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date: Mar 27, 2025, 1:47 PM

Rav Frand  
By Rabbi Yissocher Frand  
Parshas Pekudei

The Bayis is the Foundation of Bnei Yisroel

This dvar Torah was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 805, Barch Sh'omar, Ashrei and Yishtabach. Good Shabbos!

Parshas Pekudei marks the end of Sefer (the Book of) Shemos. The last pasuk in Sefer Shemos is: "For the cloud of Hashem would be on the Mishkan by day, and fire would be on it at night, before the eyes of all the House of Israel in all their journeys." (Shemos 40:38)

Let us contrast the use of the wording "Bais Yisrael" (House of Israel) with the last pasuk in Sefer Vayikra: "These are the commandments that Hashem commanded Moshe to the Children of Israel on Mount Sinai." (Vayikra 27:34) Similarly, the last pasuk in Sefer Bamidbar is: "These are the commandments and the ordinances that Hashem commanded through Moshe to the Children of Israel in the Plains of Moav, at the Jordan, by Jericho." (Bamidbar 36:13)

Both Sefer Vayikra and Sefer Bamidbar end with the more commonly used expression Bnei Yisrael, while Sefer Shemos ends with the less commonly used expression "Bais Yisrael" (House of Israel). What is the nuance here? What is the Torah hinting at?

Rav Nochum Lansky, one of the Roshei Yeshiva in Yeshivas Ner Yisroel, suggests that there is a tremendous symmetry here. How does Sefer Shemos begin? The opening pasuk is: "And these are the names of the Children of Israel who came to Egypt with Yaakov, each man and his household (u'beiso) came." (Shemos 1:1) Sefer Shemos is about the genesis of the Jewish people. This is where we became a nation. But a nation is not a conglomeration of millions of people. A nation – at least the Jewish nation – is a nation of families. That is what makes us into an "am" (nation). It is the bayis (household) that makes us into a nation. In the narrative of Sefer Shemos, this emphasis on the bayis occurs over and over again. "They should take a lamb for the households of the fathers; a lamb per household" (Shemos 12:3). The Korban Pesach was brought together with a person's

family. "Thus shall you say to the house (bais) of Yaakov..." (Shemos 19:3). The formation of the Jewish nation is family by family. This is our strength. We hear so much about the dissolution of American society and how we are losing the structure of our society because the nuclear family is breaking up. Just as a chain is only as strong as its links, so too a nation is only as strong as its families. That is why Sefer Shemos places such an emphasis on the building of 'bayis' – faithful households.

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch notes that the halacha exempts a groom from going off to war during the first year of marriage. The rule of thumb is that whenever there is a clash between a mitzvah d'rabim (incumbent on the public) and a mitzvah d'yachid (private), the public mitzvah takes precedence. In light of this principle, Rav Hirsch asks why the personal mitzvah to rejoice with a person's wife the first year of marriage trumps the public mitzvah to go out to battle together with the nation. Rav Hirsch answers that building and cementing the relationship that is the foundation of a Jewish household is a mitzvah d'rabbim (affecting the nation). This is a contribution to the entire community. We are only a nation by virtue of the fact that we are a nation of strong families.

For this reason, Sefer Shemos begins with the pasuk that emphasizes that the Jewish people came down to Egypt – "each man with his household" and ends with the pasuk which emphasizes "the entire house of Israel."

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This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion.

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From: <[ohrpublishing@gmail.com](mailto:ohrpublishing@gmail.com)> Date: Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 9:12 PM  
Subject: New Rav Video

**Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik**

**THE ATTEMPTS TO COLONIZE THE LAND OF ISRAEL**

Excerpt of lecture presented in **1955 to the Rabbinical Council of America**

With Hebrew and English Subtitles (use the cc and settings icon on the bottom right of the screen) <https://youtu.be/yETi-uvNiiw>

Subtitles: The Attempts to Colonize the Land of Israel -

Two covenants with Abraham

When we read Parshas Lech Lecha we see that there were two covenants enacted. One covenant is what we call the Bris Bein Habesarim "I am Hashem who brought you out of Ur Kasdim to give you this land to inherit it." (Bereishis 15:7) "On that day Hashem formed a covenant with Avram saying, to your seed I have given this land from the river of Egypt until the great river, the Euphrates River" (15:18).

A second covenant is discussed in the final portion of Lech Lecha: "And Avram was ninety nine years old and Hashem appeared to Avram and said to him, 'I am Kel Sha-dai, walk before me and be perfect.' 'And I will place my covenant between me and you, and I will multiply you very greatly.' " (17:2) And later it says: "And I will establish My covenant between Me and between you and between your seed after you throughout their generations" as an everlasting covenant, to be to you for a God and to your seed after you And I will give you and your seed after you the land of your sojournings, the entire land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be for them for a God." (17:7-8).

"And God said to Abraham, 'and you shall keep my covenant...this is My covenant which you shall observe between Me and between you...that every male be circumcised.' " (17:10) and the Torah section regarding Milah was imparted And the Ribono Shel Olam, interestingly, emphasized that even Yishmael must be circumcised but he will not enter the covenant "And regarding Ishmael, I have heard you; behold I have blessed him, and I will

make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly..." (17:20) but, "My covenant I will establish with Yitzchak, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year." (17:21) Eretz Yisrael was already given to Avraham in the first covenant in the Bris Bein Habesarim: "On that day, Hashem formed a covenant with Avram, saying <to your seed I have given this land" (15:18) It does not say how long [the covenant would be in force] and it does not say that it is eternal. In the second covenant, it says, "and I will give you and your seed after you the land of your sojournings, the entire land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession" (17:8)

The attempts to colonize Eretz Yisrael One miracle is from the Bris Bein Habesarim is that Eretz Yisrael waited for us. The Medrash says: [when God states]: "and I will destroy the land" (Vayikra 26:32) "this is [actually] a kindness extended to Israel" it is a blessing "because the enemies will gain no benefit from its goodness."

In the history of Eretz Yisrael there is something remarkable that is not understandable when one reflects upon this in the perspective of general history

Consider the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries or the twentieth century These were years in general history of huge colonizations. The European peoples colonized entire continents. You don't have to search far: The American continent was colonized in the 1700's and 1800's, and in the 1900's also. The North American continent, Canada and the United States. And the South American half of the continent, the Latin kingdoms colonized in those years Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, various colonies various lands, entire continents.

And the non-Jews were known as very capable colonizers the greatest example of which is the United States. It was an untamed continent historically, it was developed in the space of a few hundred years into the most advanced technological and civilized country in the world It is a remarkable thing.

Many kingdoms wanted to colonize Eretz Yisrael many from the Crusades on. What were the Crusades? Those who know the history it was an attempt to colonize Eretz Yisrael on behalf of Christendom and it was not simply a one-time attempt, an adventure. We know how many Crusades there were over a period of many years and they were unsuccessful in colonizing Eretz Yisrael - they failed Eretz Yisrael remained empty In fact the Christians left. Afterwards, it seems that the Moslems had a relationship to Eretz Yisrael. Whatever the case may be, we understand the Christians' relationship to Israel, but we do not understand the Moslems' relationship to Eretz Yisrael The story is that Mohammed flew to heaven from the Temple Mount he had first come from Mecca on a horse and from there flew to heaven Be that as it may, having asserted that they had a religious relationship to Eretz Yisrael, they also attempted to colonize it From Omar on - Omar was the first The mosque on the Temple Mount is one of their holiest sites Yet they also failed.

In the 1900's, those who know the history of Germany, of the German Empire Kaiser Wilhelm undertook, at the time that he wanted to build the Baghdad-Berlin railway, he undertook to realize his dream of colonizing Eretz Yisrael The Germans were known as colonizers the Germans even colonized many places in America: Wisconsin was almost entirely populated with Germans, and so on. It was then that they established the colony known as Sharon near Tel Aviv, it is now a part of Tel Aviv, known as the Kirya but the First World War broke out and the colonization effort was halted.

And it is remarkable that Eretz Yisrael remained more primitive than other lands Egypt was much better developed than Eretz Yisrael Syria was much better developed than Eretz Yisrael - not now but before Jews arrived Iraq was better developed than Eretz Yisrael In Eretz Yisrael, the Arabs remained the most primitive, the most unruly, the least cultured.

And I remember the land from 1935, twenty years ago, the land was nothing more than stones and burnt fields, and sand and water - more than that there was nothing to see.

But yet these mountains which did not open up to the others, opened up to the Jews.

You understand that had Eretz Yisrael in fact been colonized had Eretz Yisrael been developed into a civilized land then Jews would never have had a chance to return there

So regarding, "I will bring the land to devastation" (Vayikra 26:32) Chazal said very beautifully: "this is a kindness extended to Israel... ..for the enemies will not derive benefit from it" (Toras Kohanim 26:38). The non-Jews could not absorb Eretz Yisrael. Chazal held that colonizing a land is absorption, and Eretz Yisrael has an attribute that whatever it does not want, it vomits out. "and the land will vomit you out" (Vayikra 18:25).

And actually, R. Yosef Ber said this Like an Agunah, Eretz Yisrael waits for the husband of its youth it is a verse in Eicha: "For Mount Zion which is desolate, foxes prowl upon it" (5:18) it continues: "and You, Hashem, shall forever sit enthroned from generation to generation." (5:19) What is the link between these two verses? R. Yosef Ber in Beis Halevi says: it is the proof: "For Mount Zion which is desolate" desolate for hundreds, for thousands of years People wanted to colonize it, they wanted to transform it to become a blooming land, blooming gardens, into a paradise if it remains desolate, foxes prowling upon it it is a proof that the land which was sanctified remains sanctified that, "You Hashem are enthroned for ever, Your throne from generation to generation."

If "You Hashem are enthroned for ever, Your throne from generation to generation" had not been fulfilled, then the stones of Eretz Yisrael could have been colonized exactly like the stones of the State of New York - the state of New York also has many stones.

And really, this means, that this land remained loyal to the Jewish people. Therefore R' Yehudah Halevi authored a remarkable piyut, a Kinah that we say every Tisha B'av one of the most wonderful pearls of Jewish literature He says: Zion, do you not inquire about your prisoners?" Where does it say in Tanach that Zion inquires about the Jews? Where does it say this? Where does it say this? Where is it written? In the desolate mountains of the cities of Judea, in the deserts of the Negev in the emptiness and in the desolation of the land for the thousands of years that it did not allow itself to be colonized. With regard to this concept, Jews have a remarkable expression which does not exist in any other language It is the idea of the Agunah Agunah is a tragedy, a living widow, a tragedy. But in the word Agunah there is not only tragedy, but in the idea of Agunah lies a great ethical concept. the concept of loyalty, of waiting of constant waiting waiting - years pass, life passes and the woman grows older and older, and she won't have a chance to get remarried and we wait, and we wait for the husband of her youth. This is really the concept of Agunah an ethical norm is hidden in the word Agunah. And Eretz Yisrael is an Agunah which waits for her husband Who created this miracle? The remarkable wonder of a land, a dead land, a land of stones and sand and water There has to be a bond with the distant husband of her youth, away for thousands of years, This was the Bris Bein Habesarim.

[For full lecture in Yiddish, see <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/1032180> and <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/1032181> ]

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From: Kol Torah Webmaster <webmaster@koltorah.org>

date: Mar 27, 2025, 11:53 PM

subject: Pekudei and HaChodesh - Kol Torah TABC

**Marit Ayin in Contemporary Kashrut Contexts**

**By Rabbi Chaim Jachter**

Our Reputations Belong to Hashem

The Torah expects us to guard our reputations zealously. The Mishnah (Shekalim 3:2) states: "One must be clean in the public perception just as he must do regarding Hashem. The Torah states (BeMidbar 32:22), "And you must be clean before Hashem and Yisrael." Mishlei (3:4) teaches, "You shall appear appealing and intelligent in the eyes of Hashem and people."

It is told that the Chafetz Chaim realized that it is prohibited to speak Lashon Hara against oneself after disparaging himself to a traveler he met on a train, who did not know he was the Chafetz Chaim. The traveler became irate and upset at the Chafetz Chaim and even struck and cursed him! When the traveler visited the Chafetz Chaim and discovered he hit the holy sage, he apologized profusely. The Chafetz Chaim told him not to worry since he

taught him that speaking Lashon Hara about oneself is forbidden, something the Chafetz Chaim did not include in his works on Lashon Hara.

Rav Hershel Schachter cites Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik that the Halachot concerning Cheshad, the prohibition to arouse suspicion about oneself, is rooted in the prohibition to speak Lashon Hara about oneself. One does not own his reputation since it belongs to Hashem. We must protect our good name just as we must preserve our health.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe O.C. 2:40) defines Cheshad as casting aspersions on oneself and Marit Ayin as misleading others to incorrectly think something is permissible. Rav Shlomo Kluger (Teshuvot Uvacharta BaChaim 68), Teshuvot Chessed L'Avraham (1:21) and Rav Asher Weiss (Teshuvot Minchat Asher 1:65) agree.

#### Kashrut Applications

Although fish blood is permitted, Chazal forbid consuming it unless pieces of fish scales are mixed to clarify it is fish blood (Keritot 21b). Similarly, the Rama requires placing (Y.D. 87:3) almonds on the table when eating almond milk with animal meat. The Shach (Y.D. 87:6) clarifies that almonds are necessary even when having almond milk with poultry. The Chochmat Adam (40:3) and Aruch Hashulchan (Y.D. 87:16) follow the Shach.

#### Imitation Dairy, Meat, and Non-Kosher Foods

Today, various fake meat, cheese, and non-kosher products abound. Fake crab is very common in sushi, fake cheese is placed in burgers, and soy-based burgers are eaten with cheese. Must we display some packaging to avoid concern for Marit Ayin and Cheshad? While Rav Asher Weiss (Teshuvot Minchat Asher 1:66) writes that it is preferable to do so, OU Kosher (<https://oukosher.org/blog/consumer-kosher/maras-ayin-and-kosher/>) does not make such a requirement. The common practice reflects the OU's policy. The Mishnah (Kilayim 9:2) forbids mixing silk and wool because people confuse silk with linen. However, the Rosh (Niddah 9:7) writes that this concern is no longer relevant since silk was common in his times. The Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 298:1) codifies the Rosh with no dissent. How can the Rosh and the Shulchan Aruch overturn a Mishnah? The answer is that Marit Ayin and Cheshad are not ironclad. They change with time. What was prohibited in the time of the Mishnah because of Marit Ayin is no longer banned centuries later. The Halachah has not been altered, but the reality has changed.

Rav Ovadia Yosef (Teshuvot Yechave Da'at 3:59) applies the Rosh and Shulchan Aruch to pareve milk and ice cream. No packaging display is required. He notes that people use matza meal even though it appears like flour. Rav Asher Weiss notes that sheitels do not raise Marit Ayin concerns that the married woman is not covering her hair. Neither does a man shaving with an electric shaver does not raise suspicions he uses a razor. Matza meal, shavers, and sheitels are so common they pose no concern for Marit Ayin. Rav Asher Weiss surmises that almond milk was not common in the Rama's era, and thus, he required placing almonds on the table. Today, no one raises a fuss with fake crab meat in sushi since it is so common. The same applies to the plethora of pareve items whose widespread market availability is well-known.

Rav Ovadia adds that the Tiferet Yisrael (Kalket Shabbat, 34) writes that Marit Ayin only poses a problem when it appears more likely he is doing something forbidden than a permitted activity.

#### Eating at Non-Kosher Restaurants

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe O.C. 2:40) writes that one should not enter a restaurant absent exceptional need (such as extraordinary hunger or restroom urgency) due to Marit Ayin and Cheshad. However, Rav Moshe's Talmid, Rav Moshe Heinemann rules one may buy and eat kosher food and drinks in cafeterias, coffee shops, and food courts at airports and rest stops. He notes that no suspicion is aroused since religious people commonly purchase kosher food in these locations. He compares such purchases to buying products at supermarkets selling kosher and non-kosher items (<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/7728/optical-allusions-avoiding-maris-ayin/>).

#### Business Meetings in Non-Kosher Restaurants

Rav Asher Weiss (Teshuvot Minchat Asher 1:67) similarly permits attending a meeting held in a non-kosher restaurant since conducting business in such establishments is common. Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky (cited in Emet L'Yaakov C.M. 425:5) agrees.

Rav Hershel Schachter permits, in these circumstances, ordering a drink and uncut fruit as well (<https://oukosher.org/halacha-yomis/required-attend-business-meeting-non-kosher-restaurant-avoid-issue-maris-ayin/>).

Presumably he allows eating food from a kosher certified food provider shipped to the non-kosher place if proper steps are taken to maintain the food's kosher status (seals, special silverware, etc.).

The Rabbanim who permit attending a business meeting in a non-kosher restaurant do not contradict Rav Moshe's forbidding entering a non-kosher restaurant. Only when necessary do these Rabbanim permit entering a non-kosher place, such as for a business meeting. There is no reason to wear a cap instead of a kippa in such circumstances since one engages in permissible activity. Rav Asher Weiss does not mention a preference to avoid "appearing Orthodox" in such circumstances. Places with Questionable Kashrut Certification Rav Weiss cautions, however, that one must avoid restaurants with subpar kosher supervision. A religious Jew entering such establishments misleads the underinformed to think it is permissible to eat there. The same applies to "kosher style" and vegan eateries, which some people wrongly perceive as acceptable. In such cases, the concern for Cheshad is great, and one must zealously avoid entering such establishments.

#### Conclusion

Today, kashrut Marit Ayin is uncommon, but concern for Cheshad is perhaps greater than ever. The proliferation of sub-standard kashrut certifiers should make us keenly aware of the need to avoid misleading others.

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from: YUTorah <yutorah@comms.yu.edu>

date: Mar 27, 2025, 6:31 PM

YUTORAH IN PRINT • Pekudei 5785

#### Don't Walk Away

##### Rabbi Moshe Taragin

This was meant to be Moshe Rabeinu's finest moment—the culmination of two years of courage and heroism. He had defied the most powerful tyrant of the ancient world and brought the mighty Egyptian empire to its knees. He had led a nation of slaves to freedom, guiding them through the perilous desert. He had split a roaring sea and delivered the word of Hashem from heaven. When we betrayed Hashem at the egel, Moshe ascended once more, spending forty days and nights without food or water, pleading for our survival and begging Hashem to overlook our sins.

Finally Moshe had single-handedly spearheaded the grand construction of a house to shelter the Divine presence. A radiant glow shone from his forehead, a mark of a man who, though bound by flesh, had dwelled in the realm of heaven. His credentials were unquestionable.

Or so he thought.

As the grand construction neared completion, the cynics crept out of the shadows. Whispers spread, questioning Moshe Rabeinu's sudden wealth. Perhaps he and his brother had skimmed materials from the Mishkan, siphoning off gold and silver for their own gain. So much wealth, so many donations—who could be sure that none had found its way into his pockets? The skeptics and the disbelievers, began casting doubt on Moshe's moral integrity.

You would have expected Moshe to ignore the barking of these dogs. The vast majority of the nation surely possessed unwavering trust in him. The cynics who hurled accusations and mockery were unlikely to be convinced, no matter what he said. Moshe's reputation and moral standing were unshakable and responding to their baseless claims would only diminish the grandeur and majesty of the inauguration of the house of Hashem.

#### The Accountant

And yet, Moshe did not ignore the naysayers. Instead, he provided a meticulous accounting of every donation collected for the Mishkan and a precise record of how each material was used in its construction. He

assembled a committee of overseers to ensure that every detail was beyond suspicion, that nothing was hidden, and that the sacred project remained untainted by even the faintest shadow of doubt.

This exhaustive accounting forms the bulk of Parashat Pekudei. Unlike other parshiyot of the Torah that introduce new halachot or spiritual insights, this portion is essentially an inventory—an unembellished registry of materials and their precise roles in the Mishkan’s construction.

#### Transparency

Moshe’s accounting provides an essential moral principle: the obligation to uphold the highest standards in the public eye, known in Hebrew as avoiding any trace of suspicion or *marit ayin*. It is not enough for a person to act with integrity; they must also ensure that their actions are above suspicion, that their intentions are transparent, and that their purity of conduct is unmistakable.

For Moshe, it was not sufficient to know in his heart that he had acted with absolute honesty, that he had taken nothing for himself. It was crucial that he remain beyond reproach—not only in the eyes of G-d and his own conscience but also in the eyes of the people he led.

#### Defiant, but aware

The principle of *marit ayin* establishes a delicate balance between unwavering commitment to personal convictions and the equally vital responsibility of providing moral clarity, ensuring that one’s actions do not invite suspicion.

Deeply committed religious individuals must learn to deflect social pressures while standing firm in their beliefs and adhering to their personal moral code. If we allow our convictions to waver in the face of public scrutiny or scorn, our principles can quickly erode.

We were chosen as a stiff-necked people—a trait that, at times, has led to our struggles but is also indispensable in resisting ridicule and mockery. Lives of religious spirit and steadfast commitment, will inevitably face societal ridicule.

Without resilience and inner fortitude, the pressures of public opinion can chip away at even the strongest foundation of religious commitment.

Yet, we are also expected to be mindful of how our actions are perceived, ensuring that we do not behave in a way that could be misinterpreted as immoral. Faith demands conviction and awareness—the strength to stand firm in our beliefs and the wisdom to present them in a manner that upholds integrity in the eyes of others.

Too much sensitivity to public opinion, and we risk forfeiting our values and convictions. Too much defiance and indifference to public perception, and we invite suspicion and cynicism.

People seeking a way out of religious life will often seize upon perceived moral failings within religious figures to justify their own disengagement. Sadly, many abandon their faith, not because of theological struggles, but because they witness—or believe they witness—immoral behavior among those who should be exemplars of religious devotion. Of course, it is unfair to judge Judaism by the flaws of individual Jews, just as it is unfair to assume wrongdoing without clear evidence. Yet perception matters, and as Moshe taught, integrity must be as visible as it is real.

In our effort to showcase the beauty and dignity of a life of faith, it is not enough to simply be right. We must also ensure that those who observe us—those who, for better or worse, will judge religion by our conduct—come away with a positive impression. Our actions should not only reflect truth and righteousness but also inspire others toward spirit and religion.

It is not easy to strike this delicate balance between ignoring public ridicule and ensuring that we do not tarnish others’ perception of religion. Walking this tightrope requires both unwavering conviction and thoughtful awareness—remaining steadfast in our faith while ensuring that our actions reflect the beauty and integrity of a life devoted to G-d.

While Moshe faced this dilemma as an individual, our people now face it as a nation.

#### Israel’s test

We all know. We all know the moral standards guiding our war. We all know the immense risks we take to protect civilian lives, even at the cost of

endangering our own soldiers. We all know that the ratio of combatant to civilian casualties in this war is among the lowest in the history of urban warfare. We all know that Hamas shamelessly uses civilians as shields, treating them as expendable pawns.

We all know that the accusations of genocide and ethnic cleansing are not just false but outrageous distortions of reality.

Yet, in the face of these undeniable truths, hatred rages on, unrelenting and venomous. A tidal wave of blind antisemitism crashes against us. The desire to tune it all out, to ignore the deafening cacophony of lies and distortions, is overwhelming. They won’t listen anyway. The haters will continue to hate, twisting reality into grotesque narratives to justify their loathing of the Jewish people. Just walk away. Ignore them. Let them stew in their own malice.

We cannot just walk away. We cannot completely absolve ourselves of accountability. We bear a profound moral responsibility—not to our detractors, but to ourselves and to the Jewish conscience. We must etch our actions into the record of history, preserving the integrity of our moral conduct and the justness of our battle to protect our people and our homeland. With unwavering clarity, we must proclaim the righteousness of our ethical code, refusing to let hatred cloud our convictions or erode our moral resolve.

Will anyone listen? Some will, but most will not. But that is not why we speak. Jews do what is right because it is right—not to sway the minds of those who refuse to see. We answer to the voice within, to the moral compass woven into our soul. We answer to our history, to a destiny that calls us to live by a higher code, shaped by the Torah. We know who we are. They cannot fathom it. Our tireless efforts to explain may fall on deaf ears—but we hear, and we know.

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from: **Rabbi Efrem Goldberg** <reg@rabbiEfremGoldberg.com>

date: Mar 26, 2025, 11:06 PM

subject: From Non-Jewish Nanny to Now-Jewish Nanny

March 25, 2025

כ"ה אדר ה' אלפים תשפ"ה

#### **From Non-Jewish Nanny to Now-Jewish Nanny: A Lesson For Each of Us** By Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

Adriana Fernandez had a unique path to social media fame. For years, her almost-90,000 followers online have enjoyed her posts, pictures, and videos reflecting her insights and experiences as a non-Jewish nanny working in observant Jewish homes. She even adopted and leaned into her moniker, “Non-Jewish Nanny.”

It all began when she was a student studying opera in college when she took a job on the side babysitting. The first family that found her on the babysitting website was Jewish. Adriana didn’t have Jewish friends growing up and knew little about the Jewish people’s practices and lifestyle. As she began babysitting in observant Jewish homes, it quickly became much more than just a job or source of earning money. She came to not only love the children she interacted with but the lifestyle they and their families were leading.

She began to share her “non-Jewish” perspective and thoughts on Orthodox Jewish laws, traditions, and rituals, and it went viral. From insights and observations on *tznius* and *shaitels* to kosher recipes and Jewish holidays, people were enamored by her energy, positivity, and capacity to pronounce the “ch” sound. As her following grew, kosher and Jewish businesses took notice, sending her clothing and other products to feature and promote. All the while, she continued to serve as a nanny in Orthodox Jewish homes, developing meaningful relationships with the families she cared for, particularly the children.

Online, people saw her following and influence grow. What they didn’t see was that offline, the influence of the families she was working for was growing on her. Adriana wasn’t just curious and intrigued by the Torah way of life, she began to want it for herself. Adriana approached a rabbi and *rebbetzin* in the neighborhood where she was working and they agreed to sponsor her in the *geirus* (conversion) process. She took it seriously from the

start, learning, reading, reviewing, studying the curriculum, attending davening and classes, and integrating among observant Jewish friends. (Every detail here is published with her permission.) When the Beis Din became involved, being an “influencer” didn’t accelerate her process; if anything, it made it go slowly, methodically and in a way that would build confidence this interest was genuine and not a way to grow her following or any other motivation.

While the change in her dress and her life was noticeable, Adriana never discussed her journey and process with her followers. She never announced the program she was in or what she was working towards. And finally, after a lot of work and patience, the day came. She immersed as Adriana and emerged as Adina Shoshana. A few days after the birth of her new identity came the transformation of her online profile. The “Non-Jewish Nanny” became the “Now Jewish Nanny.”

The Gemara (Yevamos 62a) teaches that ger she’nisgayeir k’kattan shenolad dami, one who converts is like a child that is born anew. But the language of the Gemara is puzzling. Shouldn’t it be a goy she’nisgayeir, a non-Jew who converts? Why do our rabbis phrase it as, “a convert who converts”? The Chida (Midbar Kedemos) explains that Chazal were teaching that the conversion reveals that it wasn’t a non-Jew who converted, it was someone who was always destined to be Jewish, whose soul was also at Sinai. Ger she’nisgayeir, the would-be convert, converts.

Adina Shoshana is the real deal: genuine, authentic, knowledgeable, spiritual, and Torah-observant. She should be admired and appreciated for her journey and encouraged and supported as she continues her next steps as a full-fledged, proud, and practicing Jew. Her Rabbi and Rebbetzin deserve enormous credit for their guidance, care, and time teaching her how to live as a Jew. The Beis Din who enabled her to fulfill her dream will forever now be tied to Adina like everyone they convert, getting credit for her mitzvos and also carrying a responsibility for any shortcomings.

I share this story with you because it is fascinating and inspiring but also because I think there are other, unseen people in this story who deserve great credit and who obligate each of us.

The families that Adina worked for live a Judaism, and interact with people around them, in a way that that someone who was working for them and living with them wanted be a Torah-observant Jew. That is extraordinary and a tremendous credit to them. Adina shared that it was the children in particular—their sweetness, their patience in sharing their learning and lives with her, their joy in being and living Jewish—that most inspired her.

An important lesson of the Now Jewish Nanny’s journey and the families that inspired her is to ask ourselves, if someone worked in our home, lived with our family, was involved in our lives and lifestyle, would that draw them closer to Judaism or push them away? Would it inspire them or turn them off? Would it make them want to be more like us or to have nothing to do with us?

We find ourselves in the weeks leading up to Pesach, a time of tremendous work, planning, expenses, and often stress and pressure. What is the atmosphere in our homes? Are they places of joy or misery, excitement and positivity or resentment and negativity? Will those in our homes, whether our children or outsiders, be inspired in the future to look forward to Pesach or to dread it?

The Talmud (Bava Metzia 59b) stresses that the Torah obligates us to love the convert and to refrain from causing anguish or pain no less than thirty-six times. But it isn’t only the convert we should treat well. All who work in our homes, and in whose places of work we frequent, Jew and non-Jew alike, will be impacted by how we behave in general and by our attitude towards our Judaism in particular.

When he was older, Rav Yisroel Salanter no longer baked his own matzah before Pesach, but rather he asked his students to bake his matzos for him. The students, knowing that baking matza is not always a simple process, asked him, “What are the Chumros (stringencies) the Rebbe makes sure to adhere to when he bakes matzah?” He replied, “I am very careful not to yell at the woman who cleans up between every batch of matzah baking. She is a widow. Please speak kindly with her.”

We may not have asked to be role models or to be responsible for others’ impressions of Judaism, but we have been entrusted with this sacred mission, one we should embrace with pride rather than resentment. Not everyone we meet will go from Non-Jewish to Now Jewish, but if we live with positivity and joy, with honor and respect, they can go from “Never Liked Jews” to “Now Love Jews,” simply because of us.

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from: Ira Zlotowitz <Iraz@klalgovoah.org> date: Mar 27, 2025, 7:01 PM  
subject: **Klal Gavoah** - In Memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz zt"l

Tidbits •

Parashas Pekudei - Hachodesh • March 29th • 29 Adar 5785

This week is Shabbos Mevorchim Chodesh Nissan. Rosh Chodesh is on Sunday, March 30th. The molad is Shabbos morning at 7:46 AM and 1 chelek. The actual molad will have already occurred before Birkas HaChodesh is recited. Some gabbaim note this by announcing that “the molad was” or “der molad iz gevehn”. The first opportunity for Kiddush Levana is Tuesday evening, April 1st. The final opportunity is at 7:47 PM on Leil Haseder, Motzaei Shabbos, April 12th. Parashas HaChodesh is leined this Shabbos, the Shabbos preceding Rosh Chodesh Nissan. Many congregations say Yotzros during Shacharis and Mussaf. Two Sifrei Torah are taken out, and the special maftir of Parashas HaChodesh (Shemos 12:1-20) is leined from the second sefer. The haftarah for Parashas HaChodesh is leined. Av Harachamim is omitted. Kel Mallei (recited by one who has yaahrzeit) may not be said during Chodesh Nissan and is also not recited before Mussaf when Mevorchim HaChodesh is said. It may not be recited at Mincha on Shabbos due to it being Erev Rosh Chodesh. Chodesh Nissan begins this Motzaei Shabbos, March 29th. For the duration of the month, Tachanun, as well as the Yehi Ratzons recited after Kerias Hatorah, are omitted from the weekday davening. On Shabbos, Av Harachamim (before Mussaf) and Tzidkoscha (after Minchah) are omitted as well. The Kel Mallei recited by one who has a yaahrzeit is also not said. Fasting and hespeidim are generally prohibited as well. As Rosh Chodesh begins on Motzaei Shabbos, one who extends his seudas shelishis eating past sundown is in a quandary whether to say Retzei or Ya’aleh Veyavo, or both, in bentsching. Some are careful not to eat bread after tzeis hakochavim (for this purpose 35-40 minutes after shekiya) and then only say Retzei. Speak to your Rav. The berachah of Bircas Ilanos (a blessing on a newly blossomed fruit tree) is commonly said beginning in the month of Nissan. Some say it should specifically be said during Nissan. Many have the minhag not to eat matzah from Rosh Chodesh Nissan (some do not eat matzah beginning from Shushan Purim). One must donate money for Maos Chittim, money which will be used to provide the needy with food during Pesach. The donation may be given from maaser funds.

Daf Yomi - Shabbos: Bavli: Sanhedrin 102 • Yerushalmi: Eruvin 10 • Mishnah Yomis: Eduyos 3:10-11 • Oraysa (coming week): Megillah 28b-30b • Kitzur Shulchan Aruch: 111:14-112:4 Make sure to call your parents, in-laws, grandparents and Rabbi to wish them a good Shabbos. If you didn’t speak to your kids today, make sure to connect with them as well!

Parashas HaChodesh is leined this Shabbos Parashas Pekudei; it is Shabbos Mevorchim Chodesh Nissan as well. Leil Bedikas Chametz is Thursday night, April 10th. Shabbos Hagadol is Erev Pesach. Pesach begins on Motzaei Shabbos, April 12th.

PEKUDEI: An accounting of the precious metals and materials collected for the Mishkan • The Bigdei Kehunah are fashioned • Everything is completed as Hashem commanded • Moshe blesses the workers • Hashem commands Moshe to erect the Mishkan • On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, Moshe erects the Mishkan and anoints the Keilim • Moshe dresses Aharon and Aharon’s sons in the Bigdei Kehunah and anoints them • The Ananei HaKavod rest on the Mishkan • Hashem’s Glory fills the Mishkan and Moshe cannot enter • The Bnei Yisrael travel based on the movement of the Ananei HaKavod • Chazak Chazak V’nis’chazeik!

PARASHAS HACHODESH: This special maftir keriah (Shemos 12:1-20) discusses the mitzvah of Kiddush HaChodesh, as well as the commandment in Mitzrayim to sacrifice a sheep for Korban Pesach.

HAFTARAH OF PARASHAS HACHODESH: The haftarah (Yechezkel 45:16-46:18) details the inauguration of the third Beis Hamikdash that will take place in Chodesh Nissan and the Korban Pesach that will be brought then, in the days of Mashiach.

Parashas Pekudei • 92 Pesukim • No mitzvos listed

"אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת" "These are the accountings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of the testimony" (Shemos 38:22)

The Midrash on this pasuk explains that the repetition of the words "HaMishkan, Mishkan" alludes to the two Batei Mikdash that were tragically destroyed due to sin. Why, at this juncture of the inauguration of the Mishkan, does the Torah allude to the destruction of the Batei Mikdash? Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l explains: In our parashah, Moshe Rabbeinu made a public accounting of all the materials donated to the Mishkan, and detailed the way in which they were used. This public accounting served a dual purpose: firstly, that no one should suspect him of misappropriating the materials, and secondly, that he personally should not be tempted to do so! Surprisingly, Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest of our prophets and a G-dly man, felt it appropriate to safeguard himself from succumbing to petty thievery. Rav Moshe zt"l explains that the generation of the Churban was lax in instituting safeguards from sin; this was the polar opposite of the zehirus and vigilance demonstrated by Moshe Rabbeinu in our parashah. Tragically, by placing too much faith in their ability to resist temptation, they neglected to establish adequate protections against transgressions to which they eventually succumbed. Ultimately, this led to the destruction of the Batei Mikdash, that, the Midrash says, our pasuk is alluding to. One must be careful to never 'let his guard down' as these gedarim are a primary component of Avodas Hashem. Through proper zerizus and zehirus, we will bez"H be zocheh to the rebuilding of the Bais HaMikdash speedily in our days.

Please reach out to us with any thoughts or comments at: klalgovoa.org Ira Zlotowitz - Founder | iraz@gparenity.com | 917.597.2197 Ahron Dicker - Editor | adicker@klalgovoa.org | 732.581.5830 Klal Govoah 481 Oak Glen Road Howell, NJ 07731

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

date: Mar 27, 2025, 3:27 AM

subject: **Rav Kook** on The Atmosphere of Eretz Yisrael

The Atmosphere of Eretz Yisrael The Unhappy Immigrant Under the influence of Rav Kook, an American Jew had come to Eretz Yisrael with the intention of settling there permanently. But one day, he showed up at the Rav's house and asked for a farewell blessing. For some reason, he had decided to return to America. "Why are you leaving so suddenly?" Rav Kook asked. "Rebbe," the man replied, "I am disheartened by life here in Eretz Yisrael. I cannot stand the widespread desecration of the Sabbath and general disdain for our religion that I see among the pioneer settlers of the Land. Therefore, I have decided to leave and return to America."

These words, coming from the mouth of a simple, well-meaning Jew, giving voice to the yearnings of his soul, agitated and shook the Rav's heart; but he contained himself. With a gentle smile, he turned to his guest and inquired where he lived in America.

"My home is in Denver, Colorado," replied the man. Then, with clear pride, he began describing the beauty of the city, with its breathtaking mountains and crisp and refreshing air. "There are no narrow, dirty alleyways," he added, "like here in Jerusalem. There, the streets are wide, the houses are large and elegant, and trolley cars speed through the city." He then went on, as if spellbound, about the natural beauty surrounding Denver. After a while, the Rav interrupted him gently. "If I am not mistaken," he said, "Denver has a high number of tuberculosis patients. A man from Jerusalem recently returned from a trip to America and told me that he met many people suffering from chronic diseases there. If, as you say, the climate in Denver is so healthy and invigorating, why are there so many sick people there?"

"Does Your Honor really think," replied the American Jew with quiet indignation, "that those sick people are natives of Denver? They all come from other cities, where fresh air and sunshine are sorely lacking. They contracted tuberculosis in their hometowns and came to Denver, following their doctors' advice, to benefit from its fresh air and hopefully recover." "Of course," continued the man, "some people come with in very advanced stages of the disease. They neglected their condition for a long time and came too late. Their lungs are filled with bacteria, and there's almost no hope of recovery. That man from Jerusalem must have met some of those people in Denver and mistakenly thought that the city was to blame for their miserable condition. That naive man didn't realize that this city, with its healing air, actually brings relief and rehabilitation to thousands of desperately ill patients from all around the world.

The Air of the Land of Israel

Rav Kook interrupted the flow of the man's words and replied calmly, "Think about what you are saying! The air of our Holy Land is also special; it nurtures wisdom and has the ability to heal. Hapless Jews have come, and continue to come, to Eretz Yisrael from all over the world, where the foreign atmosphere of the lands of exile had a detrimental effect on their spirits, poisoning their souls.

These Jews were on the verge of assimilation, God forbid, and dying a spiritual death on foreign soil. Fortunately, though, the Healer of the Jewish people provided the cure before the disease took hold. He infused them with a breath of life, inspiring them to love and yearn for Eretz Yisrael. They come to this therapeutic environment to breathe in some fresh air and spirit." "If you see so many affected souls here in the Holy Land, people struggling with spiritual and emotional ailments, understand that they were born elsewhere. Had they not come here when they did, they would have risked complete assimilation. They are seriously ill, but we must treat them just like they treat the tuberculosis patients in Denver. I firmly believe that the atmosphere of Eretz Yisrael will have a positive, blessed influence on many of them, restoring both their physical and spiritual health."

(Adapted from An Angel Among Men by Simcha Raz)

from: Rabbi YY Jacobson <rabbiiyy@theyeshiva.net>

reply-to: info@theyeshiva.net

date: Mar 27, 2025, 4:45 PM

subject: Athens Vs. Jerusalem - Essay by Rabbi YY

**Athens Vs. Jerusalem**

By: **Rabbi YY Jacobson**

G-d Craved to Dwell in Your Nervous System and Heart

The School of Athens, by Raphael (1509-10). In the center is the artist's depiction of Plato pointing upward, to the abstract and the universal.

Question: Did your life, your marriage, your career, your family, work out the way you dreamt it would?

The story is told of a famous child psychologist who spent many hours constructing a new driveway at his home. Just after he smoothed the surface of the freshly poured concrete, his small children chased a ball across the driveway, leaving deep footprints. The man yelled after them with a torrent of angry words. His shocked wife said, "You're a psychologist who's supposed to love children."

The fuming man shouted, "I love children in the abstract, not in the concrete!"

A Vision of Duality

Plato, one of the greatest philosophers of ancient Greece (428-347 B.C.E.), was driven by the search for truth. How, in this world of chance and change, can we arrive at knowledge that is beyond chance and change? His answer was that reality is not the chaotic profusion of things we see, feel, and touch; the thousands of different kinds of chairs, houses, or trees. The truth of reality lies in what is common to each: the ideal form of a chair, house, or tree.

Plato argued that the substantive reality around us is only a reflection of a higher truth. Truth, he believed, is the abstraction; ideas are more real than things. Things are particular; truth is universal. The Greek philosopher

developed a vision of two worlds: a world of unchanging ideas and a world of changing physical objects.

A particular tree, with a branch or two missing, possibly alive, possibly dead, and with the initials of two hikers carved into its bark, is distinct from the abstract form of Tree-ness. Tree-ness is the ideal that each of us holds in our mind which allows us to identify the imperfect reflections of trees all around us. (1)

It is hard to describe how deeply this idea of Plato impacted Western thought and civilization. For one, it taught that truth can be found only in universalism, not in the particulars of reality. The more universal a culture is, the closer to the truth it comes. Truth is abstract, perfect, and uniform. In addition, Plato's vision embraced duality, conferring truth upon the perfect, spiritual, ideal universe and corruption and falsehood upon the flawed, physical, and concrete universe.

It is equally difficult to exaggerate how deeply Judaism (particularly the way it is embodied in Chassidus, the deeper spiritual tradition of Judaism), dismissed this idea. To be sure, Jewish mysticism discusses in great detail how each physical existence originates in the pristine world of the spirit, where it can be encountered in a far more wholesome and complete manner. In the Midrashic literature, the two realities are known as the "heavenly Jerusalem" vs. the "earthly Jerusalem"—the latter is frail, vulnerable, and destructible, while the former is eternal. Still, the teachings of Chassidism have dismissed Plato's conclusions, in which he shunned the physical in favor of the spiritual, ignored the particular in favor of the universal, and scorned the concrete in favor of the abstract.

Our sages knew how to compress profound philosophical ideas in concise and seemingly simple phrases. "G-d promised that He would not enter into the heavenly Jerusalem until He enters into the earthly Jerusalem (2)." This was the Rabbis' way of dismissing the dramatic conclusion of Platonic Idealism.

In this essay, we will explore the ramifications of these two conflicting world views within the psychological arena of human existence.

#### Two Lives

Richard Nixon was reported to have once explained why the American people were infatuated with Kennedy and filled with animosity toward Nixon. "When they gaze at Kennedy," he reportedly said, "they see what they'd love to be; when they look at me, they see who they are."

Most of us own two lives—the life of our dreams and the life of our reality, the life we wished for, and the life we ended up with.

Many people can speak about, at least, two marriages: the marriages they dreamt of having, and the marriages they ended up with.

This is true concerning most issues in life—children, careers, relationships, psychological serenity, and physical health. As innocent children, idealistic youngsters, and newlyweds flying high, we harbor a particular vision of what life, romance, family, and success might be like.

Then we grow up and we are called to the task of translating this magical vision into a concrete reality. We are confronted with the challenge of constructing lives of wholesomeness and happiness in a world of stress, anxiety, pain, and disillusionment. Many of us grow frustrated and downtrodden by the broken and flawed realities we must confront. We yearn to escape to Plato's idealistic world, where all flawed objects are transformed into perfect ideas.

#### Preserving a Letter

There is something very intriguing about the Torah portions of these weeks, Vayakhel & Pekudei.

Anybody even slightly familiar with the Torah is aware of its unique conciseness. Complete sagas, rich, complex, and profound, are often depicted in a few short biblical verses. Each word in the Bible literally contains layers upon layers of interpretation.

For the sages and rabbis over the past 3,000 years, it was clear that there is nary a superfluous word or letter in the Torah, and large sections of the Talmud are based on this premise. If a verse is lyrically repetitive, if two words are used where one would suffice or a longer word is used when a

shorter word would suffice, there is a message here, a new concept, another law (3).

It is thus astonishing to observe that two entire sections in the Torah are seemingly superfluous!

These are the final two sections of the Book of Exodus—Vayakhel and Pekudei (4)—telling the story of how the Jewish people constructed the portable Tabernacle (Mishkan) that would accompany them during their 40-year journey in the desert.

In the previous sections of this book, Terumah and Tetzaveh (5), the Torah gives a detailed account of G-d's instructions to Moses regarding the construction of the Sanctuary. With meticulous description, G-d lays out to Moses every detail of the Tabernacle—every piece of furniture, item, article, and vessel that should become part of the Sanctuary. Nothing is left out, from the Holy Ark, the Candelabra and the Altar to the pillars, wall panels, curtains, ropes, bars, hooks, and pegs, all specified with their exact shapes and dimensions. In these portions, G-d also presents Moses with the exact instructions of how to weave the priestly garments—down to the last tassel—worn by those who would perform the service in the Sanctuary. Then, a few chapters later in Vayakhel and Pekudei, in the story of how the Jewish people carried out these instructions, the previous two portions are repeated almost verbatim. The Torah records, once again, every nook and cranny of the Sanctuary and tells of the actual building, carving, and weaving of every pillar, wall-panel, peg, hook, bar, tapestry, piece of furniture, and vessel that comprised the Sanctuary. For a second time, we are informed of every decorative form and artistic design sculpted in each article of the Tabernacle and every single shape, design, and dimension of every article (6).

Now, a single sentence, something like: "The Jewish people made the Sanctuary exactly as G-d had commanded Moses," would have spared the Torah more than a thousand words! Why the need for hundreds of sentences that are purely repetitive of facts that have been stated earlier?

One of the worst mistakes a speaker or writer can make is to be repetitive. "You made your point," the crowd says to itself. "Time to move on." This is true regarding anybody who speaks or writes. How much more so, concerning the Torah, a Divine blueprint well known for its extraordinary brevity. Yet, in this instance, the Torah shows not even the slightest attempt to avoid repeating itself hundreds of times!

#### Two Sanctuaries

The truth of the matter is that the Torah is not repeating itself at all; it is discussing two distinct sanctuaries: a heavenly model and a terrestrial edifice.

The first two portions outline the structure and composition of the Sanctuary as it was transmitted from G-d to Moses. This was a conceptual, celestial Tabernacle; it was a heavenly blueprint, a divine map for a home to be built in the future.

In His instructions to Moses on how to construct the Sanctuary, G-d says (7), "You shall erect the Tabernacle according to its laws, as you have been shown on the mountain." On the summit of Mount Sinai, Moses was shown an image, a vision, of the home in which G-d desired to dwell. This image was, obviously, ethereal and sublime; it was a home created in heaven, by G-d himself, and presented to one of the most spiritual men in history, Moses. Plato would describe it as "the ideal tabernacle," the one that can be conceived only in our minds. It was a home built by Divine "words" and sacred energy, internalized by the sublime mind of Moses.

In contrast to this first celestial Sanctuary come the last two portions of Exodus, in which Moses descends from the glory of Sinai and presents the people of Israel with a mission of fashioning a physical home for G-d in a sandy desert. Here, the Jewish people are called to construct a physical structure comprised of mundane cedar and gold, which are, by their very definition, limited and flawed.

This second Sanctuary that the Jews built may have resembled, in every detail, the spiritual model described several chapters earlier, but in its very essence, it was a completely different Sanctuary. One was "built" by an infinite and absolute G-d; the other by mortals of flesh and blood. One



consisted entirely of nebulous spirit, the other of gross matter. One was designed in heaven, the other on earth. One was perfect, the other was flawed.

In our personal lives, these two Sanctuaries reflect the two lives most of us experience throughout our years. Each of us owns his or her heavenly "Sanctuary," envisioned atop a summit of spiritual serenity and representing a vision and dream for a life and marriage aglow with love, passion, and endless joy. This is the ideal home, the ideal family, the ideal marriage. Then we have our earthly Sanctuary, a life often filled with trials, challenges, battles, and setbacks, and yet one in which we attempt to create a space for G-d amidst a tumultuous heart and a stressful life.

#### G-d's Choice

Astonishingly, at the end of this week's portion, we are told (8) that it was only in the second Sanctuary that the divine presence came to reside. He wished to express His truth and eternity within the physical abode created by mortal and fragmented human beings on barren soil, not in the spiritual Sanctuary atop Mount Sinai (9).

In which one of these two did G-d choose to dwell? In the physical Sanctuary!

If the Torah had not repeated the story of the Sanctuary, just leaving it at "The Jewish people made the Sanctuary exactly as G-d had commanded Moses," we might have thought that our Sanctuary below is valuable insofar as it resembles the Sanctuary above. The primary Sanctuary is the perfect one designed by G-d in the spiritual realms, and the beauty of the earthly abode depends on how much it was capable of mirroring the heavenly abode. It is this notion, the Platonic notion, that the Torah was attempting to banish by repeating the entire Sanctuary story a second time. G-d did not desire a duplication of the spiritual Sanctuary on earth. The value of the earthly abode was not in how much it mirrored its heavenly twin. G-d craved for a second, distinct Sanctuary, one that would mirror the design of the spiritual one but would remain distinct and unique in its purpose; to fashion a dwelling place for the Divine infinite oneness in a coarse universe, to light a candle of truth in a world of lies, to discover the spark of truth in a broken heart, to surrender my very ego, comping mechanisms, and survival skills to G-d. It is in this struggle-filled abode where G-d's essence is found!

If the Torah had not repeated the story of the Sanctuary, it would have saved itself hundreds of sentences but robbed us of perhaps its most powerful message: that a human being, in living his or her ordinary, flawed, and fragmented day-to-day life permeated with the morality and authenticity of our Divine inner soul, and of the Torah and its mitzvos, can create heaven on earth.

"You Were Never As Beautiful"

A story (10):

A young Chassidic boy and girl from Krakow were engaged and deeply in love when the transports to Auschwitz began. Their entire families were decimated, and they both assumed that their life's partner-to-be was also dead.

One night, close to the end of the war, the groom saw his bride standing on the women's side of the fence. When the Russians came and liberated them, they met and went for a stroll. They entered a vacant home, where they spent, for the first time in years, some moments together.

Suddenly, the young woman came upon a mirror and saw herself for the first time in years. A dazzling beauty had turned into a skeleton. She had no hair, her face was full of scars, her teeth were knocked out, and she was thin as a rail.

She cried out to him, "Woe, what has become of me? I look like the Angel of Death! Would you still marry such an ugly person?"

"You never looked more beautiful to me than right at this moment," was his response.

#### Two Types of Beauty

Perhaps this is why G-d chose the second, and not the first, Sanctuary as His intimate abode. On the surface, the Sanctuary in heaven is far more beautiful and perfect than the Sanctuary on earth. The truth is, however, that

profoundest beauty and light exist when we transform our spiritual wasteland into a palace of infinite light and truth.

Look at your life again. You are not a failure. The pain, shame, and anguish you needed to confront in your journey and relationships are not your obstacles in the way of building your Divine home; they are the stuff and material through which you build your Divine home. Behind your darkness lay your deepest and most beautiful gems, from which you construct your glorious, pure, and sacred life. G-d dwells in your actual reality, in your physical nervous system and heart, in your material kitchen and bedroom, in the bodies of your incomplete students and children sitting right next to you; not in some ideal nebulous reality that exists somewhere in the abstract.

(This essay is based on an address delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Shabbas Vayakhel-Pekudei 5718, March 15, 1958 (11)).

Footnotes 1) See Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, The Dignity of Difference, for a detailed explanation of this idea of Plato and its impact on Western thought. I took much of this section of this essay from his book. 2) Talmud Taanis 5a. Zohar Vayikra 15b. 3) The Chumash ("Five Books of Moses") contains 79,976 words and 304,805 letters. The Talmud states that Rabbi Akiva would derive "mounds upon mounds of laws from the serif of a letter" in Torah (Menachos 29b). 4) Exodus chapters 35-40. 5) Exodus chapters 25-30. 6) This redundancy is reflected very clearly in the most basic and fundamental commentary to the Torah, written by Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki. From among all the 53 Torah portions, these two portions have the newest explanations of Rashi on them. Why? Rashi makes it clear in the beginning of Vayakhel: "I have already explained the contribution to the Tabernacle and its construction in the verses where their commands were presented." No need to repeat that which has been stated already. 7) Exodus 26:30. Cf. Exodus 25:40; 27:8. 8) Exodus 40:34-38. 9) "G-d desired a dwelling in the lowly realms" (Midrash Tanchuma, Nasso 16); "This is what a human being is all about, this is the purpose of his creation and of the creation of all worlds, supernal and ephemeral" (Tanya, chapter 33). Cf. Tanya ch. 36. 10) I once read this story; I do not know its source. 11) Likkutei Sichot, vol. I, pp. 195-198.

from: Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>

date: Mar 27, 2025, 1:01 PM

subject: Insights into Halacha - **Another Kiddush Question: Bentching Repetition Due to Kiddush?**

by **Rabbi Yehuda Spitz**

Previous articles addressed the importance of Kiddush B'Makom Seudah—Kiddush needing to be held in the same place as (meaning as part of) a meal.[1] In other words, in order to fulfill the Kiddush obligation, it must serve as the preamble to an actual Seudah.[2] The Rashbam explains that this halacha is gleaned from the pasuk in Yeshaya, 'V'karasa L'Shabbos Oneg, and you will proclaim Shabbos as a delight for you,' meaning in the same place where you proclaim Shabbos (making Kiddush), there must also be the delight (referring to celebrating the Shabbos Seudah).[3] This article will discuss a curious corollary – a quite common question that may affect many of us. But first, a bit of background.

What is a Seudah?

Although there is some debate as to how 'Seudah' is defined, with the Vilna Gaon famously maintaining that Kiddush may only be performed with a full bread Seudah – meaning exclusively when washing for Hamotzi, nonetheless, the common minhag is to follow the Magen Avraham's psak, that for this halacha, eating Mezonos is sufficient to be considered a Seudah for Kiddush purposes.[4] In fact, this approach of the Magen Avraham's was accepted and considered 'Minhag Yisrael' by all sectors of world Jewry, certainly for Shabbos day Kiddush.[5] That is why by almost any Kiddush in almost any shul anywhere in the world it is de rigueur to have a Kiddush with minei Mezonos as the Seudah.

A Double Dilemma...

Yet, we find a fascinating corollary to this discussion is another fascinating discussion. As queried by Rav Shimon Sofer HY"D, the renowned Hisorerus Teshuvah, grandson of the Chasam Sofer, and son of the Ksav Sofer, if one already made Kiddush on Mezonos in shul to fulfill 'Kiddush B'makom Seudah' and later, upon returning home, has his main Shabbos Seudah, is that main Seudah now considered Seudah Shlishis ('Shaleshudis' in the vernacular), or is it still deemed his main Shabbos day Seudah?[6]



Not just a technical question or one of semantics, he posed the question as a potential limud zechus (justification) for those who skip Seudah Shlishis. The upshot is that if one would have already fulfilled his Seudah Shlishis obligation by consuming his main Shabbos Day lunch Seudah, then technically speaking, consuming Seudah Shlishis is no longer strictly necessary. The Hisorerus Teshuvah actually asked this question under the title 'Nistafakti,' meaning he is uncertain about it and does not have a clear solution.

The Steipler's Sheilah

The Steipler Gaon[7] cites another practical halachic ramification of this question – if one forgot to recite Retzei as part of Birkas Hamazon. Generally speaking, as one is mandated in eating Seudos on Shabbos, one is therefore obligated to repeat the whole bentching upon omitting Retzei.[8] Yet, the exception to the rule is Seudah Shlishis. As there is a machlokes Rishonim whether it is strictly necessary to have a bread-based meal for Seudah Shlishis, the Tur concludes tzarich iyun (inconclusively) whether one must repeat Birkas Hamazon upon forgetting Retzei. Practically, the Shulchan Aruch rules that if one completed Bentching of Seudah Shlishis without reciting Retzei, and as opposed to the first two Shabbos Seudos, he should not repeat Bentching, as lemaaseh, Seudah Shlishis shares the halachic status of Rosh Chodesh, when although it is certainly preferential to wash, it is nonetheless not an outright obligation.[9]

So, if one forgot Retzei in Birkas Hamazon in his main Shabbos Day meal, which was after he had already partaken of a 'Mezonos meal' Kiddush in shul, the Steipler Gaon maintains that he has unwittingly entered a double dilemma. According to the Vilna Gaon et al., the Mezonos Kiddush in shul was not considered a Seudah. As such, upon omitting Retzei after the main meal, one would certainly be obligated to repeat Bentching, as it is halachically considered his main Shabbos Seudah.

On the other hand, following the mainstream shittah of the Magen Avraham, that the Mezonos Kiddush was considered 'Kiddush B'makom Seudah,' it is entirely possible that the Kiddush was already considered his Shabbos Seudah, and the main Seudah following was halachically considered Seudah Shlishis,[10] and thus quite complicated whether or not Birkas Hamazon need be repeated.

The Steipler Gaon concludes that there is no clear-cut solution and 'l'dina, tzarich iyun gadol.' Hence, if this happens to you, he advises washing and making Hamotzi again and then making sure to Bentch with Retzei. Utilizing this solution removes all halachic doubt and ensures that there will be nobrachah levatallah.

No Repeating

However, it is reported that later on, after consultation with his venerated brother-in-law, the Chazon Ish, the Steipler Gaon subsequently changed his psak, ruling that lemaaseh it is 'mestaver' (stands to reason) that one would have indeed fulfilled his obligation of Seudas Shacharis with Mezonos, and would therefore not repeat Birkas Hamazon for forgetting Retzei at the later full Seudah.[11]

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach is cited by his talmid Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl as ruling similarly: That if one first made Kiddush on Mezonos, and later on at his main Shabbos day Seudah forgot Retzei, then he does not repeat Bentching, as halachically speaking, that Seudah is now considered Seudah Shlishis.[12]

It would seem that the Sanz-Klausenberger Rebbe would certainly agree with this assessment, based on his strong defense of making Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos, stating that M'Deoraysa (Biblically speaking) Mezonos products are considered Pas. If cake is technically deemed an actual 'bread,' then one would have certainly have had a 'Seudah' by partaking of Kiddush. Indeed, he reports that he often would make a tnai (stipulation), that if he would later not be able to eat Seudah Shlishis, then this Kiddush should be considered his main Shabbos Seudah.[13]

Only the Main Meal

On the other hand, and although not discussing this specific nuance, the Chamudei Efraim, Rav Chaim Efraim Bala'iti HY"D, Mot"z of Taraniya, contends that although one may indeed fulfill his Kiddush B'makom Seudah

obligation with Mezonos, nonetheless he needs to have Lechem Mishneh as part of his main Shabbos Day Seudah.

He notes that halachically speaking, if one already made Kiddush earlier with Mezonos, he is technically not required to make Kiddush again at this Seudah.[14] This means that this Kiddush-goer did not have Kiddush B'makom Seudah with Lechem Mishneh – unless halacha considers both his earlier Kiddush, as well as his main Seudah as one (perhaps lengthy) actual Seudah. As such, he is still required to have a separate Seudah Shlishis. The Chamudei Efraim bolsters his shittah with proof from Tosafos who writes that Mezonos can only be considered as a Seudah on Shabbos for Seudah Shlishis, but not the Friday Night or Shabbos Day Seudos, as they are the 'ikar kavod Shabbos.' [15] Accordingly, the main Shabbos Day Seudah is considered just that – the main Shabbos Seudah, and hence, if 'Retzei' was forgotten, Bentching would need to be repeated.

His son-in-law, Rav Yisrael Veltz (Welcz), Dayan of Budapest, agrees to this principle, but presents entirely different reasoning. He cites the Shaarei Teshuva quoting the Maharshal as to how stringent we must be in observing the chashivus (importance) of the main Shabbos Day Seudah. Rav Veltz asserts that this designation is vis-à-vis Seudah Shlishis, offering support to this distinction from the Shlah, Chasam Sofer, and Likutei Chaver Ben Chaim.

As such, he avers that although one may indeed fulfill his Seudah Shlishis obligation with Mezonos when necessary, nonetheless, one should make sure not to conflate the two Shabbos Seudos. In his words, "ain laasos hatafel l'ikar v'ikar l'tafel, le'echol b'Seudah Shniyah pas v'kaffe, uv' Shlishis bassar v'dagim... d'Seudas Shabbos tzarich Hamotzi u'Birkas Hamazon... d'pshita af l'osan haPoskim d'Seudah Shlishis yotzim b'minei targima, aval rak achar Seudah Shniyah B'Shabbos shehu ikar," one should not turn the ikar tafel (primary into secondary) and the tafel ikar (or vice versa) – by having cake and coffee for one's main Shabbos Seudah and reserving the fish and meat for Seudah Shlishis. Although there is a dispensation to fulfill Seudah Shlishis with simple Mezonos, this is exclusively after first fulfilling one's main Shabbos Seudah obligation.[16]

Seudah By Chatzos

This understanding also bears out from the Aruch Hashulchan's shittah regarding the halacha of not fasting on Shabbos or Yom Tov. He explains that although one who drinks a hot drink on Shabbos morning before davening or (even better) makes Kiddush on Mezonos after davening is technically 'not fasting,' nonetheless, optimally, one should still strive to start his full Hamotzi Seudah before Chatzos, as Chazal established the morning Seudah to be held specifically then – while it is still 'morning.' [17] It seems clear from the Aruch Hashulchan's wording that he holds that a Shabbos morning Kiddush, although considered 'Makom Seudah,' nonetheless does not count as the real Seudah. In fact, he refers to it 'toamin m'taamas,' mere tasting, even while 'achal k'zayis,' consuming a proper shiur of Mezonos. Indeed, earlier on, he clearly states that although the minhag is to make Kiddush with Mezonos, it is nonetheless preferable to make 'Seudas Shabbos B'Shleimus, d'zehu Ikar Kiddush B'Makom Seudah,' the full Shabbos Seudah, as that is the primary Kiddush B'Makom Seudah.[18]

Accordingly, it would seem that these esteemed Poskim would be of the opinion that if one would have made Kiddush and later on had the Seudah, they would not consider that Seudah as Seudah Shlishis, but rather the main Shabbos Seudah, and hence, accordingly would maintain that Retzei would need to be repeated if forgotten in Bentching.

Although there does not seem to be a clear consensus or conclusion to this confounding conundrum, and if one forgot Retzei in Birkas Hamazon at the Shabbos day Seudah the Steipler's advice of washing and Bentching again would certainly be prudent, either way, at least we now have some more 'food for thought' for the next Kiddush. After all, if a shul Kiddush can be deemed a Seudah, then surely Divrei Torah would be appropriate to be 'served.' [19]

Written L'Refuah Sheleimah for R' Avrohom Yaakov Abbish ben Chana Rivka and Rav Yair Nissan ben Sarah and L'Iluy Nishmas the Rosh Yeshiva Rav Nosson Nota ben Avraham Yitzchak (Schiller) Rabbi Yehuda Spitz, author of M'Shulchan Yehuda on Inyanei Halacha, serves as the Sho'el U'Meishiv and Rosh Chabura of the Ohr Lagolah Halacha Kollel at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach in Yerushalayim and the author of the Insights Into Halachacolumn.

His recent English halacha sefer, “Insights Into Halacha - Food: A Halachic Analysis,” (Mosaica/Feldheim) contains more than 500 pages and features over 30 comprehensive chapters discussing a myriad of halachic issues relating to food. It is now available online and in bookstores everywhere.

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

[1]“Common Kiddush Questions,” “More Common Kiddush Questions: Kiddush Bemakom Seudah,” and “An Uncommon Kiddush Question: Lechem Mishneh With Mezonos?” [2]Gemara Pesachim (101a). See Rif (Pesachim 20a), Rosh (ad loc. Ch. 10:5), Tosafos (ad loc. 100b s.v. yedei Kiddush), Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos, Ch. 29:8 and 10), and Tur and Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 273:1). [3]Rashbam (ad loc. s.v. af) citing Yeshaya (Ch. 58:13). [4]Masech Rav (122; also cited in Bnei Halacha 275:5 s.v. kavu), and Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 273:11). [5]See Shu”t Ginus Veradim (Orach Chaim 3:12), Birket Yosef (Orach Chaim 273:2 and 6), Be’er Heitiv (ad loc. 7), Shaarei Teshuva (ad loc. 7), Shulchan Aruch Harav (ad loc. 7; interestingly, in the next siman 274:5, he writes that even so, one must have another Seudah on bread, as the Mezonos at a Kiddush does not constitute a meal to fulfill one of his three Shabbos Seudah obligations), Pri Megadim (ad loc. Eishel Avraham 11), Chayei Adam (vol. 2, 6:22), Mateh Efrain (597: 2), Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (77: 14), Ben Ish Chai (Year 2, Parashas Bereishis 7), Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 273:8), Mishnah Berurah (ad loc. 25), and Kaf Hachaim (ad loc. 41). Many contemporary poskim as well, including Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (see Halichos Shlomo on Moadim vol. 1, Ch. 1; footnote 72 and Va’alei Nefesh vol. 1, pg. 141), Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (Kovetz Teshuvos vol. 1:24 s.v. umi), the Minchas Yitzchak (Shu”t vol. 3:13, 7), Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer (Halichos Even Yisrael, Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 14:9 and 25:3), and Rav Moshe Feinstein (Shu”t Igros Moshe, Orach Chaim vol. 4:63, 7 and 8; see also Shu”t Vedibarta Bam vol. 1:72; quoting Rav David Feinstein), rule that the ikar halacha follows the ruling of the Magen Avraham that one may lechanchillah make Kiddush with Mini Mezonos. [6]Shu”t Hisorerus Teshuva (vol. 1:74). [7]Kehillas Yaakov (Brachos 25; 16 in the old print; see also Rav Asher Sonnenfeld’s recent Shaarei Osher on Chagim U’Zmanim vol. 3:22 s.v. v’refe and 110, and Shaarei Osher on Chag HaPesach 44). [8]See Tur and Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 188:5-6) and Shu”t Rabbi Akiva Eiger (vol. 1:3). This was discussed at length in a previous article titled “Facts and Formulae for the Forgetful.” [9]Tur and Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 188:8). The Mishnah Berurah, as well as the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 291:4 and 5), conclude that optimally one should indeed wash for Seudah Shlishis, due to the three times the Torah states “Hayom” in the Parashas HaMunn. [10]Although the Rema (O.C. 291:2) concludes that lechanchilla one should dawn Mincha prior to eating Seudah Shlishis, nevertheless, one in d’ina is still yotzei his chiyuv after Zman Mincha Gedolah. [11]Orchos Rabbeinim(new edition; vol. 1, pg. 237:8). [12]B’Yitzchak Yikarei on the Mishnah Berurah (273:28; thanks are due to R’ Yosef Trubnik for pointing this out). [13]Shu”t Dvrei Yatziv (O.C. vol. 1:127). This was detailed at length in a previous article titled “An Uncommon Kiddush Question: Lechem Mishneh With Mezonos?” [14]Although many indeed are makpid to make Kiddush again as part of their main Seudah in order to be Yotzei teichiyuv of Kiddush B’Makom Seudah according to all opinions. This was discussed at length in a previous article titled “More Common Kiddush Questions: Kiddush Bemakom Seudah.” See Shu”t Salmas Chaim (old print vol. 1:59; new print Orach Chaim 255), Shu”t Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim vol. 4:63, 7 and 8), Shu”t Teshuvos V’Hanachos (vol. 1:264), Moadim U’Zmanim (vol. 2:234), and Shu”t Teshuvos Darchei Chaim (vol. 5 s.v. umi). [15]Shu”t Dvrei Yitzel (vol. 1, O.C. 86), citing the Shaarei Teshuva (O.C. 271:1) quoting the Maharsham (Yam Shel Shlomo,Gittin Ch. 4:51). This shittah further bears out from Rav Velz’s Chok L’Yisrael on Erev Pesach Shechal B’Shabbos (footnote 79), who cites the Maharsham’s arguing on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch and further assertion that one should specifically not make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos as then he may have to halachically wash and bench (this machlokes was detailed at length in last week’s article titled “An Uncommon Kiddush Question: Lechem Mishneh With Mezonos?”), as a potential solution on Erev Pesach Shechal B’Shabbos. He explains that this facilitates an easier way to have split Seudos on this Shabbos morning before Sof Zman Achillas Chometz, which many Poskim, himself included, maintain is the preferred option on Erev Pesach Shechal B’Shabbos. He asserts that if one would make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos (i.e. two Rugelach) along with some Maachleil Chaval, it would then technically fully count as one of the Shabbos Seudos, even though it only constituted a small Kiddush, thus easier enabling another Seudah before Sof Zman Achillas Chometz. But this rationale is only valid because Rav Velz understood that in this instance, following the Maharsham’s approach, one would have actually been required to wash and bench for this Kiddush. Seudah. This proves that he is of the opinion that otherwise, a simple Shabbos morning Kiddush would certainly not be considered an actual Seudah. However, it must be noted that this approach is quite novel (in fact, this author has not seen a single other Posek advise this), and especially as the Maharsham seemingly only stated this complicated combination rationale theoretically, and exclusively to argue on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch’s premise; not that people should act upon it practically. [17]Aruch Hashulchan (O.C. 288:1-2). Thanks are due to my father, renowned kashrus expert Rav Manish Spitz, for pointing this application out. See also Rav Shmuel Kamensky’s Kovetz Halachos (Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 14:2), where not only is he makpid for this shittah that lechanchilla the actual Shabbos Seudah should begin before Chatzot, but he also in the footnotes extensively asserts that this is also truly the opinion of many other Poskim, including the Bach, Pri Megadim, and Mishnah Berurah (although he admits that there seems to be a stirah in the psakim of the Pri Megadim and Mishnah Berurah regarding this inyan), although they do not outright state this, as does the Aruch Hashulchan. [18]Aruch Hashulchan (O.C. 273:8). [19]See Pirkei Avos (Ch. 3, Mishnah 3).

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from: Torah Musings <[newsletter@torahmusings.com](mailto:newsletter@torahmusings.com)>  
date: Mar 27, 2025, 11:01 AM  
subject: Torah Musings  
Humiliating Others And The Consequences (Sanhedrin 99a)  
RIETS Kollel Elyon  
Mar 26, 2025  
**Rabbi Daniel Z Feldman**

There is a terrifying warning expressed in today’s Daf Yomi (Sanhedrin 99a, as well as elsewhere in the Talmud): one who humiliates another in public loses his portion in the World to Come, a statement also found in Pirkei Avot (3:11 in many editions), as well as expressed by King David in his retort to his tor-mentors over his past personal failings; he responds with the admonishment that one who shames others in public forfeits his eternal reward, a worse punishment even than that designated for a possible adulterer (Bava Metzia 58b). Commentators offer several possibilities to explain the basis for such a severe condemnation. Rabbenu Yonah, applying a literal reading of a Talmudic passage, views humiliating others to be a subcategory of murder, necessitating martyrdom, in his Sha’arei Teshuvah (Sha’ar 3:141) and in comments to Pirkei Avot. His explanation of the penalty incurred maintains the integrity of this position. He reasons that he who publicly shames others logically shares the punishment of a murderer, who in theory also deserves to be stripped of his portion in the World to Come. However, the murderer actually has an advantage in this area. He has committed a crime that is universally acknowledged as horrendous, and society instantly will register its complete rejection of his actions. Consequently, he will recognize the gravity of his misdeed and will repent fully. Having done so, he will continue to bear the responsibility for his actions on the temporal plane but will ultimately achieve atonement, and the eternal punishment will be suspended. However, a person who embarrasses others, although spiritually he is equivalent to a murderer, may never reach such a realization. Society will not rebuke him

comparably, if at all, and in his own mind he has committed no serious transgression. Thus, the repentance effected by the shedder of blood will not be undertaken by he who humiliates his fellow, and the eternal punishment will not be suspended.

Maimonides offers a different rationale, and once again it is one consistent with his position noted elsewhere. In his commentary to the Mishnah (Sanhedrin, ch. 10:1) he observes that shaming others does not appear to be a prohibition that one would intuitively associate with such a severe punishment as losing one’s portion in the future reward. However, the action is indicative of the nature of its protagonist. One who would regularly engage in such behavior can only be one of low character and underdeveloped morality, an individual whose behavior in general will inevitably result in spiritual condemnation. (The source and logic behind Maimonides’ assumption that the penalty is only for who commits this transgression “regularly” is discussed in R. Moshe Feinstein, Responsa Iggerot Moshe, Orach Chaim vol. 5, 20:14.)

Elsewhere, Maimonides declined to impose martyrdom to avoid humiliating others (according to most understandings), in dispute with some other authorities who took the comparison to murder to be literal. Here, apparently feeling the homicide/humiliation comparison to be nonliteral, he is loyal to that position. In his view the transgression itself did not earn the punishment, but rather revealed a personality who will prove himself in other ways to be deserving of such. (See also Menorat HaMa’or 58 and Nachal Kedumim, Parshat Kedoshim.)

The P’nei Yehoshua, in his commentary to Bava Metzia (59a), suggests another basis for this notion. There is a widely held assumption that one who commits suicide, at least in the absence of certain miti-gating conditions, and chooses to do so for philosophical reasons without emotional duress, forfeits his portion in the World to Come. (R. Yosef Shaul Nathanson, Yad Shaul to Yoreh Deah, 345, questions this assumption, claiming that it is not explicitly stated in any Talmudic sources. The Pardes Yosef, Ex. 20:13, goes to lengths to provide such a source. See also Even Ya’akov 1 of the Tzitz Eliezer, Rabbi Eliezer Yehudah Waldenberg, and R. Yosef Schwartz, Ginzei Yosef 13:2. R. Ovadiah Yosef assumes this to be the implication of Gittin 57b, Yabbia Omer 6:Y.D.:13:14. See also, at length, R. David Shperber, Responsa Afarkasta D’Anyan, IV, 370:.) Nonethe-less, the Talmud states that it is preferable to hurl oneself into a fiery furnace before shaming another. It must be, writes the P’nei Yehoshua, that embarrassing others carries a punishment at least as severe as suicide, or else the latter would not be a preferable option. This explanation is slightly difficult to understand, however, as a person who is halachically compelled to sacrifice his life cannot readily be considered as one who has committed a transgression of suicide. This objection is raised at length by R. Binyamin Aryeh Weiss (Responsa Even Y’kara, Mahadurah Tinyana 96. It seems from the P’nei Yehoshua’s language, it should be noted, that he is sensitive to this difficulty).

The Iyyun Ya’akov (Bava Metzia 59a), commenting on the Talmud’s statement that it is preferable to have relations with a possibly mar-ried woman rather than humiliate another person, highlights another aspect of this transgression. In his opinion, martyrdom is an option rather than an obligation, a recommendation based on the severity of the punishment. This penalty is greater than that for adultery, as the Talmud implies, because adulterous tendencies are a normal part of human makeup and a source of great temptation. Humiliating others, however, is not an innate human tendency, and thus its egregiousness is not mitigated by the realities of mortal weakness. (Compare the comments of R. Avraham Bornstein, Responsa Avnei Nezer, Even HaEzer 57.) The author of the Midrash Eliyahu notes a further manner in which humiliation is more severe than murder: physical death occurs once and is over with, while the emotional pain lasts and reverberates.

The P’nei Yehoshua (Bava Metzia 58b) offers another possibility, this time in the name of the Tosafot Yom Tov, citing the Midrash Shmuel. One who embarrasses another and strips away his sense of dignity violates his tzelem Elokim, his creation in the image of God, as noted elsewhere in the name of

the Alshikh. It is this Divine image that is the basis for the soul. One who has displayed a disregard for this image, therefore, undermines his own conception of a soul. (See also Chiddushei Aggadot of the Maharal of Prague, Gittin 56b, as well as Bava Metzia 59a, and Be'er Avot to Pirkei Avot of R. Menachem Mendel Frankel, Teomim, R. Moshe Outz Meri, Ahavat Shalom to Pirkei Avot, and Torat Chaim, Bava Kama 90a.)

The Sefer Tikkunei Teshuvah expresses a similar notion, ruling that one who humiliates others must fast as atonement and that acquiring the forgiveness of the injured party is not sufficient. Similarly, note also the language of the Orchot Tzadikim (Sha'ar HaTeshuvah): "He who humiliates another, this is his penitence: he must appease him, and fast forty days or more, and afflict himself every day, and confess all of his days."

This builds on the assumption that there exists here more than an interpersonal crime, but rather an attack has been committed against God Himself through the vehicle of the Divine image. This is a concept that has ground-ings in midrashic sources. R. Tanchuma, in a discussion of the severity of humiliating others, is quoted as remarking, "Know: whom are you disgracing? 'In the image of God he was created!'" (Bereishit Rabbah 24:8; see also Sanhedrin 58b. Note Tomer Devorah, ch. 2.) Further, the Tal-mud (Berakhot 17a) derives significant halakhic principles from the verse "He who mocks the poor blasphemes his Creator" (Prov. 17:5).

As many have noted, the Talmud's comparison of humiliation and murder cannot be taken literally for any practical purposes. Nonetheless, it is not simply hyperbole; it makes a crucial ethical point. One who would humiliate another is, in many senses of the term, playing with fire. If not literally, the point must be taken seriously.

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from: TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>

date: Mar 27, 2025, 8:31 PM

**Rabbi Daniel Stein**

Pride in the Pekudei Hamishkan

Coping with sin might be an inescapable feature of religious life, as the pasuk states, "for there is no righteous man on earth who does good and does not sin" (Koheles 7:20). Indeed, the existence of the Ten Days of Repentance as an annual fixture on the Jewish calendar attests to the universal and constant need for correction and improvement. Nevertheless, there is a world of difference between one who succumbs to temptation and engages in errant behavior, even on a continual basis, and the individual for whom transgression has become a lifestyle and deeply held identity, perhaps even a source of pride. When performance of a sin metastasizes from a lapse in judgement or lack of self-control into a policy and ideology, not only is teshuvah unlikely, for there is no basis for regret, the core values of the Torah and mitzvos are in danger of becoming confused and distorted. For this reason, the accountings of the Mishkan are introduced with the words "eileh pekudei haMishkan" - "these are the accounts of the Mishkan" (Shemos 38:21) which the Medrash (Pekudei 51:8) relates to the phrase uttered upon the emergence of the Golden Calf, "eileh elohecha Yisrael" - "these are your Gods Yisrael" (Shemos 32:4). According to the Medrash, "Hashem said to Yisrael, when you fashioned the Golden Calf, I was angered by the word eileh, now that you have made the Mishkan, I have been appeased by the word eileh." What was implied by the word "eileh" specifically that aroused the anger of Hashem more so than the actual creation of the Golden Calf itself? Moreover, how was this issue tempered and remedied by the subsequent usage of the word "eileh" upon the completion of the Mishkan?

In his Peirush Maharzu, Rav Zev Wolf Einhorn explains that the word "eileh" connotes a measure of pride, as if to display prominently and exhibit that which was accomplished. When the process of creation was completed, the pasuk states, "eileh toldos hashamayim ve'haaretz" - "this is the history of the heavens and the earth" (Breishis 2:4). On that occasion, Hashem proudly praised the world and boastfully proclaimed "Look at what I have created" (Medrash Bereishis 12:1). Yielding to the desperation of the moment and producing the Golden Calf was undoubtedly a grave mistake. But when Bnei Yisrael paraded the Golden Calf about announcing "eileh elohecha Yisrael,"

in essence flaunting that which they had done without any remorse, it exacerbated their sin and transformed it into a matter of principle. Only by later celebrating the Mishkan in a similar fashion and proudly declaring "eileh pekudei haMishkan" were their values and beliefs properly repaired and restored.

As part of the avodah of Yom Kippur two identical goats were presented before the Kohen Gadol. After drawing lots, one goat was designated as a sacrifice before Hashem in the Beis Hamikdash while the other was dispatched into the wilderness to be brought to Azazel. Upon the head of the goat sent to Azazel, the Kohen Gadol would confess all the iniquities of Bnei Yisrael. According to the Gemara (Yoma 61a), the role of the second goat was to atone for the lone sin of defiling the ritual purity of the Mikdash and its consecrated objects. If all the sins of Bnei Yisrael were carried away by the goat sent to Azazel why wasn't the transgression of contaminating the Mikdash included? In addition, the division of labor here seems lopsided. One goat was sufficient for redressing the entire spectrum of sin while the other was necessary just for violating the rules of the Beis Hamikdash? Rav Moshe Feinstein (Kol Ram, Achrei Mos) suggests that the two goats were atoning for two different kinds of individuals and distinct iterations of sin. There are those who are driven to sin by virtue of their unrestrained instincts, lusts, and cravings. For them the goat sent to Azazel is adequate. However, there are others who pursue an evil course of action as a matter of personal conviction, for they believe it to be right and good. They are guilty of blurring the boundary between holy and profane by introducing impure concepts and foreign actions into the sanctuary of Jewish thought and practice. In this instance the real problem is internal, in the Mikdash of one's mind, where authentic concepts have been infiltrated by poisonous ideas and constructs. It is this brand of sinning, which constitutes the pollution of holy spaces, that is addressed by the goat brought as a sacrifice in the Beis Hamikdash.

When confronting the reality of sin, it is important to bear this distinction in mind. Even Orthodox communal institutions that are otherwise equipped to support those who are struggling with their personal religious observance may not be able to accommodate those who openly and proudly identify with positions and lifestyles that are not compatible with the views and attitudes of the Torah. In our private lives as well, there is a periodic need for cheshbon hanfesh not only regarding our behaviors but also in relation to our entrenched stances and perspectives.

There is a great disparity between the duration of the exile after the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash, which lasted for seventy years, and the length of the exile after the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash, which is still ongoing. In grappling with this phenomenon, the Gemara (Yoma 9b) explains that during the first Beis Hamikdash they were guilty of adultery, idolatry, and murder which are exposed and obvious sins and therefore easily rectifiable. In the case of the second Beis Hamikdash their primary shortcoming was baseless hatred, which is, by its nature, concealed and obfuscated and therefore continues to evade detection and remediation. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Drash Moshe, Drush 29) adds that baseless hatred lingers because we have adopted it as one of the principles that we proudly tout. All too often we believe that our hatred is not baseless at all, but rather justified and righteous, and hence our failure to rectify this sin is not a behavioral flaw but an ideological one.

As we enter the month of Nissan and the season of renewal it is an appropriate time to rethink and reassess our actions and as well as our perspectives and perceptions. In that merit, may we witness the redemption and see "sins cease from the land" (Tehillim 104, 35).