent, while Harav Y.S. Elyashiv and Harav Y.Y. Fisher (ibid. 84) are lenient. [This also seems to be the view of the Chazon Ish 37:32.] If the purpose of the aluminum foil, however, is to serve as a plate [and not to retain heat], all poskim agree that it is permitted. If more than one piece of aluminum foil is wrapped around the food item, all poskim agree that it is prohibited; see Machazeh Eiliyahu 32. 24 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-34. See preceding footnote concerning hatmanah. 25 O.C. 318:14. 26 Since only the bottle will become "cooked", not the milk inside; Harav M. Feinstein (Sefer Hilchos Shabbos, pg. 289); Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1:50. 27 Mishnah Berurah 318:23; since re-cooking a liquid item in a kli sheini is permitted. Under extenuating circumstances, even a kli rishon which has been removed from the fire may sometimes be used, see Shevet ha-Levi 5:31. 28 Mishnah Berurah 258:2; Minchas Yitzchak 8:17, unlike Shulchan Aruch Harav 318:23 and Chazon Ish 37:32, who are lenient. 29 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-14. It is also permitted to dish out water from an urn. 30 See The weekly Halachah Discussion, pgs. 211-212 for the many details involved. 31 This review does not discuss the opening and closing of thermostat controlled ovens on Shabbos. 32 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-31,32. 33 O.C. 318:14-15. 34 Since cooking or reheating liquids in a kli rishon is prohibited. 35 This is strictly prohibited, since these are foods which were not cooked before Shabbos. 36 Even though instant coffee and tea are generally processed (cooked) foods, several poskim hold that one should not pour hot water directly from a kli rishon over them for several reasons; see Sefer Hilchos Shabbos, pg. 298. 37 Since tea leaves can easily become cooked in a kli sheini, and even by boiling water poured upon them from a kli sheini; Mishnah Berurah 318:39. 38 Mishnah Berurah 318:71, since in the opinion of some poskim, soluble foods dissolved in liquids are in themselves considered liquid and are subject to the prohibition of cooking cold liquids. It is permitted, however, to add precooked seasoning [sugar or salt] to solid food, e.g., a hot potato, since in that case the seasoning does not dissolve - see Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 1, note 173*. 39 Mishnah Berurah 318:118. See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-8 for an explanation of why it is prohibited to stir food which is completely cooked. 40 O.C. 318:18. 41 But if the food is on the blech and not directly over the fire, many poskim permit scooping out food from the pot; Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-11. 42 Mishnah Berurah 318:113. 43 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74-9. See Chazon Ish 37:15, who is somewhat more lenient. 44 O.C. 254:4; 257:4. See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:10, who may hold that it is forbidden to cover a pot which is on the fire even if the food is completely cooked, but other poskim clearly permit this, and Harav Feinstein himself is quoted (The Shabbos Kitchen, pg. 9) as having given oral permission for this. 45 Mishnah Berurah 301:169.

ALSO MAZEL TO RABBI AND MRS YEHOShUA BRESSLER ON THE BIRTH OF A SON.
ALSO MAZEL TOV TO THE PROUD GRANDPARENTS RABBI AND MRS. DONIEL NEUSTADT
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