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With permission, I am attaching this week an article by a guest writer, Rabbi Yehuda Spitz. To Drink or Not to Drink? A Halachic Analysis of Getting Drunk on Purim

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**To Drink or Not to Drink
by Rabbi Yehuda Spitz**

A Halachic Analysis of Getting Drunk on Purim

Can you feel Purim just around the corner? Who isn't eagerly anticipating this annual Yom Tov extravaganza, featuring joyous dancing, Mishloach Manos, colorful costumes, and of course the Megillah reading? However, for many, it is the unique mitzvah to get drunk that they are eagerly awaiting. Since Purim is described in the Megillah [1] as a day of Mishteh (referring to a wine feast) and the Purim turnabout miracle occurred at such wine feasts, there is a rare dispensation from the norm, and an apparent obligation to drink wine. [2] Hopefully, the wine will enable one to experience a sublime, spiritual Purim. [3] Yet, uninhibited drinking may also unfortunately result in catastrophic consequences. If so, what exactly is the Mitzvah of drinking on Purim?

Chayav Inish Livesumei...

The Gemara Megillah (7b) famously rules that 'MeiChayav Inish Livesumei B'Puraya ad d'lo yada bein Arur Haman L'Boruch Mordechai' - a person is obligated to drink and get intoxicated on Purim until he cannot tell the difference between 'Cursed is Haman' and 'Blessed is Mordechai'. The simple meaning is seemingly teaching us that we must get exceedingly drunk on Purim.

Yet, as we will soon see, this assertion is anything but simple.

The very next line in the Gemara tells a fascinating story of Rabba and Rabbi Zeira who got excessively drunk together on Purim. In his drunken stupor, Rabba proceeded to kill ('slaughter') Rabbi Zeira. When he sobered up and realized what he had done, he davened that Rabbi Zeira be brought back to life. His tefillos were answered and Rabbi Zeira rejoined the world of the living. Yet, the next year, Rabbi Zeira refused to join Rabba for his Purim seudah, duly noting that a miracle is not a common occurrence and one may not rely on such miracles.

Although there are different interpretations of this story, with several meforshim explaining that it is not to be understood literally, positing that Rabba did not actually kill Rabbi Zeira, [4] nevertheless, many commentaries are bothered by the Gemara's choice of words. If the ruling is that one must get drunk on Purim, then why is this story, showcasing the potential drastic and tragic consequences of such drinking, featured immediately following? What message is the Gemara trying to impart to us? Additionally, what exactly does it mean that one must drink until "ad d'lo yada bein Arur Haman L'Boruch Mordechai"? What does this enigmatic turn of phrase actually mean?

Ad D'ad D'lo Yada...

As with many other issues in halacha, the answers to these questions are not as simple as they seem. Several authorities, including the Rif and Tur, [5] when codifying this Mitzvah, do indeed use the basic understanding of the Gemara's ruling, that one is required to get so drunk on Purim that he cannot tell the difference between 'Cursed is Haman' and 'Blessed is Mordechai', implying quite drunk.

Yet, Rabbeinu Efraim, cited l'halacha by the Ran and Baal HaMa'or, [6] rules the exact opposite! He maintains that since the Gemara tells the story of Rabba and Rabbi Zeira after the ruling of getting drunk, it is not meant exclusively as a cautionary tale detailing the evils of excessive alcohol imbibement; rather, it is coming to negate the ruling! According to this understanding, it is forbidden to get drunk on Purim!

V'lo Ad B'Chlal!

A different explanation of the Gemara is that drinking "ad d'lo yada bein Arur Haman L'Boruch Mordechai" does not actually mean getting stone-cold drunk. In fact, most commentaries offer many different rationales as to the Gemara's intent with this phrase.

Some say it means drinking until one can no longer perform the mental acrobatics necessary to be able to add up the Gematria of Arur Haman and Baruch Mordechai [7] (Hint: they both equal 502!). Accordingly, this is a much lesser degree of drunkenness. Others explain it means drinking until one can no longer decide which was a greater miracle: the downfall of Haman or Mordechai's meteoric rise in prominence. [8] Another interpretation is to drink enough to no longer be able to recite a lengthy Purim-themed Alef-Bais acrostic poem in the proper order. [9] An additional understanding is that one must get inebriated just enough to no longer be able to properly thank Hashem for the many miracles of our salvation Purim time. [10] It is clear that many authorities throughout the generations felt uncomfortable with the literal interpretation of the Gemara's teaching to get drunk on Purim, and each one interprets the instruction as such that it does not imply one's getting fully drunk.

Rav Manoach Hendel of Prague, [11] a contemporary of the Maharshal's (mid 1500s), cites many of these explanations to elucidate the Gemara's intent. Interestingly, what they all have in common is that not a single one of them understands the Gemara to mean actually getting drunk! Utilizing any of these aforementioned opinions would mean that one should definitely not 'get plastered'. Rather, one should only drink a bit, somewhat more than he usually would, [12] until he fulfills one of these understandings of the dictum of ad d'lo yada.

In fact, although the Shulchan Aruch seems to imply that he agrees with the Tur's interpretation, that one must get drunk, it must be noted that in his Beis Yosef commentary he completely rejects this approach, exclusively citing Rabbeinu Efraim and the Orchos Chaim, [13] who refers to getting drunk on Purim as 'ain lecha Aveirah gedolah mi'zu', the worst of Aveiros, and concludes that one should merely drink a tad more than he is accustomed to. This apparently means that when he codified the halacha in the Shulchan Aruch as drinking until "ad d'lo yada", this should be understood in the light of his writing in the Beis Yosef, and not 'getting wasted', as many mistakenly believe.

Just Sleep It Off

The Rambam[14] offers an alternate approach. He maintains that one must drink until he falls asleep. Meaning, if one drinks and then falls asleep he has fulfilled his Mitzvah of drinking on Purim “ad d’lo yada” without actually getting drunk. When asleep, one certainly cannot distinguish between Arur Haman and Baruch Mordechai! This also fits well with his famous ruling in Hilchos Dei’os about one who gets drunk being a ‘sinner and a disgrace’.

The Rema[15] when codifying the proper amount to drink on Purim, combines both of the latter approaches: drinking somewhat more than one is accustomed to regularly, and then going to sleep.

So...What’s the Halacha?

Many contemporary Gedolim personally followed the Rema’s shittah, including the Chofetz Chaim, the Steipler Gaon, and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach.[16]

It should be noted that several prominent authorities who do rule that one should actually get drunk, including the Ya’avetz, Sha’arei Teshuva, Chayei Adam, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, and Kaf Hachaim,[17] add an important caveat. If one might come to be lax in the performance of even one other Mitzvah, such as Netillas Yadayim, Bentching or Davening while drunk, they all maintain that it is preferable not to drink at all, to ensure that all of one’s actions remain l’sheim shamayim.

The Pri Chodosh cites several opinions regarding drinking on Purim and concludes that already in his time several hundred years ago (late 1600s), with society’s decline over the generations, it is proper to follow the opinion of Rabbeinu Efraim, and only drink a small amount more than usual. This way one will be certain not to chas veshalom unwittingly transgress any prohibitions, and result in receiving blessings from Hashem. Not a daas yachid, the Pri Megadim, Aruch Hashulchan, and Mishna Berura[18] all rule like the Pri Chodosh l’maaseh.

If this was the case several centuries ago, how much more relevant is the Pri Chodosh’s prophetic words nowadays, with teen alcoholism on the rise and not a year going by without hearing horror stories about the tragic results of excessive drinking on Purim? In fact, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l[19] decried the leitzonus and zilzul that unfortunately has replaced Simcha shel Mitzva and become the norm among many, due to extreme intoxication. And, more recently, Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky has publicly stated that “it is an Aveira to get drunk on Purim”.[20]

In the final analysis, whichever opinion one follows, it seems that Hatzolah has it right with their annual Purim message: ‘Don’t get carried away this Purim!’[21] [22]

The author wishes to acknowledge excellent articles on this topic by Rabbi Moshe Brody, Rabbi Yehoshua Pfeffer, and Rabbi Binyomin Radner.

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For any questions, comments or for the full Mareh Mekomos / sources, please email the author: yspitz@ohr.edu.

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[1] Esther (Ch. 9: verse 19 and 22).

[2] See Abudraham (Hilchos Purim), Shu”t Radbaz (vol. 1: 462), Elya Rabba (Orach Chaim 695: 1), Chayei Adam (vol. 2, 155: 30), Tzror Hachaim (Haderech Hashmini, Midrash L’Purim pg. 120-121), Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (142: 6), Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 695: end 6) and Biur Halacha (695 s.v. chayav). However, there are those who maintain that one need not get drunk exclusively with wine. See also Mikraei Kodesh (Purim, 44: in the footnotes), Orchos Rabbeinu (vol. 3: Purim, 92) and Shu”t Rivevos Efraim (vol. 1, 395: 2; vol. 3, 465: 1; and vol. 7, 360: 1).

[3] As Rav Shlomo Wolbe (AleI Shur vol. 2: pg. 468) wrote about Rav Yisrael Salanter on Purim. See the Maharal M’Prague’s Ohr Chodosh (pg. 221) for an interesting assessment why we drink on Purim, explaining that by drinking we are negating ourselves, which shows that our existence is totally from Hashem, similar to the time of

the Purim miracles. Another idea is that the wine serves as a catalyst to draw us close to one another, as the Gemara in Sanhedrin (103b) states “Great is drinking... for it brings together those who are distant”. See Rav Chaim Friedlander’s Sifsei Chaim (Moadim vol. 2, pg. 205) at length.

[4] For different interpretations of what Rabba actually did to Rabbi Zeira if not kill him, see Meiri (Megillah 7b), Maharsha (Chiddushei Aggados to Megillah 7b), Ya’avetz (in his glosses to Megillah 7b), Halichos Shlomo (Moadim vol. 1, Ch.19: end footnote 77), and Shu”t Teshuvos V’Hanhagos (vol. 4: 173).

[5] Rif (Megillah 3b) and Tur (Orach Chaim 695, 2). Although the Rosh (ad loc. 8) also uses this choice of words in his ruling, he adds the piyut cited in Tosafos (ad loc. s.v. d’lo), implying a lower level of drunkenness is required. See footnote 9 at length. Other Rishonim who also maintain that the halacha is to get completely drunk include the Ravyah (end 564; cited by the Haghos Maimoniyos - Hilchos Megillah Ch. 2, 15: 2 and Maharil - Shu”t 56) and the Sefer HaMinhagim of Rav Yitzchak Isaac Tyrnau [Tirna] (Hilchos Purim; cited in Darchei Moshe, Orach Chaim 695: 1). However, it is important to note that they hold that doing so is a Mitzvah and not an outright obligation. The Rema, in his commentary to Megillas Esther, Mechir Yayin (pg. 95) writes several possible explanations to drinking “ad d’lo yada bein Arur Haman L’ Boruch Mordechai”, and astoundingly all are the exact opposite of how he rules l’maaseh. They include that one should start drinking on Purim while very young, before reaching the age of understanding the difference between Haman and Mordechai, but once he gets older and understands, he shouldn’t drink on Purim anymore, as Eliyahu Hanavi stated (Brachos 29b) ‘don’t drink and you won’t come to sin’. Alternatively, he posits that “ad d’lo yada” refers to drinking ‘harbeh me’od’ until one gets ‘as drunk as Lot’, as therefore even if one sins, he will be patur. This is why, he postulates, that the Gemara told the story of Rabba and Rabbi Zeira - to show that if one gets so drunk (lishkruso shel Lot) that he kills someone - he is not held liable! On the other hand, if one drinks and does not get that ‘plastered’, it is considered that he did not drink at all, and would be held accountable. However, and quite importantly, it must be strongly stressed that the Rema only wrote these as possible sevaros and actually rules quite conversely. An additional rationale to get exceedingly drunk on Purim is cited in Rav Aryeh Pomeranchik’s Emek Bracha (pg. 126, Seudas Purim s.v. shamaati) quoting Rav Yisrael Salanter. He puts forth the notion that the ikar Mitzvah is to drink and get drunk; ergo if one was drunk and sobered up, he has not fulfilled the Mitzvah, and is required to get drunk again. In other words, the Mitzvah is not to get drunk, but rather to be drunk, as a Mitzvah Kiyumis, as according to this understanding ad d’lo yada is just a shiur to patur the Mitzvah, not to actually fulfill it. Rav Pomeranchik attempts to fit this pshat in with the Rambam’s choice of words (Hilchos Megillah Ch. 2: 15) ‘v’shoseh yayin’ (to drink wine - using the present tense), but notes that both Rashi and the Tur use the term ‘lehishtaker b’yayin’, meaning to get drunk - not to keep getting drunk. It is worthwhile to note that this is a novel approach to the Rambam’s ruling, as the Rema, among others, definitely does not understand the Rambam that way. Additionally, it would create a stirah between the Rambam’s own words in Hilchos Dei’os (Ch. 5: 3; see footnote 14). Rav Pomeranchik concludes with the words of the Brisker Rav that since the pasuk states ‘Mishteh V’Simcha’, it means that ‘Mishteh’ in itself is essentially its own Mitzvah, even without ‘Simcha’, and it is this specific Mitzvah of Purim that Chazal established the parameters as ad d’lo yada. [The author wishes to thank his talmid, R’ Moshe Sanders, for pointing out several of these invaluable sources.] On the other hand, this assessment is not so simple, as Rav Betzalel Zolty (Shu”t Mishnas Yaavetz, Orach Chaim 79) explains this pasuk differently. He maintains (in order to answer up the Magen Avrohom’s kushya (Orach Chaim 696: 18) on the Shulchan Aruch regarding getting married on Purim), that ‘Mishteh V’Simcha’ refers to a ‘Mishteh shel Simcha’, meaning the only Simcha mandated on Purim is the Simcha of the Mishteh, but not that they are separate Mitzvos. See also Rav Asher Weiss’s Minchas Asher on Moadim (vol. 2, Purim, 28: 7, Simchas Purim) who argues, explaining that the full quote in the pasuk is ‘Yemei Mishteh V’Simcha’, implying that that there is a Mitzvah on Purim to rejoice in any manner of Simcha, not necessarily bound to the Mitzvos of Purim. He explains that this bears out from the Gemara’s referencing (Megillah 5b) of (and the Shulchan Aruch’s later ruling of - Orach Chaim 696: 1) a Binyan and Netiyah shel Simcha, which are not Purim-related, yet are nonetheless permissible to build on Purim as they are still Simcha related.

[6] Rabbeinu Efraim’s shittah is cited l’halacha by the Ran (Megillah 3b in the Rif’s folios s.v. meichayav), Baal HaMa’or (ad loc.), and Shitas Rivav (R’ Yehuda ben Brechya; ad loc.). It is also cited by many later authorities including the Beis Yosef (Orach Chaim 695: 2 s.v. mitzvah), Bach (ad loc. s.v. u’lfa’d), Taz (ad loc. 2), and Pri Chodosh (ad loc. 2). See also Korban Nesanel (Megillah Ch. 1: 10) who writes similarly.

[7] This approach is cited by the Agudah (Purim 6), Rabbeinu Yerucham (Toldos Adam, Nesiv 10, vol. 1: pg. 62c), Chochmas Manoach (Megillah 7b), Darchei Moshe (Orach Chaim 695: 1), Ba’er Hagolah (ad loc.), Magen Avrohom (ad loc. 3), Pri

Megadim (ad loc. Eshel Avrohom 3), Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 3), and Shaar HaTziyud (ad loc. 5).

[8] See Biur HaGr"a (ad loc. s.v. chayav), Yad Efraim (ad loc. s.v. chayav), Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 4), and Mishna Berura (ad loc. 4).

[9] The idea that Gemara's intent was not simply to know the difference between "Arur Haman L'Boruch Mordechai" but rather reciting a lengthier acrostic, implying that a much lesser degree of inebriation is mandated, is brought by Tosafos (Megillah 7b s.v. d'lo) and the Rosh (ad loc. 8), citing the Yerushalmi (Megillah, Ch. Bnei Ha'Ir, Halacha 5). A similar assessment is cited by many authorities, including the Abudraham (Hilchos Purim), Sefer Ha'Eshkol (Hilchos Megillah 8), Sefer HaMinhagim (Purim), Chochmas Manoach (in his commentary to Megillah 7b), Darchei Moshe (Orach Chaim 695: 1), Rashash (in his commentary to Megillah 7b), Maharsham (ad loc.), and Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 695: 3), who explain that there used to be a common lengthy Purim-themed Alef-Bais acrostic poem recited on Purim. Accordingly, this understanding of "Arur Haman L'Boruch Mordechai" is to drink enough to no longer be able to recite this piyut in the proper order; a feat that would not entail much drinking at all.

[10] See Taz (Orach Chaim 695: 1) and Mishna Berura (ad loc. 4). Several later authorities seem to combine this understanding with that of the Gr"a's. For different and fascinating hesberim into why we drink on Purim, see Rav Yitzchok Hutner's Pachad Yitzchok (Purim, Inyan 6), Rav Chaim Friedlander's Sifsei Chaim (Moadim vol. 2, Maamar 'Ad D'lo Yada'), and Rav Moshe Sternbuch's Shu"t Teshuvos V'Hanhagos (vol. 4: 173). See also Netivos Shalom (Purim, pg. 57- 58) who offers a completely separate understanding of the Gemara. He notes that the Gemara does not say 'livsumei' with wine, rather 'livsume' in Purim, meaning that one should get intoxicated from Purim itself, as in the connotation of Yeshaya (Ch. 51:21) "drunk, but not from wine." On Purim a person must become so "drunk" on the elevated revelations of Purim that he cannot tell between the 'Arur Haman' and 'Boruch Mordechai' of his Avodas Hashem, his interpersonal relationships, and himself.

[11] In his Chochmas Manoach commentary to Gemara Megillah (7b).

[12] Many authorities cite this as correct, some stating 'ad v'lo ad b'chlal', meaning yes, one should drink more than usual, but one should definitely not actually get drunk. See Meiri (Megillah 7b s.v. chayav), Kol Bo (45), Nemukei Yosef (Megillah 7b), Korban Nesanel (ad loc. 10), Rema (Orach Chaim 695: 2), Yad Efraim (Orach Chaim 695: 2), Sefas Emes (Megillah 7b), Biur Halacha (695 s.v. ad), Sha'arim Metzuyanin B'Halacha (vol. 3, 142: 11), and Shu"t Shevet Halevi (vol. 10, 107: 2). However, and interestingly, the Bach (695 s.v. u'lfad) concludes that one should still drink 'harbeh' but not get actually drunk.

[13] Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 695: 2), Beis Yosef commentary (ad loc. s.v. mitzvah), Rabbeinu Efraim (ibid.), and Orchos Chaim (Hilchos Purim 38). Interestingly, the Maharsha, in his Chiddushei Halachos (Megillah 7b) implies this way as well. On the words to explain the chiyuv of "ad d'lo yada", he simply writes, 'v'ayin B'Beis Yosef, v'kal lahaveen', implying that this is the proper explanation. See also his comments to Bava Metzia 23b, where he alludes to this as well, that one should not actually get drunk on Purim. However, from the Rema's choice of words (v'yesh ommim) it seems that he understood that the Shulchan Aruch was actually contradicting his own psak in the Beis Yosef, and he therefore felt the need to actually spell out the correct psak - the conclusion in the Beis Yosef, synthesized with the Rambam's shitta - see footnote 15. The Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 6) as well, asks this as a stira on the Shulchan Aruch and even concludes tzarich iyun. Yet, afterwards, in parenthesis, he writes 'v'ulai yifrshu ad v'lo ad b'chlal', meaning there truly is no contradiction, but the Shulchan Aruch's intent all along was to drink more than usual, but not to get drunk.

[14] Rambam (Hilchos Megillah Ch. 2: 15 and Hilchos Dei'os Ch. 5: 3; see also Hilchos Shevisas Yom Tov, Ch. 6:20). See Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 695: 2) for hesber. This is also the opinion of the Mahari Brin (quoted in the Darchei Moshe, Orach Chaim 695:1).

[15] Rema (Orach Chaim 695: 2). See Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 2) for hesber. The Rema's approach seems to be a synthesis of the Kol Bo's shitta (45) and the Rambam's. For how to optimally fulfill the Mitzvah this way see Mikraei Kodesh (Purim 44), Orchos Rabbeinu (vol. 3, pg. 57), Shu"t Moadim U'Zmanim (vol. 2: 190), Chazon Ovadia (Purim. ppg. 175 - 178), and Rav Chaim Kanievsky's Igeres HaPurim (Ch. 6: 10). On this Rema, the Vilna Gaon (Biur HaGr"a ad loc. s.v. v'yesh ommim) references several Gemaros (Pesachim 113b and Yoma 74b - 75a) that refer to the evils of getting drunk, strongly implying that this is the proper ruling. The Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. end 6) as well, after much shakla v'tarya, concludes that this is the correct course of action to take on Purim.

[16] Many Gedolim personally followed the Rema's shittah, including the Chofetz Chaim (see Hanhagos HaChofetz Chaim pg. 181), the Steipler Gaon (see Orchos Rabbeinu vol. 3, pg. 57), and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (see Shalmei Moed pg. 288).

[17] Ya'avetz (in his Amudei Shamayim Siddur; cited by the Sha'arei Teshuva 695: 2), Chayei Adam (vol. 2, 155: 30), Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (142: 6), and Kaf Hachaim (Orach Chaim 695: 15 and 16). See also Biur Halacha (695 s.v. ad). The Kaf Hachaim adds that still one should at least drink a small amount of wine to fulfill the words of the Megillah (Esther Ch. 9, verse 19) 'Yemei Mishteh V'Simcha'.

[18] Pri Chodosh (Orach Chaim 695: 2), Pri Megadim (ad loc. Mishbetzos Zahav 2), and Mishna Berura (ad loc. 5). The Aruch Hashulchan deals with this topic extensively (ad loc. 1 - 6), citing several opinions, questions and possible answers. Yet he concludes 'u'lmaaseh yeish l'hisrachek min hashichrus...v'rak l'shtos mi'at yoser m'limudo v'lishan ketzas', that bottom line one should distance himself from intoxication, and should rather drink a bit more than he is accustomed to and then go to sleep.

[19] Halichos Shlomo (Moadim vol. 1, Ch.19: end footnote 77).

[20] See here: <http://www.vosizneias.com/49255/2010/02/12/new-york-rabbi-shmuel-kaminetsky-%E2%80%9Ccit-is-an-aveira-to-get-drunk-on-purim%E2%80%9D/>. Perhaps a smach to his shitta (that Livesumei is referring to sniffing) can be found in Rabbeinu Gershom's interpretation of the word (Bava Basra 73b s.v. v'damo). Thanks are due to Rabbi Tzvi Price for pointing out this invaluable source.

[21] See here: <http://www.hatzolahems.org/safety/purimsafetyposter.pdf>.

[22] Especially as the Mordechai (Megillah Ch. 1: 789; cited in Darchei Moshe ibid.) writes 'v'adif yomei d'Puraya m'Yom Shenitnah bo Torah'. Just something worthwhile to think about.

From: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> date: Thu, Mar 9, 2017:

Who Is Honoured?

Britain's Former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks Tetzaveh is the only sedra from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy, that does not contain the word "Moses". For once Moses, the hero, the leader, the liberator, the lawgiver, is offstage. Instead our focus is on his elder brother Aaron who, elsewhere, is often in the background. Indeed virtually the whole sedra is devoted to the role Moses did not occupy, except briefly – that of priest in general, high priest in particular.

Why so? Is there any larger significance to the absence of Moses from this passage? The commentators offered many suggestions. One of two offered by R. Jacob ben Asher (1270-1340, author of the code known as the Tur), relates this week's sedra to an event at the beginning of Moses' leadership: his encounter with God at the burning bush (Ex. 3-4). Moses repeatedly expressed reluctance to undertake the mission of leading the people out of Egypt. Finally we read:

But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and He said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do." (Ex. 4:13-15)

The Sages say that it was this hesitation on the part of Moses that caused part of his role – as potential high priest – to be taken from him and given to his brother. R. Jacob ben Asher concludes that Moses' name is missing from Tetzaveh "to spare him distress" on seeing Aaron acquire the insignia of priesthood that might have been Moses' own.

Without negating this or other explanations, there may be a more fundamental message. As I have mentioned before, one of the recurring themes of Genesis is sibling rivalry, hostility between brothers. This story is told, at ever-increasing length, four times: between Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers.

There is an identifiable pattern to this set of narratives, best seen in the way each ends. The story of Cain and Abel ends with murder, fratricide. Isaac and Ishmael – though they grow up apart – are seen together at Abraham's funeral. Evidently there had been a reconciliation, though this is told between the lines (and spelled out in midrash), not directly in the text. Jacob and Esau meet, embrace and go their separate ways. Joseph and his brothers are reconciled and live together in peace, Joseph providing them with food, land, and protection. Genesis is telling us a story of great consequence. Fraternity – one of the key words of the French revolution – is not simple or

straightforward. It is often fraught with conflict and contention. Yet slowly, brothers can learn that there is another way. On this note Genesis ends.

But it is not the end of the story. There is a fifth chapter: the relationship between Moses and Aaron. Here, for the first time, there is no hint of sibling rivalry (some developed later – Bamidbar ch. 12 – but was resolved by Moses’ humility). The brothers work together from the very outset of the mission to lead the Israelites to freedom. They address the people together. They stand together when confronting Pharaoh. They perform signs and wonders together. They share leadership of the people in the wilderness together. For the first time, brothers function as a team, with different gifts, different talents, different roles, but without hostility, each complementing the other.

This is conveyed by the Torah in two striking phrases. The first is in the passage already cited above. God says to Moses: Aaron “is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you.” How different this is from the tense encounters between brothers in Genesis. Aaron, we may have thought, might have many reasons not to rejoice on seeing Moses return. The brothers had not grown up together. Moses had been adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and raised in an Egyptian palace. Nor had they been together during the Israelites’ sufferings. Moses, fearing for his life after his assault on an Egyptian taskmaster, had fled to Midian. Besides this, Moses was Aaron’s younger brother, and it was he who was about to become leader of the people. Always in the past, when the younger had taken something the elder might have believed belonged naturally to him, there was jealousy, animosity. Yet God assures Moses: “When Aaron sees you, he will rejoice”. And so he did (Ex. 4:27).

The second intimation is contained in a strange text, tracing the descent of Moses and Aaron:

Amram married his father’s sister Jochebed, who bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years. . .? It was this same Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, “Bring the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions.” They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing the Israelites out of Egypt.? It was the same Moses and Aaron. ?(Ex. 6:20, 26-27).

The repeated phrase, “It was this same”, is emphatic even in translation. It is all the more so when we note two peculiarities of the text. The first is that the phrases, though at first they sound identical, in fact place the names of the brothers in a different order: the first phrase says “Aaron and Moses”, the second, “Moses and Aaron”. Even more striking is the grammatical oddity of the phrase. Both times, the third person singular is used. Literally, they read: “He was Aaron and Moses”, “He was Moses and Aaron”. The text should have said, “They” – all the more so since the pronoun “they” is used in the middle of the passage: “They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh”.

The unmistakable implication is that they were like a single individual. They were as one. There was no hierarchy between them: sometimes Aaron’s name appears first, sometimes Moses’. On this there is a wonderful midrash, based on the verse in Psalms (85:11) “Loving-kindness and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.”

Loving-kindness?– this refers to Aaron. ?Truth?– this refers to Moses. Righteousness?– this refers to Moses.? Peace?– this refers to Aaron. (Shemot Rabbah 5:10)

The midrash brings proof-texts for each of these identifications, but we understand them immediately. Moses and Aaron were quite different in temperament and role. Moses was the man of truth, Aaron of peace. Without truth, there can be no vision to inspire a nation. But without internal peace, there is no nation to inspire. Aaron and Moses were both necessary. Their roles were in creative tension. Yet they worked side by side, each respecting the distinctive gift of the other. As the midrash goes on to say:

“And he kissed him” [the brothers kissed when they met] – This means: each rejoiced at the other’s greatness. (Shemot Rabbah ad loc)

A final midrash completes the picture by referring to this week’s sedra and the vestments of the High Priest, especially the breastplate with its Urim and Tumim:

“His heart will be glad when he sees you” – Let the heart that rejoiced in the greatness of his brother be vested with the Urim and Tumim. (Shemot Rabbah 3:17)

It was precisely the fact that Aaron did not envy his younger brother but instead rejoiced in his greatness that made him worthy to be High Priest. So it came to pass – measure for measure – that just as Aaron made space for his younger brother to lead, so the Torah makes space for Aaron to lead. That is why Aaron is the hero of Tetzaveh: for once, not overshadowed by Moses.

“Who is honoured?” asked Ben Zoma (Avot 4:1). “One who honours others.” Aaron honoured his younger brother. That is why Moses (not mentioned by name but by implication) is told in this week’s sedra, “Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him honour and splendour” (Ex. 28:2). To this day a Cohen is honoured by being first to be called up to the Torah – the Torah that Aaron’s younger brother Moses gave to the Jewish people.

The story of Aaron and Moses, the fifth chapter in the biblical story of brotherhood, is where, finally, fraternity reaches the heights. And that surely is the meaning of Psalm 133, with its explicit reference to Aaron and his sacred garments: “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down upon the collar of his robes.” It was thanks to Aaron, and the honour he showed Moses, that at last brothers learned to live together in unity.

http://halachipedia.com/index.php?title=Mishloach_Manot

[Ed. R' Ike Sultan]

Mishloach Manot

There is a mitzvah of Mishloach Manot to give a gift of two foods to another Jew on Purim. [1]

What is the primary purpose of Mishloach Manot?

Some say that the primary purpose is to increase friendship amongst Klal Yisrael, and some say that it is to ensure that every Jew has food for Seudat Purim. [2]

How many Mishloach Manot should one give? There’s an obligation to send one gift called Mishloach Manot, consisting of two foods, to one person on Purim. [3] After fulfilling one Mishloach Manot according to the halacha, one may give more even if they don’t fulfill all the stringencies of Mishloach Manot. [4] Anyone who increases in sending Mishloach Manot is praiseworthy. [5] Some explain that we’re supposed to give gifts in order to increase friendliness and spread kindness and peace among Jews. [6] Others explain that the obligation is meant to supply people with food for the Purim Seuda especially those who are poor and are embarrassed to ask for money. [7]

When should it be done? Mishloach Manot should be given during the day of purim and not the night. [8] It is preferable to give it before eating the Seudat Purim. [9] One should ensure that the recipient notices that he received it before sunset. [10]

What’s called two portions? To fulfill the obligation of Mishloach Manot, one must give two foods. One food which is cut into two pieces is not considered two foods. [11] Two food with two different tastes is considered two different foods. [12] After fulfilling Mishloach Manot according to the halacha, one may give more even if they don’t fulfill all the stringencies of Mishloach Manot. [13]

What type of foods? The food being sent should be cooked or ready to eat, however, some permit even if it’s raw but at least the animal has been slaughtered properly (shechita). [14] Canned food is considered ready to eat and is acceptable. [15] Preferably, one should send Mishloach Manot that are significant according to the wealth of the giver. [16] If the receiver of the

Mishloach Manot is wealthy, it's proper that the Mishloach Manot be according to his honor. [17] Many say that each food should be something that could serve as a course in a meal. [18] If one sends bread it counts as one food and only one other is required. [19] A filled pastry only counts as one food, and another food item is required. [20] Deli and Sardines can be used for Mishloach Manot. [21] If one sent food that is kosher but the receiver doesn't hold of that hechsher, one fulfills the obligation. [22] A drink counts just like a food, but some are strict to give two foods. [23] One cannot fulfill his obligation by sending meat to a vegetarian.[24] Non-foods One doesn't fulfill the obligation with anything that's non-food, such as clothing or cigarettes. [25] Some say women who send to other women fulfill their obligation by sending clothes. [26] One doesn't fulfill the obligation by sending money. [27] Additionally, one doesn't fulfill their obligation by sending Chiddushei Torah. [28] Some say that one may fulfill one's obligation by sending candies to someone with diabetes or food that the receiver is allergic to, or unhealthy foods to someone on a diet. [29] One fulfills the mitzvah by sending fruit that grew with Kedushat Shemitta as long as one lets the receiver know that they are Kedushat Shemitta. Similarly, if one received Mishloach Manot from one person, one may return Mishloach Manot to that person with fruit with Kedushat Shemitta. Some say that one should only do so after one already fulfilled the mitzvah with giving one other Mishloach Manot. [30] If one sent a slaughtered bird and it turns out to be Taref one needs to send another food in its place. [31] If one sent Mishloach Manot and it was stolen one should resend the Mishloach Manot. [32]

How the gift is sent Some say that one should give Mishloach Manot through a Shaliach (messenger), while others say that this is unnecessary. [33] One fulfills the obligation by sending the Mishloach Manot through a child or non-Jew. [34] If the person receiving the gift doesn't want to accept, nonetheless, the giver has fulfilled his obligation. [35] However, others argue that one hasn't fulfilled his obligation. [36] It's preferable to give the two portions of Mishloach Manot at once and not one after another. [37] If one gives Mishloach Manot as a gift on the condition that it must be returned one does not fulfill one's obligation. [38] If one gives Mishloach Manot through an institution and one will pay later, one fulfills the mitzvah. [39] If one gave the Mishloach Manot and the receiver didn't know until after purim, one didn't fulfill one's obligation. Therefore, one should ensure that the recipient notices that he received it before sunset. [40]

Who is obligated? Women are obligated to fulfill Mishloach Manot. [41] However, if she's married she may fulfill her obligation if her husband sends more than one. [42] If partners or a community send Mishloach Manot together, some say that each partner must contribute the value of 2 portions, whereas others hold that even if altogether the Mishloach Manot is complete, each person fulfilled their obligation. [43] If a Mishloach Manot is addressed to a group of people such as a family one should make sure that there's 2 separate foods per person of the group. [44] A Yeshiva student who receives a portion of food in the cafeteria can fulfill Mishloach Manot by giving it to a friend. [45] Children who have reached the age of chinuch, should be taught to give Mishloach Manot [46]

To whom is the gift sent? Some say that one doesn't fulfill the obligation if someone who celebrate purim of the 14th sends Mishloach Manot to someone celebrating on the 15th and visa versa. [47] Some poskim say that one shouldn't send mishloach manot to a child who isn't at the age of bar mitzvah. [48]

Challah If one kneads the amount of dough to take Challah even if one plans on separating the dough as long as one isn't concerned about the pieces touching one another, one should remove Challah without a Bracha. [49] If one receives a lot of baked goods and put them together in a basket or in the refrigerator one doesn't have to take Challah as it's considered as if they have combined. [50]

Sources 1. The obligation of Mishloach Manot is explicit in Megillat Ester 9:22 and S"A 695:4. Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 142) writes that it's obvious one doesn't fulfill one's obligation by sending to a non-Jew as he is not included in Reyeyhu. 2. The first reason is found in the Manot

HaLevi (Ester 9:20) and the second in Trumat HaDeshen 111 3. Gemara Megilah 7a, Rambam (Megilah 2:15), Tur and S"A 695:4. While the Ben Ish Chai Parashat Tetzaveh 16 says not to put the different foods into one bowl since it may be that this combines them into one kind, Halachot Shlomo 2:19 as well as Teshuvot vihanagot 2:346 disagree. 4. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 133) writes that after one gave one Mishloach Manot, one may send more even if they don't fulfill the strict laws of Mishloach Manot (unlike the Torat Avigdor who holds that all of the Mishloach Manot have to be according to the halacha). This seems to be supported by the Mishna Brurah 695:22. 5. S"A 695:4 6. Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz (Manot HaLevi, Ester 9:20, pg 208a) 7. Sh"t Trumat HaDeshen 111. To see more pilpul about these reasons see Sh"t Chatom Sofer 196, Katav Sofer 141:2, Sh"t Shevet Sofer 23, Sh"t Binyan Tzion 44, Sh"t Afarkasta DeAniya 25, Sh"t Bet Sharim 385. 8. Darkei Moshe 695:7 quotes Mahari Brin (based on the Rosh Megilah 1:6) who says that there's only an obligation of Mishloach Manot during the day. The Rama codifies this in 695:4. Mishna Brurah 695:22 writes that only one must be given during the day, however, if one wants to give more Mishloach Manot one may give them at night. Rav Ovadyah in Chazon Ovadyah (pg 140) and Yalkut Yosef 695:4(2) holds like the Rama. 9. Rav Shlomo Zalman (Halichot Shlomo 19:9) writes that one shouldn't eat before fulfilling Mishloach Manot because it is like other mitzvot which one may not eat before fulfilling. Moadim UZmanim 2:186 agrees. However, Chazon Ovadyah (pg 135) writes that the implication of the Rambam and S"A who mention Seudat Purim before Mishloach Manot is that it is permitted to eat before Mishloach Manot. He adds that it is proper to give it before the meal. Tzitz Eliezer 15:32(15), Az Nidbaru 6:65, and Mishna Halachot 6:122, 7:92 agree. 10. Aruch HaShulchan 695:16 writes that if the recipient doesn't return home during the day and doesn't know about it, even if his family accepts it for him, the giver doesn't fulfill his obligation. Yalkut Yosef 695:4(28) agrees. However, Moadei Yeshurun (pg 59) quotes Rav Moshe Feinstein as saying that if a woman accepted Mishloach Manot on her husband's behalf, the giver fulfills his obligation, even if he didn't know about it on Purim 11. Aruch HaShulchan 695:14, Chazon Ovadyah (purim pg 125) 12. Halichot Shlomo 19:12 13. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 133) writes that after one gave one Mishloach Manot, one may send more even if they don't fulfill the strict laws of Mishloach Manot (unlike the Torat Avigdor who holds that all of the Mishloach Manot have to be according to the halacha). This seems to be supported by the Mishna Brurah 695:22. 14. Maharil, Magen Avraham 795:11, Eliyah Rabba 695:8, Maaseh Rav (Siman 240), Chaye Adam 155:31, and Aruch HaShulchan 695:15 all hold that one must send a food that's cooked and ready to eat. However, Pri Chadash 695:4 holds that it's enough that it's slaughtered even if it's raw. Kodeshei David Chassan 695:4, Sh"t Shelat Yacov 61(1), Gefen Poriah (Megilah 7b), Sh"t Shevet Sofer 23, Netsiv in Emek Shelah (Siman 67:9), and Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 118) holds like the Pri Chadash. Mishna Brurah 695:20 brings both opinions. 15. Moadim UZmanim Volume Siman 186 16. Sh"t Tzitz Eliezer 8:14:4, Chazon Ovadyah (pg 129) 17. Chaye Adam (vol 3, 155:31) quotes the Yerushalmi which implies that to fulfill one's obligation the Mishloach Manot must be according to the honor of the receiver. However, Beir Halacha (695 s.v. Chayav), Halichot Shlomo (pg 336), and Chazon Ovadyah (pg 129) hold that it's only preferable. 18. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 129-31) learns from Megillah 7b that one should send enough food that could serve as a meal. Aruch HaShulchan 695:15 writes each food should be significant. Similarly, Rabbi Schachter (3/4/09 "Hilchos Purim", min 56-8) said each food should be something that could serve as a course in a meal or one can invite a guest for a meal. 19. Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 128), Kaf HaChaim 695:42 20. Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 128) 21. Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 118), however, Moadim UZmanim (Rav Moshe Shternbach, vol 2 siman 54) has a doubt regarding deli (or foods that can last more than one day). 22. Sh"t Kinyan Torah 7:55 writes that one fulfills the obligation even according to the Trumat HaDeshen since he could sell it. Nishmat Avraham 695 quotes Rav Shlomo Zalman who also holds that you fulfill your obligation. Piskei Teshuvot 695:20 writes that if one sends kosher food but the receiver doesn't eat because of a chumra one fulfills one's obligation. 23. Trumat HaDeshen 111 writes that a drink counts just like a food. Many achromim agree including Magen Avraham 695:11, Mishna Brurah 695:20, Pri Chadash 695:4 (D"H Katuv BeTrumat), and Aruch HaShulchan 695:14. However, Chazon Ovadyah (pg 124) writes that it's preferable to give two foods, not including drinks, because of the opinion of Rabbeinu Chananel (Megilla 7b). Kovetz Halachot 17:9 says that water or seltzer would not count as one type. 24. Sh"t Rivivot Ephraim 6:387. see also Halichot Shlomo 19:11 and Nishmas Abraham page 324 regarding sending sugary foods to a diabetic 25. Darkei Moshe 695:7 quotes the Maharil that it's preferable to send food and not other items. However, the Darkei Moshe also quotes the Sh"t Trumat HaDeshen 111 who writes that one doesn't fulfill their obligation with anything other than food and drinks. This is also the opinion of the Eliyah Rabba 695:9, Mishna Brurah 695:20, and Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 120) write that only food can be used and not clothing or other things against the Sh"t Halachot Ketanot 163 (quoted by Bear Hetiev 695:9), Nahar Shalom 695:2, and Sh"t Mei Yehuda 86. Similarly, Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 120-3), Sh"t Tzitz Eliezer 9:33, and Sh"t Tirosch VeYitzhar 171:4 write that one doesn't fulfill their obligation with cigarettes. However, Sh"t Divrei Yisrael (Waltz) 1:223 holds that one fulfills their obligation with cigarettes. See also Sh"t Rivivot Ephraim 3:473:2 26. Sh"t Bet Sharim OC 380 since the gifts that women enjoy nowadays is clothing, one fulfills their obligation by sending clothing. Sh"t Mishneh Halachot 4:91 (D"H VeTzipiti) also supports this idea. However, Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 121), and Sh"t Haychalei Shen (3rd edition, siman 8) argue that in order to fulfill the obligation of sending manot, even for women one must send food and not clothing in order to fulfill one's obligation. 27. Sh"t Trumat HaDeshen 111 writes that such is implied from the Rambam who mentions money by Matanot LeEvyonim but not by Mishloach Manot. However, the Sefer Charedim (Siman 713) and Sh"t Halachot Ketanot 2:163 allow sending money. Sh"t Yechave Daat 6:45, Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 120), Maharsham in Daat Torah (Siman 695), Erech HaShulchan (695:2), and Sh"t Shtat Yacov 61 hold like the Trumat HaDeshen. 28. Chazon Ovadyah (Purim pg 123), Sh"t Mishneh Halachot 4:91 29. Sh"t Yabia Omer (additions) 9:74, Halichot Shlomo 19:11, Piskei Teshuvot 695:20 30. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 154), Yalkut Yosef (HaSheviyit pg 423), Halichot Shlomo (vol 2 19:10) 31. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 150) 32. Yalkut Yosef (Moadim pg 337, Kitzur S"A 694:4(50)) 33. Sh"t Binyan Tzion 44 writes that based on the simple translation of Mishloach, he had a question if one fulfilled Mishloach Manot by giving it directly. He concludes that one fulfills one's obligation because giving it directly satisfies both reasons (see note 2). Teshuvot VeHanagot

2:346 writes that this seems to be a dispute in the Rishonim. Gemara Megilla 7b says that Abaye and Rabbi Chanina would exchange their meals on Purim. Rashi Megilla 7b explains that they switched off eating at each other's Seudot. Bet Yosef 695:4 asks on Rashi how they fulfilled Mishloach Manot. Darkei Moshe 695:7 defends Rashi saying that the word "mishloach" is imprecise and there's no difference in sending food and providing food for a guest. However, Rambam (Megillah 2:15) and Ran 3b explain each person sent his meal to his friend and his friend to him in order to fulfill Mishloach Manot, implying it needs to be sent. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 143-5) quotes Rav Ezra Attiah, who argues on the Binyan Tzion based on Kiddushin 23b which says that there's no Shelichut if one couldn't do it oneself. Rav Ovadyah answers that this only applies when the sender isn't chayav in that mitzvah; however, all Jews are chayav in Mishloach Manot. Mishna Brurah 695:18 quotes the question of the Binyan Tzion. Chatom Sofer on Gittin 22b and Yafeh Lelev 695:19 insist on having a messenger. However, Maadani Shlomo (pg 121) quoting Chazon Ish, Chazon Ovadyah (pg 143), Sh"t Tzitz Eliezer 9:33, Sh"t Yehuda Yaaleh OC 207, Eshel Avraham 695, Sh"t Nachalat Binyamin 136, Sh"t Elef Lecha Shlomo OC 383, Sh"t Yad HaLevi OC 118, and Rabbi Sobolofsky (3/8/09 "Mishloach Manos- Fact and Fiction") hold one doesn't need a messenger. See also Sh"t Yabia Omer 9:71 who writes that one can rely on a Shaliach to fulfill his mission. Rav Yisroel Belsky (Piskei Harav Belsky page 122) is cited as ruling that although the majority of poskim maintain that one may deliver Mishloach Manos himself, nonetheless, one should send at least one set of Mishloach Manos with a messenger to accommodate all opinions. 34. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 145-6), Mekor Chaim 694, Chatom Sofer (Gittin 22b) 35. Rama 695:4 36. Chatom Sofer 196, Pri Chadash (quoted by Mishna Brurah 695:23) 37. Chida in Kikar LeAden (pg 21b) writes that from the ??? one must send both portions at once. Chazon Ovadyah (pg 131) writes that preferably one should give both portions together. 38. Halichot Shlomo 19:13, Chazon Ovadyah (pg 133), Yalkut Yosef (Kitzur S" A 694:4(4) 39. Halichot Shlomo 19:14 40. Aruch HaShulchan 695:16 writes that if the recipient doesn't return home during the day and doesn't know about it, even if his family accepts it for him, the giver doesn't fulfill his obligation. Yalkut Yosef 695:4(28) agrees. 3. Moadei Yeshurun (Purim pg 59) quoting Rav Moshe disagrees with the Aruch HaShulchan. See, also, Adar VePurim (pg 158) who quotes Rav Moshe Feinstein as saying that if a woman accepted Mishloach Manot on behalf of her husband, even if he didn't know about it on Purim, nonetheless, the giver fulfills his obligation. 41. Rama 695:4 writes that women are obligated in Mishloach Manot against the Pri Chadash (end of 695). The Pri Megadim (695 A" A 14), Aruch HaShulchan 695:18, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:4, Ben Ish Chai (Parshat Titsaveh #17), Chaye Adam (Vol 3 155:33), Kaf HaChaim 695:53, Mishna Brurah 695:25, and Chazon Ovadyah (pg 140) all hold like the Rama. 42. Magen Avraham 695:14 writes some women rely on their husband to send Mishloach Manot for them however he concludes that women should be strict and fulfill the mitzvah themselves. The Magen Avraham is quoted by the acronym including Chaye Adam (Moadim 155:33), Kitzur S" A 142:4, Mishna Brurah 695:25 43. Halichot Baytah 24:25 (also quoted in Halichot Shlomo 19:15 and 19:17 pg 337-8) in name of Rav Shlomo Auerbach writes that a woman can fulfill her obligation by a joint gift with her husband to someone else if there's a contribution of 2 Manot per person, whereas Chazon Ovadyah (pg 137-8) writes that it's sufficient if altogether there's a proper Mishloach Manot. 44. Halichot Shlomo 19:15 45. Halichot Shlomo 19:16 46. Pri Megadim 695:14 47. Moadim UZmanim (vol 2 siman 186) 48. Ben Ish Chai Parshat Tetzaveh Halacha 16 and Kaf Hachaim 694:12. Aruch HaShulchan 695 on the other hand permits it 49. Halichot Shlomo 19:18 50. Halichot Shlomo 19:19

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Rabbi Benjamin Yudin Inside Out

If clothes do not make the man they certainly influence the man. A policeman who dons his uniform consciously or not is donning upon himself not only specific and unique garments that identify his profession, but responsibility and commitment to others. This is one of the many items on the long list of "we had it first" ideas that the Torah teaches. The Kohanim in the Beis Hamikdash, we are taught in Parshas Tetzaveh, wore special garments, "l'chavod u'l'sifares - for honor and splendor" (Shemos 28:2). At first glance this is to be understood as honor for the One they served, and honor for the House in which they served. Indeed, this is the way the Sefer HaChinuch (99) understands this mitzvah. I'd like to suggest however, that in addition these special garments, unique to the Kohanim, brought out their honor and splendor.

The Ibn Ezra in his interpretation of the l'chavod u'l'sifares notes, "sheyisparau bahem - that their honor may be revealed through them." Rashi famously comments regarding Aharon's lighting of the menorah, (Bamidbar 8:3) "melamed shelo shina - this teaches us that he did not deviate." The Sfas Emes z"tl understands this to mean he did not deviate from his initial excitement and commitment; the privilege of lighting the menorah never became a routine matter. Perhaps his donning of the priestly garments which, as the Ramban notes, reflected royalty, assisted him in maintaining his incredible focus. Indeed, Reb Yochanan referred to his garments as, "m'chabdusai -that which honors me" (Shabbos 113a.)

Clothing plays a most important role in the Sanctuary, as we are taught, "while clad in Priestly garments their Kehuna responsibilities and effectiveness as officiating is valid" (Zevachim 17b); without the exact prescribed attire of the Kohen, they are no better than a zar (a non-Kohen) and their service would be invalidated.

An additional appreciation of clothing may be learned from the laws of Shabbos and Yom Tov attire. The Talmud (Shabbos 113a) teaches that one's garments for Shabbos should be better and different than those worn during the week, and if possible one's attire for Yom Tov should be even of a better class. A possible reason for this was explained by the Rav z"tl, that on Shabbos Hashem comes to visit us and we dress accordingly. On Yom Tov when we go to visit Him, if possible we upgrade the clothes to mark the specialty of the occasion. Here too our donning Shabbos and Yom Tov clothing brings out a greater respect and appreciation for Shabbos, and in turn elevates our persona on these holy days.

It is interesting to note that regarding the forthcoming holiday of Purim there is an old custom to masquerade in costumes and conceal our true identity. The B'nei Yissaschar in Ma'amarei Chodesh Adar (9) suggests the following explanation for the custom: the Gemara (Megillah 12a) teaches that the Jews were guilty of bowing down to the statue of Nevuchadnetzar, but they only sinned on the surface. That is to say, they feigned serving the idol, while in their hearts they remained loyal to Hashem. Hashem acted midah k'neged midah and therefore feigned a threat to (G-d forbid) destroy the Jewish nation in order to scare and arouse the Jewish nation to teshuva; there never was a Divine plot to destroy His people. We therefore masquerade at the time of the Purim Seudah, thus demonstrating and proclaiming the message that we need to learn from, and rectify, the past. They failed to have their inner resolve prevail over their actions; their penimius did not influence their chitzonius.

Purim was a day of v'nahafoch hu - topsy-turvy, and what appears on the surface was not genuine. The Talmud (Megillah 12a) teaches that King Achashveirosh, to celebrate that the Jews would not be rebuilding their Temple nor returning to their land, clad himself in the bigdei Kehuna to defiantly mock the Jews by saying they would no longer be needing these garments.

The Jew relives his past, he does not only remember it. It is not enough to recall that those who left Egypt ate matzah, rather we also eat matzah. We remain awake all night on Shavuos, anxiously awaiting our receiving the Torah. We reside in Sukkos. It is thus most appropriate that we masquerade on Purim, laughing at and mocking the outer trappings and behavior of the another individual, and thereby reminding ourselves that the penimius, i.e. the inner core, commitment, and image of G-d and true character is what saved the Jewish nation at Purim, and reminding us that this is to be our true perspective and identity all year long.

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subject: Rabbi Reisman's Chumash Shiur

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Tzav 5774

Let me share with you a Purim thought or two. We have the expression which comes from a Posuk that we have in the Megillah 8:16 (לְיְהוּדִים, הַיְהִי אֹרֶז וְשִׂמְרָה, וְשִׂשְׁוֹן, וְיִקָּר) Jews celebrated. For some reason which is hard to explain this is part of Havdalah. What does it have to do with the weekly Motzoei Shabbos Havdalah (וְיִקָּר, וְשִׂשְׁוֹן, וְשִׂמְרָה, וְאֹרֶז). It is a nice thing, however, it seems to be totally unrelated to Havdalah. Rav Zelig Epstein said the following Pshat. Rav Zelig explained that the Yevonim wanted Klal Yisrael to assimilate with them (לְיְהוּדִים הִיחָה אֹרֶה) Zu Torah (אֹרֶה זֶה תוֹרָה). The Gemara in Maseches Megillah 16b (24 lines from the bottom) says that Ora represents the light of Torah. (שְׂמֵחָה זֶה יוֹם טוֹב) Simcha Zu Yom Tov, (שִׂשְׁוֹן זֶה מִילָה) Sason Zu Milah, (וְיִקָּר אֵלּוּ תַפְלִין) Yikar Eilu Hatefillin. These are a reference to four Mitzvos, the Mitzvos being Torah, Yom Tov, Milah, and Tefillin. These are all things which separate Klal

Yisrael from the Umos Haolam, from the nations of the world. The Gemara in Maseches Sanhedrin 59a (2nd line from the top) says (ואמר ר' יוחנן עובד) כוכבים שעוסק בתורה חייב מיתה שנאמר תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה לנו מורשה ולא (להם). A non-Jew is forbidden from learning Torah She'bal Peh. Yom Tov, we know that (Sanhedrin 58b 3 lines from the bottom) (ואר"ל עובד כוכבים) Nachri Sheshavas is also Chayuv Misah although this refers to Yom Tov rather than Shabbos, Yomim Tovim are more specific to Klal Yisrael. The Yomim Tovim are a Zeicher to Yetzias Mitzrayim. Milah is the Os Hab'ris that is Madchin between a Yid and not a Yid. And of course Tefillin, Chazal say (ויקר אלו תפלין וכן הוא אומר וראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ד') (נקרא עליך ויראו ממך) (ל'יהודים, ה'תה אורה ושמחה, ו'ששן, ו'יקר) is Shayich to Purim because these four Mitzvos specifically were Mitzvos that the Yevonim sought to rid Klal Yisrael of. They are Mitzvos that are Boruch Hamavdil Bain Yisrael La'amim. They are a Havdalah between Klal Yisrael and the nations. Now of course it is simple that this belongs in Havdalah. Rav Schorr in the Ohr Gedalyahu (in the Moadim volume on page # 98 Os 4) brings (ל'יהודים, ה'תה אורה ושמחה, ו'ששן, ו'יקר) why doesn't it say Layehudim Osah Torah, V'yom Tov, Umilah, and Tefillin. Why does it hide these Mitzvos with words that only hint at them? Rav Schorr answers in the name of Sfas Emes. He says that Klal Yisrael always had Torah and Milah, Tefillin, and Yom Tov. However, we find that Haman said regarding the Jews (ל'שנו עם-אחד) that Mitzvos they do it by route. They do it out of habit. They no longer have the Zechus of doing Mitzvos with a Cheishek, and with a Bren. After the Neis of Purim, Klal Yisrael fixed that. (ל'יהודים היתה אורה) Orah Zu Torah. They didn't just learn Torah they saw Torah as their light. The same thing with Yomim Tovim. Many people when it comes to Yom Tov do what they have to do and they try to go to sleep and run away after Havdalah. That didn't happen. After the Neis of Purim it became (שמחה זה) (ישנו טוב מילה). The same thing, Klal Yisrael had an enthusiasm for Bris Milah. (ויקר אלו תפלין) People put on Tefillin every day out of habit. Do we see Tefillin as Yakar, something of great value? We should. Therefore, the Yom Tov of Purim is a time of great Cheishek. Whereas all other Yomim Tovim are Yomim Tovim that Jews unfortunately run away from. After Pesach they are running to get their pizza. After Shabbos it is a Bizayon in the Shuls how people are running to get away from the Shabbos as early as possible. There is friction over having an early enough Minyan. Chazal said Tosafos Shabbos, well we say how much Tosafos Shabbos do we need. When it comes to Purim it is not that way. If you noticed, when Purim goes out it is developing its warmth, its frenzy, and its delight. People who run around all day giving Mishloach Manos and being Osek in the Mitzvah come evening time to their Rabbeim, to their parents, to their grandparents, they get together and have a Cheishek. The Mishna Berura has to caution people stick to a Seuda which has its main foods by day because people push it into the night. But Kach Heim Hadevorim. Purim is different than the other Yomim Tovim. The other Yomim Tovim unfortunately are not with the right Bren. Purim is with a Bren, with a drive, with a desire. Don't let yourself fall to the Yeitzer Hora on Purim to let it be with a coldness, without the warmth that Purim deserves. Attach yourself to Purim, connect yourself to Purim. Show up at your Rabbeim's Purim Seuda whether you are invited or not. Just knock on the door, or don't knock on the door, just go in and be part of the Purim. If they look at you as if it is inappropriate just pretend to be drunk. When a person is drunk he can do whatever he wants. Make sure that there is a warmth to Purim, a Cheishek to a Purim, a drive to a Purim. It is all about Chamimus and Kiyum Hamitzvos, a warmth in doing Mitzvos properly. That is the idea regarding Purim which unfortunately we sometimes overlook.

And so, as we prepare for Parshas Zachor and for Purim, I want to wish one and all a meaningful Purim, a Purim with Cheishek and with drive. The best way to get ready for Purim of course is that right after Taanis Esther going straight to the Bais Hamedrash for a Mishmar. Of course that is the way to do it.

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

from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com> reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

In My Opinion PURIM Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

The Megillah of Esther itself tells us that the memory and commemoration of the days of Purim will continue until eternity and never disappear from Jewish life. Extraordinarily, the Talmud expands this statement to mean that even at the end of days when the other commandments of the Torah may no longer be necessary because of the exalted state of spirituality within the Jewish nation and mankind as a whole, the commemoration and memory of the days of Purim will continue even then. Jews live with a constant Purim story unfolding in all generations and over all time. The story of Purim, as it has come down to us through the writings of Mordechai and Esther, is a story replete with individual characters whose personalities and actions define the story itself. These characters are prototypes for later personalities, ideas, plots and events that occur throughout history. Every generation is charged with reviewing the story of Purim in its time and to see the events and characters of its generation in the light of the grand heavenly scheme that Purim represents. Surveying today's scene and events, I think that I can identify someone who can fill the bill as far as King Achashveirosh is concerned. I can also cast someone as a humble and destroyed Queen Vashti. There also are an abundance of tyrants, haters and corrupt officials who certainly can represent Haman in our current reconstruction of the Purim story. Even some of the minor characters of the Megillah, such as Charbonah can be discerned in our current world. But my fantasy Purim story has, as of yet, been unable to fit in the two main characters, the heroic figures that make the story of Purim timeless and eternal. Who is to play the roles of Mordechai and Esther in our current Purim scenario? Where are they when, seemingly, we need them most? Against all odds, ignoring advice from friends and threats from foes, Mordechai will not kneel nor bow down to false gods and cruel tyrants. Queen Esther for her part risks life and limb, position and honor, wealth and comfort, to come to the aid of her people in their hour of need. She is a Jewess first and only secondarily is she the queen of Persia. These two people, Mordechai and Esther, have set very high standards for Jewish behavior for all later generations. Criticized from within and persecuted from without, they persevered and through their loyalty and commitment to the Torah, people and the Jewish nation, brought about salvation and triumph. There are such people amongst us today as well. Our task is to recognize and identify them, strengthen them in their efforts and support them against the misguided other Jews and non-Jews. All of us have the ability to fill in our own playbill with the characters – the heroes and villains, if you will – and construct our own current living Purim story. We live in momentous times where miracles abound for the Jewish people. Just as in the original Purim story the miracles were hidden and not necessarily obvious to all, so too is this the case in our time as well. It apparently requires dangerous circumstances to bring about some semblance of Jewish unity. Even then, there are always those who dissent, carp and criticize. They were present in Persia long ago when the original Purim story unfolded, and they exist today in various forms, organizations and institutions. They always profess great human goals and deep concern for the future of the Jewish people while at the same time taking actions that are detrimental to the Jewish present and outrightly dangerous to the Jewish future. Mordechai and Esther are a little too Jewish for them. They are too brash, too stubborn, too clannish and are unnecessarily provocative. Mordechai and Esther in their time did not receive universal approbation. It is only history, in its unfolding of events, that has proven them correct and heroic. We cannot expect that people who aspire to be Mordechai and Esther in our time should be universally accepted, loved, admired.... and followed. This is a reality of Jewish and human life that must be accepted and factored into the general pursuit of the good and noble. Hidden miracles abound in our current world as far as the Jewish people are concerned. Anyone who has the good fortune of living in the Land of Israel today instinctively realizes this on a daily basis. Let us strengthen ourselves and be determined and strong as our current Purim story unfolds around us. Shabbat shalom Purim sameach Berel Wein

from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com> reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

TETZAVEH – ZACHOR

Although it is obvious from the context of the previous parts of the Torah that when the Torah states “and you shall command” the you referred to is

Moshe, nevertheless the name of Moshe does not appear in this week's Torah reading. Many explanations, ideas and commentaries have been advanced over the ages as to why his name is absent from this portion of the Torah. His name is so intertwined with the Torah that he transmitted to us, that the absence of his name strikes a perplexing and even jarring note. Since there are no mere coincidences or accidents of language and style in the Torah, this issue of the absence of the name of Moshe in this week's Torah reading merits our attention and understanding. There is an element of Moshe's phenomenal modesty certainly present here. Moshe strove all of his life to prevent Jewish belief from becoming the cult of the personality. Moshe always made it clear that he was only the conduit for the transmission of God's word to the people of Israel and that the Torah was of Heavenly origin and not the work of his mind and pen. Thus it would be completely in character for him to allow an entire portion of his teachings to Israel to appear without his name being attached to it. The Torah is represented by the great candelabra and the light that emanated from it. The fuel that fed that light – the pure olive oil, came from all of the Jewish people collectively and not from Moshe alone. It is completely understandable that the intrinsic modesty of Moshe would be reflected by the absence of his name being associated with this holy fuel and light. The Torah reading of this week coincides with the Shabbat of Zachor. Amalek comes to destroy the Jewish people in their infancy as a nation. There has always been a tendency in the Jewish world to somehow ascribe the hatred of Jews by certain sections of the non-Jewish world to the acts, policies or personalities of the leaders of the Jewish people. In the story of Purim, the Jews of Persia blamed Mordechai for the decrees and enmity of Haman. But Haman certainly is not satisfied with destroying Mordechai alone. He meant to destroy Mordechai's Jewish critics as well. To our enemies, the hatred is never exclusively personal. To them, a Jew is a Jew, no matter what or whom. Thus the fact that this week's Torah reading coincides with Shabbat Zachor indicates to us that the problem is not Moshe or any other leader or individual Jew. Even when Moshe and his name are absent from the scene, Amalek, and its hatred and violence towards Jews, is present and dangerously active. There is a tendency in the Jewish world to cast blame upon our leadership - national, organizational and religious - for all of the outside ills that befall us. Our leadership must always be held up to scrutiny and critical standards of personal behavior and national policy. However, the outside forces that arise in every generation to attempt to destroy us do so even when our leaders are blameless and even absent from the scene completely. Shabbat shalom
 Rabbi Berel Wein

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 http://www.ravaviner.com/ Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim From the teachings of the
 Rosh Yeshiva Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a*

Rav Shlomo Aviner Purim which falls on Motzei Shabbat

Question: What are the special Halachot for when Purim falls on Motzei Shabbat?

Answer: 1. Bringing the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat: We do not read the Megillah when Purim falls on Shabbat (though nowadays only Shushan Purim can fall on Shabbat). This was decreed in order to prevent people from carrying the Megillah into a public domain (which is forbidden on Shabbat). There are later authorities who forbid carrying the Megillah on Shabbat even within a private domain on account of it being Muktzeh (something that may not be moved on Shabbat), but most authorities disagree and permit it (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 688 and Mishnah Berurah #18). There is, however, a problem with bringing the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat when Purim falls on the next day because of the prohibition of preparing on Shabbat for a weekday. If one does bring the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat, it should be brought inconspicuously, and one should be sure to learn something from it at Shul on Shabbat itself (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 141:17. Aruch Ha-Shulchan, Orach Chaim 693:3).

And it is permissible on Shabbat to prepare for reading the Megillah. It is not considered preparing on Shabbat for a weekday, since it is learning Torah (Shemirat Shabbat Ke-Hilchata Chapter 28 note #169). 2. Children Dressing in Purim Costumes on Shabbat: Children may dress up in a costume on Shabbat before they come to Shul, since they will have enjoyment from the costume on Shabbat itself. It is therefore not considered as if one were preparing on Shabbat for a weekday. This is obviously on the condition that there is no part of the costume which is Muktzeh, and it does not involve painting, [forbidden] tying, and other similarly forbidden things. Adults, however, may not wear costumes on Shabbat, since many authorities rule that it is preparing on Shabbat for a weekday (Shalmei Todah - Purim of Rav Pelman #42. Kaf Ha-Chaim 529:3, 551:93). And it is also not honoring Shabbat. 3. Noisemakers on Shabbat: Noisemakers are definitely forbidden on account of Muktzeh. And even if they are not Muktzeh, one may not bring them because of preparing on Shabbat for a weekday, since one cannot rely on the solution of using them on Shabbat itself, as making noise from any type of instrument, object, etc. on Shabbat is forbidden (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 80:87). Summary: It is permissible to bring a Megillah to Shul while it is still daytime on Shabbat, provided that one learns something from it. It is permissible for children to dress up in a costume while it is still day time, but it is forbidden to bring noisemakers.

from: Rabbi Yissocher Frand <ryfrand@torah.org> to: ravfrand@torah.org
 subject: Rabbi Frand on Parsha **Rav Frand The Omission of Moshe's Name is a Tribute to His Self-Sacrifice** Moshe Not Mentioned In Tezaveh: The Tribute of Anonymity There is a very famous statement of the Baal HaTurim in this week's parsha. The Baal HaTurim notes that this is the only parsha in the Torah after the birth of Moshe that does not mention his name. The Baal HaTurim attributes this to Moshe's offer "Erase me from your book that you have written" when he was pleading on behalf of the Jewish people after the sin of the Golden Calf. When a wise man utters a curse — even a conditional curse — the curse is destined to be fulfilled. This is the fulfillment of Moshe's self-curse. Ironically, every year, the reading of this parsha falls out during the week of the Yahrtzeit [anniversary of the death] of Moshe Rabbeinu. This is a strange Baal HaTurim. Moshe's pleading on behalf of the Jewish people was a very noble deed. As a result of his efforts, the Jewish people were saved. The Succas Dovid cites a Zohar that if Noach would have waged such a forceful argument to G-d on behalf of his generation, the Flood would have never occurred. It does not seem fair that Moshe should be punished for such heroic efforts. The Succas Dovid consequently explains that the omission of Moshe's name in Parshas Tezaveh is not a punishment. It is the price, however, that he was willing to pay. He knew that offering "erase me from the Book You have written" was going to cost him. But he said, "I do not care. I am more worried about the Jewish people than about my honor." The omission of Moshe's name from Parshas Tezaveh is not a punishment. It is the tribute to the self-sacrifice of Moshe Rabbeinu, who was willing to have his name erased from the Torah, in order to save the Jewish people. There are two places where the Torah mentions accolades about Moshe. One place is in Parshas BeHaaloscha after Miriam and Aaron apparently spoke against Moshe and G-d chastised them. The other place is in Parshas V'zos HaBracha, where the Torah relates Moshe's final obituary. Seemingly, these are the only two places where the Torah provides testimony to Moshe's greatness. The Baal HaTurim is teaching us that there is a third parsha that speaks volumes about the character and qualities of Moshe Rabbeinu. Parshas Tezaveh shows us how much Moshe Rabbeinu loved the Jewish people. He loved them so much that he was willing to forgo having his name in this parsha of the Torah in order to save them. Parshas Tezaveh provides 'silent testimony' to the greatness of Moshe. It illustrates the ultimate self-sacrifice that the leader had for his people. That is why it is not ironic, but rather most appropriate that this tribute should be paid to Moshe, specifically on the week of his Yahrtzeit.

rom: Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu> subject: Torah Weekly *Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Tetzaveh Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com For the week ending 11 March 2017 / 13 Adar II 5777 Insights Ner Tamid — The Everlasting Light “Pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually” (27:20)*

In last week’s haftarah it says that King Shlomo made the windows of the Beit Hamikdash wide on the inside and narrow on the outside (Melachim 6:4). Usually the reverse would be correct: The windows should be broad on the outside to let in as much light as possible, but narrow on the inside to focus and concentrate the light.

Why did King Shlomo depart from normal building practice?

The Beit Hamikdash was not in need of light. The world needed its light. The two Batei Mikdash illuminated the world with spirituality.

The first Beit Hamikdash stood for 410 years. In Hebrew we would write that as $\times^{am}\times^{TM}$. The second Beit Hamikdash stood for 420 years — $\times^{am}\times$. Those four letters spell the word, “ $\times^{a}\times^{TM}\times^{ap}$ ”, meaning “pressed.”

“Pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually.”

Even though the light of the first two Batei Mikdash was “ $\times^{a}\times^{TM}\times^{ap}$ ” — it was ‘pressed’ into only 420 years — the Third Beit Hamikdash will “kindle the lamp continually”. It will radiate light to the world forever. Sources: based on Toldot Yitzchak in Mayana Shel Torah © 2017 Ohr Somayach International - all rights reserved

http://www.ou.org/torah/author/Rabbi_Dr_Tzvi_Hersh_Weinreb from: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb *OU Torah The Leader's Clothing Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb*

Nowadays, all leaders look the same. Their typical garb is a dark business suit, a white or pale blue shirt, and a tie with a dash of color. They dress no differently from any other successful entrepreneur or professional. They wear no distinguishing sign to identify them as leaders, as men in positions of great power and responsibility.

There was a time when this was not so. Kings and queens dressed in royal cloaks and regal gowns, and they wore crowns upon their heads, clearly conveying that they were entitled to wield authority over others. Even lesser officials, mayors of small villages and local judges, dressed distinctively, thus setting themselves apart from their constituencies, aloof from the masses.

At this time of year, just before the joyous holiday of Purim, we become keenly aware of the role of the uniforms of royalty. The book of Esther reaches its happy climax when “Mordecai left the king’s presence in royal robes of blue and white, with a magnificent crown of gold and a mantle of fine linen and purple wool.” (Esther 8:15). This new attire mirrored the dramatic change in Mordecai’s position in the Persian Empire: “... All the officials of the provinces... showed deference to the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them. For Mordecai was now powerful in the royal palace, and his fame was spreading through all the provinces...” (Esther 9:3-4).

Long before the Purim story and Mordecai’s rise to power, there lived another leader whose prescribed garb conveyed his special position. I refer to the passage in this week’s Torah portion, Parshat Tetzaveh (Exodus 27:20-30:10). There we read about the special clothing worn in the Tabernacle service by the priests, the kohanim, the sons of Aaron. Of special interest are the unique components of Aaron’s own uniform. Aaron was the High Priest, the Kohen Gadol, the ancestor and the archetype for all future generations of High Priests. A special set of eight garments was designated for his exclusive use. One of these, in many ways the most important of all, was the Choshen Mishpat, commonly translated as “the breast plate of judgment” or “the breast piece of decision”.

As its name implies, this breastplate was prominently suspended above the High Priest’s chest. The details of this sacred item include the following instruction: “Aaron shall carry the names of the Children of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart when he enters the Sanctuary for remembrance before the Lord at all times.” (Exodus 28:29).

The legendary Hasidic master, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, finds this requirement very strange. He asks, “Why the names of the twelve tribes? Don’t we commonly mention only the names of the three Patriarchs when we beseech the Almighty for His remembrance?” Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is aware of the Talmudic passage, which indicates that the names of the twelve tribes supplemented the names of the three patriarchs which were also inscribed upon the breastplate. However, he stresses that Scripture itself only mentions the twelve tribes as having their names engraved upon the gemstones on the breastplate. “Why,” he asks, “the emphasis upon the twelve tribes?”

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s response to his own question is a fascinating one. He writes: “When one individual is selected from a group for a position of importance we are inclined to conclude that that one individual is chosen, and all the others are rejected. The chosen one is loved, and the rejected are despised. Here too, we might erroneously presume that Aaron was the Almighty’s favorite, and the rest of Israel somehow inferior to him. Therefore, the names of all the tribes of Israel were engraved upon the breastplate, indicating that all of Israel was equally beloved by the Almighty.” (Kedushat Levi, Exodus 28:29)

Following Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s exposition, we become aware that, unlike worldly royal attire which proclaims the uniqueness and superiority of the wearer, Aaron’s special clothing was designed to convince him and everyone else that he was in no way superior to those whom he represented. Quite the contrary; the fact that all of the Children of Israel are equally favored by the Almighty is the central message of the sacred breastplate, the Choshen Mishpat.

The era of the Holy Temple is sadly long gone now. There is no longer a High Priest, and although the distant descendants of Aaron still dwell among us and play a role in our rituals, their special clothing is now only a matter of historical interest. Yet, there is a trace of the lesson of the sacred breastplate that has endured.

This trace becomes apparent if one carefully examines the phylacteries, or tefilin, which Jewish men don most mornings of the year. If one gazes carefully at the undersurface of the leather phylacteries he will notice twelve stitches holding the various compartments in place. The halachic authorities inform us that these twelve stitches symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel. (See Mishneh Berurah, 32:51/228).

The person who wears tefilin in our day must meticulously avoid considering himself superior to the rest of Israel, even to those who neglect the mitzvah of tefilin, just as Aaron in his day was to avoid such haughtiness.

There is a fundamental lesson here to be learned by all leaders, of small communities as well as of large nations, whether of the Jewish people or of the world at large. The lesson is that a true leader acts as the leader of all of his constituents and not merely as the leader of those who share his beliefs and convictions.

That Mordecai was such a true leader can be supported by a homiletic analysis of the very final verse of the book of Esther. It reads: “For Mordecai... was highly regarded by his many brethren; he sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his kindred.”

Rashi presents an alternative translation to the phrase, “he was highly regarded by his many brethren” so that it reads, “he was highly regarded by most of his brethren”—that is, most but not all of his brethren. A contingent of Mordecai’s colleagues objected to Mordecai’s involvement in public affairs, which resulted in his diminished involvement in religious matters.

Many are troubled by this interpretation, wondering why the book of Esther would end with a critical remark against the heroic Mordecai. A relatively obscure Hasidic sage, Rabbi Shalom Yosef of Shpikov, creatively brushes aside this difficulty and explains that the entire verse is a salute to Mordecai’s great leadership. Yes, Rabbi Shalom Yosef concedes, Mordecai had his opponents. But nevertheless, “he sought the good of his people,” even those who disagreed with him. And, “he interceded for the welfare of all his kindred”—even those who were his fiercest critics.

Understanding the final words of the Purim story in this manner allows us to see Mordecai as a heroic leader from start to finish. The Megillah begins with an account of Mordecai’s bravery and courage and concern for Esther. It ends with the portrait of a leader who seeks the well-being of all of his people, even of those who are deeply disappointed in him.

Purim is an opportune moment for us all to pray that our contemporary leaders, at every level and of every nation, learn to emulate Mordecai’s example.

<http://torah.org/series/drasha/>

Parsha Parables By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky *torah.org Inconspicuous Assumption Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky*

In this week’s portion Moshe is charged to prepare every detail of the priesthood for his brother Aharon and his descendants. In intricate detail, the sartorial traits of every one of the priestly vestments are explicated, down to the last intertwined threads.

And though Moshe is in charge of setting up the administration and establishing the entire order of service while training his brother and nephews, his name is conspicuously missing from this portion.

Our sages explain the reason for the omission. When Hashem threatened to destroy His nation, Moshe pleaded with Him: “And now if You would but forgive their sin! — but if not, erase me now from Your book that You have

written”(Exodus 32:32) As we all know, Moshe’s plea were accepted. The nation was spared. But Moshe was not left unscathed. His request of written eradication was fulfilled in one aspect. He was left out of one portion of the Torah Tezaveh. Thus the words of the tzadik were fulfilled in one aspect. But why this portion?

Though this English-language publication is not wont to discuss Hebrew etymological derivations, it is noteworthy to mention a thought I once heard in the name of Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef. Moshe’s plea “erase me now from Your book,” bears an explanation. The word sifr’chah, “your book” can be broken down to two words sefer chaf — which means the twentieth book. Thus Moshe was removed from this portion of Tezaveh, the twentieth portion of the Torah.

But why would Moshe intone such omission in this, of all the portions of the Torah? Why not omit his name in the portions that declare the tragic outcome of sin or the calamities of insurrection? Wouldn’t that be a better choice for omission? Why did Moshe allude to having his name omitted in the week he charges Aharon with all the honor and glory that is afforded the High Priest?

Rav Yitzchak Blaser was once seated at a gathering of the most prominent sages of his generation that was held in his city of St. Petersburg.

Among the Talmudic sages present was Rabbi Yosef Dov HaLevi Soleveitchik of Brisk, world renowned for his Talmudic genius. Rabbi Soloveitchik presented a Talmudic question that his young son, Reb Chaim, had asked. After posing the question, a flurry of discussion ensued, each of the rabbis offering his own answer to the riddle, while other rabbis refuted them with powerful rebuttals. During the entire repartee, Rabbi Blaser, who had a reputation as a Talmudic genius, sat silently. He did not offer an answer, nor did he voice approval to any of the answers given by the Rabbis.

When Rabbi Soleveitchik ultimately offered his son’s own solution, Rabbi Blaser sat quietly, neither nodding in approval nor shaking his head in disagreement. It seemed as if he did not comprehend the depth of the insightful discourse. It was as if he was not even there! Bewildered, Reb Yosef Dov began having second thoughts about the renowned Rabbi Blaser. “Was he truly the remarkable scholar that the world had made him out to be?” he wondered.

Later that evening, Rabbi Soloveitchik was in the main synagogue where he got hold of the book “Pri Yitzchok,” a volume filled with Talmudic exegesis authored by none other than Rabbi Blaser himself.

After leafing through the large volume he saw that the afternoon’s entire discourse, his son’s question, the offered and reputed responses, and the final resolution, were all part of a dissertation that Rabbi Blaser had himself published years earlier!

“Now I realize,” thought Rabbi Soleveitchik, “Rabbi Blaser is as much a genius in humility as he is in Talmudic law!”

Our sages tell us that actually Moshe was to have been chosen as the Kohen Gadol in addition to the leader of the Jewish nation. It was his unwavering refusal to accept any of those positions that lost him the opportunity to serve as Kohen Gadol. Instead, Hashem took it from him and gave it to Aharon.

Many of us would have always harped on the fact. How often do I hear the claims “I got him that job!” “I could have been in his position!” “I started that company! Had I stayed, I would be the one with the stock options!” “That was really my idea!”

Moshe, too, could have injected himself as the one who propelled and engineered Aharon’s thrust to glory — especially after a seemingly tainting experience with the Golden Calf. In his great humility, Moshe did just the opposite.

Moshe did not want to diminish Aharon’s glory in any way. He wanted the entire spotlight to shine on Aharon and his great service to Klal Yisrael. Therefore, in the portion in which Moshe charges, guides, and directs the entire process of the priesthood, his name is conspicuously omitted.

One of the greatest attributes of true humility is to let others shine in their own achievement without interfering or announcing your role in their

success. The greatest educators, the wisest parents, and most understanding colleagues know when to share the spotlight and when to let another friend, colleague, sibling, or child shine in their success or accomplishment. They know exactly when to be conspicuously or inconspicuously “missing from the book.” Good Shabbos © 2000 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

The author is the Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore. Dedicated by Ira & Gisele Beer in memory of Harry Beer — L’Iluy Nishmas Reb Zvi Mendel ben Reb Pinchas — 8 Adar Aleph Copyright © 1998 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc.

The Jerusalem Post Parashat Tezaveh: A leader who carries the nation in his heart Shmuel Rabinowitz March 9, 2017 Thursday 11 AdarI 5777

One of the halachot (Jewish laws) regarding wearing the breastplate stipulates that the breastplate must be placed over the Kohen’s heart. This week’s Torah portion – Tezaveh – deals with the clothing worn by the Kohen Gadol, the High Priest, in the Temple.

These were valuable clothes meant to symbolize the Kohen’s respected status and the fact that he was chosen to serve the nation and perform its sacrifices.

One of the pieces of clothing worn by the kohen was the hoshen, the breastplate. This was a square piece of material embroidered with valuable stones that had the names of the Twelve Tribes etched on them. The sages of the Talmud (Tractate Yoma, page 73) teach us that the breastplate was not just a piece of decorative jewelry. It served a practical purpose for the entire nation.

When the nation faced a significant dilemma requiring a decision, they would present the problem to the Kohen Gadol and the answer would be given from God through the stones of the breastplate and the letters etched on them. The etched letters of the breastplate would shine, but not in any logical order that would signify a clear and definitive answer. The Kohen would have to combine the letters that shone and deduce the answer to the dilemma presented to him. This is possibly why this clothing was called urim ve’tumim, referring to the light.

The reason the answer was given in this unclear manner, leaving the kohen to decipher God’s message from the shining letters, is hinted at in our portion.

One of the halachot (Jewish laws) regarding wearing the breastplate stipulates that the breastplate must be placed over the Kohen’s heart.

“...And the breastplate will not move off the ephod. You shall place the urim and the tumim into the breastplate of judgment so that they will be over Aaron’s heart when he comes before the Lord, and Aaron will carry the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the Lord at all times” (Exodus 28:28-30).

This unusual law stipulating where on the Kohen Gadol’s body this clothing must be positioned does not exist with any other item of his clothing. The other items must be worn by the kohen when working in the Temple, but if they move slightly out of place, there is no problem. Only with the breastplate do we find a specific directive that it must not move from its designated place.

This law teaches us about the essence of a true leader. Obviously a leader is obligated to lead his nation wisely, and make decisions after properly considering all the necessary information. But there is another side to this coin. A leader who makes decisions with cold logic only will ultimately end up disconnected from his nation. Analytical considerations do not suffice in determining serious moral issues. Room must be made for feelings as well.

Sometimes rational decisions lead us in a certain direction, but when we listen to the sounds emanating from our hearts, other considerations arise that we did not consider when weighing pros and cons.

Listening to these feelings adds a deeper dimension to decision-making.

A leader must not ignore the feelings of his public; he must make room for the “heart,” feeling his nation’s pain and distress, feeling what they are experiencing on a day-to-day basis, and thus attempting to alleviate their hardships. A leader whose decisions stem from awareness of his nation’s feelings is the one who will arrive at decisions that are beneficial for it.

Only the kohen wears the breastplate etched with the names of the tribes on his heart. He is the one who can combine the shining letters and create the relevant and best answer for the given situation. Only a leader who carries the nation in his heart and is sensitive to its troubles and needs can find the answer, because the decision is based on a combination of factors.

This concept is true for each and every one of us. It is only the person who carries the suffering of others in his heart, who is aware of another’s distress or pain, can help him and offer good advice. *The writer is the rabbi of the Western Wall and Holy Sites. Copyright © 2014 Jpost Inc. All rights reserved*

from: Rabbi Chanan Morrison <ravkooklist@gmail.com> to: Rav Kook List <Rav-Kook-List@googlegroups.com> subject: [Rav Kook Torah]

ravkooktorah.org Accepting the Torah in the Days of Ahasuerus Why did the Sages enjoin us to become inebriated on Purim? Assimilation in Ancient Persia

The Talmud in Megillah 12a states that the near-annihilation of the Jews in the time of Ahasuerus was a punishment for participating in the royal banquet, where they prostrated themselves before Persian idols. What led them to this act of disloyalty?

The Jews of that time believed that the root cause of anti-Semitism was due to a xenophobic hatred of their distinct culture and religion. In fact, this was Haman's explanation for seeking to destroy them: "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every people; neither do they keep the king's laws." (Esther 3:8)

In order to overcome this hatred, the Jews felt that it would be prudent to adopt the customs and ways of their idolatrous neighbors. They demonstrated their allegiance as loyal Persian subjects by attending the royal banquet and bowing down to the Persian idols.

To their consternation, the Jews soon discovered that their efforts were futile. They were shocked to learn of Haman's plot to annihilate them, despite their best attempts at integrating into the local culture. Accepting the Torah Again

With the realization that assimilation is not the answer, and that their only true protection is God's providence, the Jews reaffirmed their commitment to keep the Torah and its mitzvot. This is the meaning of the verse, "They confirmed and accepted upon themselves" (Esther 9:27) — "they confirmed what they had accepted long before" at Mount Sinai (Shabbat 88a).

The Talmud teaches that their renewed commitment to Torah complemented and completed the original acceptance of Torah at Sinai. What was missing at Sinai? The dramatic revelation at Mount Sinai contained an element of coercion. Alone and helpless in the wilderness, the Israelites were hardly in a position to refuse. The Midrash portrays this limited free choice with God's threat to bury them beneath the mountain had they refused to accept the Torah. In the time of Ahasuerus, however, they voluntarily accepted the Torah in a spirit of pure free will, thus completing the original acceptance of Torah at Sinai. Effusion of Good Will

This appears to be the explanation for the unusual rabbinic requirement to become inebriated on Purim (Megillah 7b). It is ordinarily forbidden to become drunk, since without the intellect to guide us, our uncontrolled desires may lead us to improper and unbecoming behavior.

But on Purim, the entire Jewish nation was blessed with an outpouring of good will to accept the Torah. On this special day, we find within ourselves a sincere yearning to embrace the Torah and its teachings. For this reason, we demonstrate on Purim that even when intoxicated we do not stray from the path of Torah, since we are naturally predisposed to goodness and closeness to God. Even in a drunken state, we are confident that we will not be shamed or humiliated by the exposure of our innermost desires. As we say in the Shoshanat Ya'akov prayer on Purim: "To make known that all who place their hope in You will not be shamed, and all who take refuge in You will never be humiliated." (*Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Olat Re'iyah vol. I, p. 441*)

<http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/headlines-breaking-stories/537925/morning-coffee-in-the-wrong-place.html> theyeshivaworld.com Morning Coffee in the Wrong Place Thursday, March 9th, 2017 By Rabbi Yair Hoffman for the Five Towns Jewish Times

Many people have argued about Dunkin Coffee versus Starbucks. It is a battle between the two brands. Some like Starbucks because it is stronger. Others like Dunkin's because it is sweeter. There is a war between their business models too. Dunkin stores are mostly franchises. Starbucks are mostly corporate owned. Who is winning the war? Starbucks has 22,519 stores – Dunkin only 11,500. Starbucks made 16.8 billion dollars last year, Dunkin only 828.9 million.

But this war is not between the two brands. It is between the Shul Gabbaim and both of the brands. This is because of late, many people have been bringing their coffee not only into shul but into davening itself.

They say brachos and have the first intra-davening sip. Before Boruch sh'amar is the second sip. The third sip comes at ashrei. The cup of Joe is half gone by birchas Krias Shma. If it is a latte, then it is half gone only by Ezras Avosainu.

What is the halacha here? Is this permitted? What about if a person is weak or simply cannot function without coffee – would it be permitted for him?

THE FOUR CUPS OF WINE ON PESACH

Perhaps we can find the answer to our question with another question. How come we make four blessings over wine at the Pesach seder? Why are the four cups not covered with one bracha? Rav Amram Gaon (800? to 875) answers this question in his siddur,

and one of his answers is as follows: "Similarly, a group of people celebrating who were seated and established drinking over wine, and got up to pray and prayed. They subsequently returned to drink – they must recite a Borei Pri HaGafen. Why must they do so? They did not remove themselves from that place?"

Rather, since they arose to pray and they may not drink during prayer – it is considered like they interrupted and they must recite the blessing [again]. So too, here. Since he recited the Hagaddah and he may not drink during the hagaddah, it is as if he has interrupted and he must recite the blessing. Because of these reasons each of the cups necessitates its own blessing" One can see clearly from Rav Amram Gaon's words that not only is it forbidden to drink during the Shmoneh Esreh, but even during the other parts of davening. There is no substantive difference between the Hagaddah and davening, and the fact that Rav Amram Gaon compares the two indicates clearly that drinking coffee during Davening is forbidden.

EATING BEFORE DAVENING

There is also a halacha that it is forbidden to eat before davening. This is based upon a Gemorah in Brachos (10b) and is codified in Shulchan Aruch (89:3). It is considered haughty to take care of one's own needs before tending to our obligations toward Hashem. A drink is permitted, according to the Mishna Brurah (89:22). Nowadays, it is even permitted to add sugar and milk to one's coffee, but breakfast before davening, is forbidden unless one is weak or sick (See Minchas Yitzchok Vol. IV #28).

This entire discussion, however, is only for eating and drinking before davening – but no one ever even contemplated the issue during Davening. That is why, the issue is not even touched upon in the Poskim despite the fact that coffee has been around for many centuries.

THE ISSUE OF DOING IT IN SHUL

There is another issue and that is eating and drinking in shul. The Shulchan Aruch 151:1 writes:

"Our shuls and Batei Midrashim, we are not to conduct ourselves within them light-headed activity such as laughter and humor and extraneous conversation. Nor do we eat and drink in them.." The Sefer Yereim (Amud HaKorbanos page 386) brings two explanations for the prohibition of eating or drinking in a shul. One reason is on account of Moreh Mikdash – having the proper awe and reverence for the House of Hashem. The second reason is on account of Me'ilah b'hekdesh – the misuse of Hekdesh. The Bais HaKnesses is singled out as a special place devoted exclusively to Hashem. Eating and drinking inside the shul would be a negation of this. Although some shuls are built with the permission to eat and drink at a Kiddush afterward, in no way did they originally have in mind that one may eat during actual prayers.

It is clear from the verses in Vayikra 26:31 that shuls are considered a Mikdash. It is for this reason that shuls are exempt from the Mitzvah of Mezuzah (See Rambam hilchos Tefillah 6:6). Of course, if a person is truly sick and requires the coffee in order to become healed – then he may drink and eat as necessary. However, there is another issue. People who observe him are unaware that he is sick, and there may also be a Maris Ayin issue where people might think that such behavior is, in fact permitted for healthy people as well.

CHILLUL HASHEM

Finally, there is one last issue and that is the concept of Chillul Hashem. Gentiles are quite careful neither to eat nor drink while in a church. Is it not a grave desecration of Hashem's Name that we, the Jewish people, drink while standing in prayer before the King of all kings? Lest the reader question this last point, Rav Dovid Tzvi Hoffman zt"l (in his Melamed l'Ho'il Orech Chaim Siman 15) cites this very same issue in regard to smoking within a shul. He brings up the idea that gentiles do not smoke in their churches. How then can we do so ourselves?

It is clear from all of the above that we should stop this practice immediately. Whether the coffee is from Starbucks, Dunkin, home-brewed or from any other place – the shul should not be a coffee house. We must also keep in mind that America, indeed, the world runs not on Dunkin' but on Tefillah. It is, as it states in Pirkei Avos, one of the three pillars that hold up the world. In the merit of our davening and treating our shuls and our Tefilos with the greatest of respect – may we merit Moshiach Tzidkeinu bimheira b'yameinu, amain! *The author can be reached at yairhoffman2@gmail.com*