Kol Mevaseret
A Compilation of Insights and Analyses of Torah Topics
by the students of Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim
Jerusalem, 5772
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Chapter 19 of תהלים records one of דוד's many praises of Hashem. The entire first half of the פרק is devoted to a poetic description about how all of creation praises Him:

The sky itself declares Hashem's glory, stretching from one end of the earth to another, and providing a backdrop for the star of the show – the sun – who triumphantly emerges each morning. With the enthusiasm of a חותן היוצא – a bridegroom emerging from his חופה in ecstasy, the sun travels each day across the sky, proclaiming its enthusiasm for serving Hashem, and warming all of creation with that excitement.

But then suddenly and abruptly, the פרק switches themes, and appears to be discussing something else entirely:

These verses pay homage to uniqueness of התורה study, and the unique gifts that התורה provides for those who study it.
The תורה is pure, and refreshes our souls. Hashem’s commandments are bright, straight and sweet as honey, and fear of Him is pure and everlasting.

Both halves of this פרק are beautiful poetic images that illuminate important religious teachings. But what do they have to do with one another? Why are they in the same פרק?

דוד מוצדת זר explains that all of the images in the second half (the ones referring to the תורה) are meant as contrasts to the central image of the first half – the sun. Whereas the sun is powerful, the תורה is תמימה – perfect, because it restores our soul under all circumstances (as opposed to sunlight which can be of benefit to people but can also do damage). The sun can cause happiness or hardship, but the מצות are always לבمشמי.

Looking directly into the sun can damage one’s eyes, but מצות ‘עניים מאירת ברה – Hashem’s commandments always enlighten us.

The one who studies the Torah and follows it, therefore, is able to bring warmth and excitement to the world, and to enlighten all of creation, even more than the sun which itself is מחופה יוצא כחתן, ארח לרוץ כגיבור יישיש.

The תלמידות of MMY 5772, among whom are the authors of the articles in this journal, spent a year immersed in the study of הקדושה תורתנו within the walls of MMY’s מדרש בית. They themselves benefitted from all of תורתו unique abilities to improve mankind, which המלך expresses in such an exalted fashion in these פסוקים.

The transformative happiness and excitement of learning is palpable to anyone who steps foot into MMY’s building on חברון דרך in ירושלים. But after a period of time immersed in the study of תורה, it is incumbent upon all of us to emerge from the מדרש with even greater enthusiasm than the
sun emerges each morning, to share the warmth and light of Torah with everyone else – This journal offers some insights into the Torah studied in MMY by the תלמידות of 5772, and it is our pleasure to share these articles with the public.

בר ينب יודר, Trường

Rabbi Alan Haber
תנוחר
The Secret of the חמש:
The Destructive Potential of Human Emotion

Language is an exceptionally intricate art. Each word has the ability to breathe new life and meaning into a passage in a book or into everyday speech. However, people often underestimate the power of words and ignore their depth. The highly unique word חמש, which explains the fifth rib, is used only four times throughout all of תנך, exclusively in שמאל הב'.

The term first appears when דוד אבנר killed ב来做: שעשה ילבשיו לחוטם והחל את החולות של אבנר וחושב ויהיו להם לחות ובٱל ת 때 אח ויהיו לחות. It is used a second time when describing יואב in turn killed אבנר: שם ויכהו החמש בדם ויהיו אחועשלה. The word appears in a third context when רחב ובענה assassinated אישבשת: אל ויכהו חטים לקחי הבית עמו עד באו והנה החמש. The word is present a fourth and final instance when יואב stabbed עמשא: ושמשה אל בה ויכהו יואב ביד אשר חזרב נשמר לא החמש ויהיו לו שנה ולא ארץ מעיו וישפך.

This unusual term creates a link between these stories, threading them together through themes of treachery and immorality. Through this connection, a cause-and-effect chain of events
emerges. Thus, החשمش serves to teach people the power of one word and the effect of one person.

The first account of murder introduces the theme of deceit. In דוד מַצְוֹת, אַבֵּנֵר, שמואל ב פרק ב יֵאֵש, יִוָּאָב, והוֹד’s lead commander, instigated a battle with יִוָּאָב, דוד’s lead commander, to compare the military powers of both armies. The battle escalated and ultimately defeated אַבֵּנֵר, יִוָּאָב, ושָׁמָהא, אַבֵּנֵר’s brother, pursued אַבֵּנֵר in order to fully achieve victory through the opposing commander’s death. The battle intensified and ultimately defeated אַבֵּנֵר, יִוָּאָב, ושָׁמָהא, in the fifth rib. אַבֵּנֵר validates his actions by affirming אַבֵּנֵר’s status as a רְדָף and concluding that he was acting in of self-defense⁶. However, רְדָף⁷ argues that אַבֵּנֵר did not have the right to kill ושָׁמָהא. Rather, he could have adequately defended himself by wounding ושָׁמָהא in the fifth rib. The term רְדָף validates the in数控 in which describes a conversation between אַבֵּנֵר and the Sanhedrin in which אַבֵּנֵר maintained that he did not intend to kill ושָׁמָהא. אַבֵּנֵר claimed that a lack of focus when he aimed his weapon caused his attack to have fatal results, despite his attempt to merely injure. Through this assertion, אַבֵּנֵר made himself appear blameless in ושָׁמָהא’s murder. However, the Sanhedrin challenged him by pointing out that he had enough concentration and aim to specifically stab ושָׁמָהא in the fifth rib. This indicates that אַבֵּנֵר did, in fact, intentionally kill ושָׁמָהא. The term החשمش is thus used to indicate אַבֵּנֵר’s dishonesty and deceit.

The second stabbing in the החשمش exemplifies a murder which was even more dishonest and cunning than the first. According to דוד מַצְוֹת, יִוָּאָב, אַבֵּנֵר blatantly tricked אַבֵּנֵר into thinking that he had a message for him. When אַבֵּנֵר came to receive the message,
The next incident in which the word חמש appears depicts a progressively more severe case of deception and immorality. In דפרקב שמואל, רחב and בענה, two officers of אישבשת, dressed up as wheat gatherers and entered אישבשת’s room while he was asleep. They killed אישבשת and brought his head to דוד in an attempt to earn דוד’s praise for murdering the only remaining impediment to his acquisition of the throne. Their crime was unabashed and portrays a complete lack of respect for human life. Thus, the word חמש highlights the presence of an even higher level of treachery in yet another murder story.

In the accounts of אבנר, יואב, רחב, and בענה, the word חמש illuminates the progression of dishonesty. As the stories continue, the level of treachery deepens. אבנר was dishonest in his confrontation with the סנהדרין. At the same time, he murdered אתה蓮 in self-defense and not merely in pursuit of personal gain. In the second murder, יואב’s only reason for killing אבנר was revenge and he did so in complete deceit. However, he, too, did not murder for profit. Finally, רחב and בענה brought this trait to its climax. Their treachery was total: murdering an innocent man and betraying their own royalty merely in pursuit of wealth and power.

The word חמש further links these accounts by showing their cause-and-effect relationship. Due to אבנר’s killing of אתה蓮, יואב’s vengeance for his brother was aroused which, in turn, lead him to murder אבנר. As a result, אישבשת no longer had 에רחא莲 protecting him and his kingdom. רחב and בענה, therefore, could freely enter אישבשת’s room and murder him in his sleep. Each first murder acted as a catalyst for the next incident.
The final usage of the word חמש appears in כפרק, also in the context of murder. Although not directly connected with the other occurrences, this killing strongly relates to them. This incident occurred following רוד’s choice to replace יואב, his head commander, with עמשא who was consequently murdered by יואב out of spite. According to רש"י10 and many other commentators, יואב purposely tied his sword in an abnormal way that would cause the sword to fall and allow יואב to pick it up without noticing. When יואב approached עמשא, he grabbed on to עמשא’s beard, as if to kiss him. instead, he stabbed him in the חמש.

This appearance of the term חמש, like those previously mentioned, accentuates the themes of treachery and immorality. The פסוק explicitly states that עמשא was entirely unaware of his predicament: יואב ביד אשרבחרב נשמר ולא עמשא. יואב had no right to kill him and, moreover, did so in utter deceit. חמש in this context refers to all its previous usages and in doing so, once again serves the purpose of highlighting the murderer’s actions as devious.

While the mere appearance of the word חמש indicates the themes of treachery and immorality, the meaning of the word itself alludes to these traits as well. All the murderers stabbed their victims specifically in the חמש, the fifth rib, conveying the murderers’ true intentions and qualities. According to the גמרא12, the fifth rib is over the liver, the organ responsible for detoxification and necessary for digestion. The acts of murder described here reflect the toxins of deceit and trickery found within the murderers.

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9 שםיאלא ב כ"ד
10 רש"י שםיאלא ב כ"ת
11 שםיאלא ב כ"ח
12 סנהדרין ט לא.
Alternatively, דוד מצודת ודז holds that the הפשׁה is over the heart, where a person’s true intentions are hidden. Although אבנר had a basis on which to claim his innocence, his true intentions were to kill, as were all the others’. The heart is the home for emotions and feelings towards others; however, none of these people had love or even concern for others. They had no understanding of another’s life and worth. Instead, their hearts harbored hatred. The הפשׁה of each of these murderers was the source of their hateful traits. Moreover, instead of recognizing the qualities within themselves and correcting them, they placed the blame for their faults on others. Stabbing their victims was the physical manifestation of handing the fault over to them. The fifth rib and the organs it protects hint to the root of the sins of אבנר, יואב, רחב, and בענה.

The repetition of the word הפשׁה reveals these themes of deceit and treachery. הפשׁה links all the murders together, creating a series of cause and effect incidents, showing that the first act perpetrated by אבנר resulted in the proceeding events. The word הפשׁה thus unlocks the main lesson in all these stories: the power of each person’s attitude and actions has the strength to create an ongoing rippling effect on everyone around him. One person’s mindset and deeds can create a chain of events which will leave an indelible mark and irremovable impact, which can last for generations.
Prashat Shoftim: Structure of the
Torah’s Ideal Government

The Torah begins with the commandment to appoint שופטים, a term which generally refers to judges. Following this commandment, the Torah details a number of other laws on a variety of topics, including the prohibitions against idolatry, laws of קרבנות, the borders of the land, the נביאים, the king, and procedures relating to war and peace. This provokes the question: how do all these laws fit together into one theme, and how do they connect to the theme of דברים as a whole?

Mentioned in the same section as the מצוה of appointing שופטים is the prohibition against planting trees for idolatry, the prohibition of creating מצבות (altar-like platforms used for idolatry), the prohibition of bringing blemished sacrifices, and the commandment to seek out idol worshippers. These מצות appear to be disconnected and unrelated – not only to each other, but to the preceding commandment to appoint judges as well.

Idolatrous trees and מצבות, according to Rav Hirsch, “cloud the Jewish conception of ה. Our meticulousness in ensuring that our קרבנות are without blemish mirrors our striving to submit to

1 However, these שופטים are interpreted by many מפרשים as much more than that, as the basis for the entire Halachic system

2 דברים ט כא
3 דברים ט כב
4 דברים יז א
5 דברים יז ב-ז
without blemish. Similarly comments that by removing idolatrous trees and giving blemish-free קרבנות, we are acknowledging our internal and individual devotion to ה. Furthermore, says Rav Hirsch, we must remove negative external influences, namely, idol worshippers, so that we do not fall prey to their tendencies of blemishing our service of ה. Only after following such conditions can sustain and properly appoint שופטים to maintain such justice in our social and political realms.

The next section opens with the words, which means “if a matter requires clarification”. This command mandates the use of the courts whose establishment was commanded in the opening verses. This instruction fits logically with the initial emphasis on having a בית דין in order to clarify הלה in a Godly and just setting. Additionally, the choice of the word אלה, usually used in the context of miracles, seems to reveal something new and profound about the nature of this judicial branch of government: just as miracles, according to R’ Hirsch, are wholly new entities created by ה that have no connection to previous series of events, so too, שופטים must view every case as an entirely new, original case, without preconceived notions.

This is the theme that ties together not only this section, but the rest of פרשת שופטים as well. According to רמברגן, regardless of whether or not a person agrees with the verdict of the בית דין, he must follow the verdict because of the notion of ויהי ה לע¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="10" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="9" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="8" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="7" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="6" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="5" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="4" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="3" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="2" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/¶MethodName="end_note" Método="endNote" type="plain" number="1" content="בש汚れם שופטים, דברים יא"/
By following the court’s ultimate decision, one is following לֶסְמֹן הַחַתָּן וַיַּשְׁמֹע אֹרְרֵי אֶשֶׁר הֲרָאוּךָ בְּךָ. As we will now see, a similar concept underlies the authority of other authority figures and government functionaries as well.

The next section discusses the appointment of a king, representing the next branch of government. According to רֹמְבִּית תּוֹרָה, appointing a king is one of the three תּוֹמִצָּה that must be fulfilled when they conquer the land; namely, to appoint a king, to eliminate עֲמָלְקֵי and to build the מקדש. According to R. Hirsch, appointing a king is the mitzvah that will assist ישראל בני וירשת in creating an orderly, just nation. Thus, the establishment of this branch of government fits with the פרשה’s theme of creating a social and political system according to ה’.

The following section essentially discusses the future lifestyle of the כהנים and ימיו, who are meant to be the spiritual leaders of the nation. These לוי בני actually represent a third branch of government; a reinforcement that ה’ must be carried out so that the political and social realms of the nation shall thrive. חזקוני believes that the reason ישראל ארץ receive no portion is in order that they not be burdened with the daily responsibilities of cultivating and maintaining the land. Without the burden of such responsibilities, the לוי בני can commit to being uninterrupted, devoted spiritual leaders of ישראל.

Following the subject of כענס, the notion of prophecy is discussed. This section delineates our obligation to listen to true

11 רֹמְבִּית תּוֹרָה: דְּבָרִים י:א
12 דְּבָרִים תּוֹנֶךְ
13 רְפוּאֵל מַשֶּׁנה חוֹדֶה וּלְטוֹחָה מַלְכוּת א:א
14 חזקוני, דְּבָרִים י:ח
15 דְּבָרִים י:ח:בֵּב
prophets and avoid false ones. décões comments that the dis-
cussion about נביאים because the leadership of נביאים is yet another form of authority in the Torah’s social-political system. נביאים, although perhaps not usually considered to constitute a branch of government, nevertheless offer vital sources of guidance directly from ה.

After the section about נביאים, the next three topics dis-
cussed in the פרשה נביאים, the preservation of borders, and conspiring witnesses נביאים נביאים. According to ספורנו, all of these fall under the jurisdiction of the judicial branch of government. Lastly, the topics following the judicial theme discuss the processes of war and peace נביאים נביאים. The last topic discussed in the נביאים, הער נביאים, is a procedure that takes place when a dead body is found in between cities, and the murderer is not known. This is a halachic procedure that involves the נביאים, who represent the entire governing body of the city closest to the scene of the murder.

Only after the נביאים finishes discussing the key instru-
ments that will ensure a strong, just government does the נביאים then discuss how to accomplish the government’s most significant goal: safeguarding human life נביאים נביאים. The subject of preserving borders is written adjacent to the subject of נביאים. This unique placement represents the court’s two separate functions: דיני נביאים (civil law) נביאים נביאים.

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16 חוכנים, דברים י:ט
17 דברים י:ט-א
18 ספורנו, דברים י:ב
19 דברים י:ג-ט
20 דברים ט:א-ג
21 כ דברים ט:א-ט
and נפשות (criminal law). Both types of law rely heavily on the belief and trust in witnesses. Thus, these two sections are juxtaposed with each other in order to emphasize the importance of witness integrity in order to help uphold לְשׁוֹן’s will in the courts.

Only after describing the domestic government does the Torah discuss foreign affairs; how יִשְׂרָאֵל are to proceed in going to war and handling peace processes. רשי explains why the sections of government are juxtaposed next to this section on מלחמה. This unique placement highlights the notion that, if יִשְׂרָאֵל carry out righteous judgment and follow לְשׁוֹן’s guidelines when dealing with domestic government, they will succeed in war and in foreign affairs in general. Furthermore, Rav Hirsch infers from the opening פסוק of this section that all matters delineated in this section deal exclusively with a רַשות מלחמה (optional war, as opposed to מצוות מלחמה, obligatory war, which includes the conquering of the land from the seven nations). This optional war, led by the king, aptly fits with the theme of the פרשה discussing the king’s jurisdiction and his delegated powers.

The structure of the laws in פרשה ultimately delineates the ideal way לְשׁוֹן prefers יִשְׂרָאֵל to govern themselves and allow us to understand the deeper meaning behind the intricate, and sometimes unrelated laws in יִשְׂרָאֵל’s legal system.
Sara Tepper

Just Within Sight...
But Just Out of Reach

was perhaps the greatest leader to ever lead the nation. He remained a steadfast leader through the formation of the nation in מצרים itself, and all the way through the forty years in the מדבר. But when their ultimate destination loomed just ahead, over the ירדן and into the land of Israel, וinecraft told that he could not continue and complete the mission. Why was וinecraft denied this final step of fulfillment of the dream?

In פרשת דברים, וinecraft stated why he couldn’t continue: וinecraft was angry with וinecraft because of the sin of the מרגלים, as that is the incident which was mentioned previously, directly before this פסוק which begins with ו. However, this seems a bit strange. Could it really be due to the people’s sin of which he was not a part, that וinecraft, the שורר, wasn’t allowed to enter the land of Israel, which he wanted to do with all his heart?

This question actually runs deeper. We see in פרשת חקת, at the incident of מרב, וinecraft stated: וinecraft was punished for this event and not to the sin of מרגלים or the sin of מרב. So which sin was actually the cause - the sin of מרגלים or the sin of מרב? Are these two separate reasons, or are they perhaps related?

1 דברים א:2
2 דברים כ:2
A closer look at the various מפרשים relating to these events can shed light on both situations. The רבועים in דברים explains that the incident with the רוניים is commemorated as a national day of mourning for all of ישראל. Therefore, this event must have been seen as a communal sin in the eyes of יהוה, and would indicate that the whole nation should be punished, not merely the spies. If so, then perhaps we can understand that משה himself was also included in the punishment, as implied in דברים פרשת רעים.

But still, in פרשת חקת it says that the reason משה wasn’t allowed to enter the land of Israel was because of the incident at מי מרביעי. The רמב“ן addresses this problem and explained that the פסוק in דברים must be split into two statements. The first half of the פסוק says כי בְּגַם יֵשֵׁב הָעֹלָה, which means that because of the spies, the entire nation would be prevented from entering the land. The מרגלים חטא wasn’t simply an individual sin with personal ramifications, but rather it was a sin that had a ripple effect on the entire nation. This is why the whole nation needed to be rebuked and was unable to enter the land – and משה included himself in that rebuke. The רמב“ן goes on to explain that while the current generation had sinned, the next generation would be worthy of entering the land and יהושע would lead them in. Because the leader is responsible for the community he creates, we can infer that רמב“ן saw a direct connection between the מרגלים sin and משה, their leader.

The second part of the פסוק, בְּגַם יֵשֵׁב הָעֹלָה..., פסוק, goes on to say that it was because of ישראל, with their pressure and complaints, that משה sinned at מי מרביעי by hitting the rock.

With this, רמב“ן, we can perhaps answer our initial questions regarding משה’s punishment. He was actually punished for both incidents: one as the leader of a community, and one as a...
personal sin. We can now understand the basis behind משלו’s punishment and how the two sins are related.

Regarding the sin of the spies, it’s understandable why משלו wouldn’t be allowed to go in to ארץ ישראל – he brought up a nation that could speak negatively about the land. But why was the sin of hitting the rock – a personal sin seemingly minor in comparison – also mentioned as a reason for this harsh punishment?

To answer this we must analyze the פסוקים in פרשת חקת רשם. רש"י comments that משלו’s sin was specifically that he hit the rock rather than speaking to it⁵. אבן עזרא comments that he hit the rock twice when he was supposed to hit it once⁶. רמב"ם says he got punished because he lost his temper and spoke harshly⁷, while רב נטירא says that it was because he said that he would give בני ישראל water without acknowledging that it would actually be מ"ש that would be giving it to them⁸.

In general, the מפרשים can be divided into two groups – those who believe that משלו did something wrong physically in dealing with the rock (רש"י and אבן עזרא) and those who attribute the sin to his general mindset (רמב"ן and רמב"ם). All of these reasons, however, can be viewed as manifestations of a single flaw: משלו’s leadership abilities. The first group claims that משלו lacked the appropriate level of אמונה by being impatient and hitting the rock. Additionally, hitting the rock twice showed a sense of urgency. We learn from משלו’s physical sins concerning the rock that he lacked אמונה and succumbed to the pressure of the people. The views regarding his angry words to the nation and his claim that he

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⁵ במדבר כב: "הקדישני יהוה" רש"י ⁶ אבן עזרא במדבר כ: "קח אתמטה" ⁷ "sitemap פורשים" פרק ד ⁸ רב נטירא במדבר כ:
would give them water rather than attributing it to Hashem, both led to Moshe being unable to lead the people into Eretz Yisrael. He was a great leader during Yisrael's Exodus and all the way through the Negev, but this time could not extend into entering and conquering the land. At that point, Bnei Yisrael needed a leader that had steadfast, unwavering faith in Hashem, patience with the people, and acknowledgement of Hashem's Hand in everything.

Now we can finally answer our question about how these two sins relate to each other. These are not distinct matters, but two aspects of one single issue. The incident of the rock shows Moshe failing personally (because of his relationship with the people), while the sin of the spies shows Moshe failing as a leader, through his personal action of sending the spies. Both exhibit the same qualities that made it impossible for Moshe to be the one to lead the nation into Eretz Yisrael.

Or, to take a different approach, perhaps we can suggest that this isn't even a punishment at all – just a natural consequence of the situation: the passing of one leader to make way for the next.

Ultimately, though, Moshe remains a truly exemplary leader and figure that we have much to learn from. Through this analysis of his exceedingly minor flaws, we can learn of his overall greatness as well as from his failings.
Growing Day by Day –
the Example of רבי משה

After 120 years we will each be called upon to give an accounting of our life in front of the Ultimate Judge. We will give a report on the success of our mission, because only we have the capacity to fulfill such a mission and to be in the immediate presence of ר. 

Every Jew is created בצלם א-ל; therefore, each of us has the potential to become great. Yet we all start small, and sometimes it can take a lifetime to achieve our potential. We see this clearly illustrated in פרשהを通して. Just like every person, he starts off small and throughout the פרשה we see how he gradually develops his מדות, until at 80 years old he reaches the level of becoming הרבי.

In the beginning of ותשמ, משה hadn’t yet had enough time to grow spiritually, and is therefore referred to as היליד. However both יי פסוק and יא פסוק use similar phrasing of היליד רשי. רש"י explains that the first use of the word ויגדל is referring to משה’ physical growth and the second mention in יא פסוק is in terms of spiritual improvement. Only now in יא פסוק is משה given a name, thus signifying his spiritual development as he gradually grows closer to fulfilling his mission.
Yet this is only the beginning of מְשַׁה's growth process, as he views every stage of life as a means of strengthening his מִדְוִים. We see how מְשַׁה grows stronger in בְּפָרָק יא פָסַוקים—יב. His compassion for Іִשְׂרָאֵל was so great, that he could not bear to see them being beaten by פרעון's taskmasters. מְשַׁה was so greatly distraught by the beatings that he hit and killed one of the Egyptians, מצרי את וּיְכָ. יִרְשָׁב רב explains how this trait in מְשַׁה’s character is of utmost importance. מְשַׁה felt that it was his duty to help an innocent person being harmed. Although we see מְשַׁה's improvement in מִדְוִים, he still had not yet reached his ultimate level of leadership. This is evident in פרעון and when מְשַׁה turned and saw that there was no one around וּיְפַן כָּה איש אין כי וּיְרָא והָאִיש. יִרְשָׁב רב goes onto explain how this proves that at that moment, מְשַׁה lacked the 'daring boldness which rushes without thinking into danger'. Although מְשַׁה was far from being a leader at this point in his life, he had grown much closer to fulfilling his potential than the very beginning of the פרק. מְשַׁה's thirst for strengthening his וְכָה in every stage of his life is what enabled him to become a leader. After פרעון condemned him for his action against the Egyptian, he was forced to flee מצרים and he traveled to מַדְיְנַה. יִרְשָׁב רב 6 explains how shepherds came and pushed the seven daughters of the כָּה away and mistreated them, however מְשַׁה came to help them, simply out of kindness, in order to aid mistreated beings.
In פָּרְק ינ, Moshe entered a new stage of life in מְדִינָה when he became a צָאֶן. This not only implies that Moshe literally becomes a shepherd, but figuratively too. The מַדְרָש tells us how Moshe was chosen to lead בֶּן יִשְׂרָאֵל due to the compassion that he displayed towards one helpless animal. When he brought the sheep to a river for water, one lamb did not come so Moshe went over to the animal and carried it to the water to allow it to drink. Like 'ה, Moshe cared about each individual in the group, not just about the group as a whole. And here Moshe proved himself worthy of becoming a shepherd for 'ה’s children. Only now, at the age of 80, had Moshe reached the level of becoming a leader.

One would think that since Moshe had now reached the level of undertaking such a challenging mission and had gained such a high level of authority, he would feel accomplished and would perhaps feel no more of a need to grow. But this is not the end of his personal development; Moshe constantly strove higher and always realized that the מַדְרָש that he was on at every stage of his life was only a fraction of what he can achieve. Throughout the rest of פְּרֶשֶת שֵׁם הָעָם and the entire ספר שֵׁם הָעָם we see clearly how Moshe continuously developed himself through the rest of his life until his death where he was described in דברים as הַעֲבֵד דָּוִד וַיָּמֵת. And one of the main reasons for this was his humility. In פָּרְק ינ, when 'ה commanded Moshe to take ישראל בני אָיִית מֵמִצְרָי, Moshe questioned his own ability, פרעה אֲלֹהֵיךָ כי אנכי מי אֲנִי מִמִּצְרָי. וְיהוָה רָפָא יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָדִיעָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָי. יָדִיעָה אֲנִי שֵׁם הָעָם וַיְקַלְּלֵנִי שֵׁם הָעָם, כי אנוכי מי אֲנִי מִמִּצְרָי.
saw his complete unsuitability for the work made him the most suitable for it. He goes on to explain how 'ה required a man who was the greatest חכם and at the same time the greatest ענו. This is such a valuable lesson that רבינו teaches us. רבי_SMואל teacheus that המ started out small and through many years of constant growth he managed to become הרב, and continue growing until ultimately he became the most suitable for the work and the most fit for it11.

Each one of us possesses a divine soul and therefore each one of us has the potential to achieve greatness. But רבי_SMואל highlights the fact that greatness does not come easily or instantly. We see this too in ספר יוהושע. At the beginning of the ספר יוהושע is referred to only as and only by the end of his life in ספר יוהושע י is he referred to as being a true ' 부분. This further teaches us that it takes many, many years of one’s life to achieve our potential and often up to a lifetime.

The first מוסף in ספר תהילים discusses the worthiness of one who immerses oneself in תורה. It begins in ספר תהילים: and only in the last פסוק of the מוסף does it change from איש to צדיק, again signifying this vital message. It begins with איש to highlight the fact that any person can become a צדיק. We all have the potential to become a leader in our own unique way, though we all start as an איש, just as מحرف יוהושע starts his life as הילך, small and untitled. Yet only by emulating the ways of רבי_SMואל, by using every stage of our lives as an opportunity for growth, of

11 הבכור ביצי ואישון משם לנני מכל האדם אחר לעי המאה.
12 יהושע כאו יהי אברר כך משם ידע הבני ה ゴリメר לאשר יהושע בן בן משה לא פרש).
13 יהושע בדעת יהי אברר הדמויות ההאמות רות יהושע בן בן עני להב ממקים מעש
14 תהלים א:א אבישי ואישון אחר אל הילת במעני龙门ך יהושע בן בן עני אל טע משמש לעי
strengthening our תורה, growing closer to our mission and always remaining humble can we eventually reach the level of becoming a true צירם and a leader.
מהשבה ומעשה
In Pursuit of Peace

The concept of peace tends to be conceptualized in physical terms: the rescue from an enemy or the disappearance of burdens and annoyances; but is this the only “peace” a Jew is meant to strive for? After all, peace is a theme expressed extensively in the תנ"ך: תהלים is bursting with petitions for peace, the blessing of the כהנים ends with a request for peace, and three times a day, in the last ברכה of עשרה שמנים, we send a plea to שמחה ברוך to bless us with peace. Why is peace so important? Why is peace something a Jew is constantly begging and striving for?

"quotes a רש"י stating that יעקב pleaded with הקדוש ברוך הוא to live peacefully. Upon hearing this request, הasher responded that צדיקים dwell in peace only in העתיד הולך. How can this be, if we

1 תהלים
2 כבрабатыва פרק 1
3 כד (כד) בריך ווישמרך: פ (כד) אсан ופייג אליך היונה: פ (כד) איש לא פייג אליך יושם ל שמל: פ (כד)乙烯 ואפיים ולא אמציה: פ
4 רש"י בראשית פרק ל"ז: ווא ווועב וויבט ועשבו, אומר להじゃ ווועבו שמל: ווא ווועב וויבט ועשבו, אומר להじゃ ווועבו שמל: ווא ווועב וויבט ועשבו, אומר להじゃ ווועבו שמל: ווא ווועב וויבט ועשבו, אומר להじゃ ווועבו שמל: ווא ווועב וויבט ועשבו, אומר להじゃ ווועבvo
are constantly asking for peace in this world, in our homes, within our families? If Hashem’s response does indeed reflect the way we should approach the idea of peace, how do the requests for peace permeating the ה’ correspond with other facets of Judaism? Is peace not placed on the pedestal of Jewish achievement? Do we not plead for peace three times a day? In order to completely understand the idea of peace, we must expound upon ‘יעקב’s search for peace.

The first scenario indicating ‘יעקב’s attempt to attain peace is when he came to שכם in a state of שלם. The פרק states:

 Ebola ויכם שלח רזר ששםލ באה פדנה א prova ווحن תֶּנְכִים. רזר שלח שלם. According to רש יctest, and this פרק alludes to the peace ‘יעקב felt after overcoming the traumas of his past. רש states that ‘יעקב was שלם in terms of his health since he had been healed from his encounter with theangel, in terms of his wealth because he had stolen none of his money, and in terms of his Torah learning for he had not forgotten his תורה while living in לבן’s house. Subsequently, ויכם, after so many years of hardship, was finally able to feel the tranquility of peace. His entire life had been devoted to fleeing from spiritual and physical dangers. Now, finally, ויכם was able to sample and appreciate the sweetness of freedom.
Yet, something is flawed with this image. If יִצָּכְבָּר truly did achieve peace, why was his next life event one of the biggest tragedies in all of התורה? Moreover, soon after this event, יִצָּכְבָּר asserts that Hashem specifically told יִצָּכְבָּר not to live in peace. Why did יִצָּכְבָּר continue to search for peace then, and why did his pursuit of this peace lead to tragedy?

The first time שכם is mentioned in the התורה is:

**In Pursuit of Peace**

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The first time שכם is mentioned in the התora is:
He explains that Abram was aware of the fact that Abraham may have even prayed for Jacob while in Shechem, as Rambam quotes from Sefer Devarim. Thus, it can be derived from this that, after finally left his house, he should have proceeded directly to Shechem. He should have felt inclined to follow the directive of Abraham’s forefather to go promptly to the Land of Israel, specifically to Shechem.

Nevertheless, instead of following his preordained path into the Land of Israel and beginning his destiny as the father of a nation, Jacob went to a place outside of the Land of Israel.

According to Rashi, Jacob stayed in Shechem for more than a year! This incident is the manifestation of Jacob’s search for peace. A sukkah is a temporary dwelling; by establishing himself in Shechem, he was attempting to construct a home in a temporarily "peaceful" world. Jacob did not want to pursue his destiny as a leader of a nation. Rather, he preferred to view his life as a secluded, isolated event, void of its inevitable connection with history. His search for peace was a search for calmness, after a life filled with turbulence. After all, it is not unreasonable for Jacob to ask whether or not it was really his duty to suffer endlessly in order to forge the path for his descendants. Why then, was his pursuit of peace deemed an improper lapse of judgment in the eyes of Hashem?

Regardless of how comfortable Jacob may have been in Shechem, the decision to go there started a cycle of events that ultimately led to the destruction of the world.

According to the Talmud, the years in the formation of Jacob’s thoughts formed a complete month, a year, and a month. He then said to himself: ‘I have come to a place where I can build my house and called it the house of Jacob, for there Jacob set up his abode.’ He went to Shechem in the summer, and he built a house in the winter, and he went again to Shechem in the summer.
him to more pain and suffering. Though Ṣeḇaḥ intended peace and tranquility in this lifetime, his destiny was to become a leader who wouldn’t have the luxury for such desires. Thus, since Ṣeḇaḥ decided to take a detour before going to the city of Shem, he had to suffer the consequences. Ṣeḇaḥ inevitably conquered Shem, the city where Yisrael Beni were to receive the ברכה והקללה 14, as stated by רמב"ם. 15

Nevertheless, had Ṣeḇaḥ entered Shem at the first possible moment, he would have conquered Shem by way of ברכה only. Since he had deviated from his intended path to attain “peace,” Ṣeḇaḥ had to conquer Shem by means of קללה.

In addition, the kidnapping of דינה 16 by Shem was also an incident orchestrated by Hashem in order to convey to Ṣeḇaḥ that he had sinned by delaying his conquest of Shem. Throughout the narration of the affair of דינה’s kidnapping, the words בתם 17 and ונתן 18 appear numerous times. The idea of giving and

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14 כלי יקר בראשית פרק יב פסוק נ– עד מקום ספוךRAINT: הראהוקבלת התורה והשבועהשבהר גריזיםוהר עיבל.
15 בראשית יב: ו
16 בראשית שם: ב
17 בראשית שם: ד
18 בראשית שם: ב
19 בראשית שם: ד
20 בראשית שם: ט
21 בראשית שם: טז
22 בראשית שם: יז
23 בראשית שם: כא
24 בראשית שם: כא
25 בראשית שם: כב
taking is a very external and superficial view of a relationship; it implies the concept of "who has what" or "who possesses whom." This idea coincides with יִצְפָּק's approach to obtaining peace; he became so focused on attaining physical and monetary attributes that his sense of שלמות began to become dependent on his external and material gains. Consequently, the tragedy that occurred in שכם seems to have been a situation of מְדָה כְּנֶגֶד מְדָה. Hashem would not allow events to transpire in יִצְפָּק's favor so long as he shirked his duties, as he had when he delayed his entrance into שכם. Had יִצְפָּק gone directly to שכם, fulfilling the edict of לֹבַןָיָמֶן אֵלֶּה אָבֵיתֵי אָבֵיהֶם עֲשָׂרָה, Hashem would have conquered שכם easily with Hashem's help.

But, why was רְדָה chosen to be the medium that Hashem would use to teach יִצְפָּק this lesson? The story of רְדָה's abduction begins with the indicative verse: 19:רש asserts that the reason the verse explicitly states בת לאה and not בת יִצְפָּק is because, in this incident, רְדָה was behaving like her mother20. רש develops this idea in his commentary on the דודאים where he focuses on the פסוק's description of לאה with the verb
In Pursuit of Peace

The story epitomizes the concept of ‘wanting something you cannot have because it belongs to someone else.’ רחל believed she could achieve a life of fulfillment only after getting יעקב’s unwavering love, which he bestowed upon רחל, on the other hand, assumed that she could only attain a life of contentment after bearing children, with which רחל had been blessed six fold. Each believed that her happiness could only be attained if she would be granted what her counterpart had, something beyond her control and reach. This idea is also represented through the repetition of the words קח ונתן, 21 words that are used repeatedly in the saga of ושכם דינה as well. This use of word choice only emphasizes the flawed nature of the idea that a sense of fulfillment and tranquility can be achieved through external means. When רחל was given the opportunity to be together with יעקב, the verse states: לקראתו רחל וותצא 22; רחל nearly ambushed יעקב upon his arrival. Through the use of the word וותצא in the aforementioned פסוק, 23 it is apparent that דינה inherited this trait of ‘going out’ from רחל. The жизнь של הרשונה explains that when דינה would see the women of שכם who were משחקים, she would ‘go out’ to “play” with them, which ultimately led to her rape in שכם. 24 דינה represented the דין of בראשית ל: יד – טז (דר פא”ה) יד (לאה אל רחל והאמר לא אתכם ויבא בשדה דודאים וימצא חטים קציר בימי ראובן וילך תני בנך מדודאי ليנא:) יד (לאה אל ייבא בשנים וקחתך אישך ואתך גם הלילה עמך ישכב לכן רחל והאמר בני דודאי בנך דודאי تحت: טז (בניבדודאי שכרתיך שכר כי תבוא אלי ותאמר לקראתו לאה וותצא בערב השדה מן יעקב ויבא הוא בלילו עמה וישכב:) 22 בראשית ל: טז 23 בראשית ל: א 24 בראשית ל: ד Đình הרשונה
Hashem; the harshness, which ultimately inspires a person to change. דינה served as the conduit for her aunt, her mother and now her father, through her ordeals in שכם, to achieve a true, internal peace.

The idea suggesting that שכם’s punishment through שכם came as a result of his attempt to attain peace through external, material gains can further be conveyed through the following verse25:

This verse presents an interesting phenomenon: that שכם was willing to get a מיל הברית and assimilate into עקיב’a’s society because they assumed עקיבא’s people were שלמים! The characterization of עקיבא as שלם, describing עקיבא’s complacency and focus on materialism, is exactly what drove שכם to agree to join עקיבא’s people. The closing portion of this verse testifies that the people of שכם believed that they would be able to develop a relationship with עקיבא and his family in order to trade with them and intermarry with them. עקיבא’s yearning for a feeling of peace was translated into materialism: שכם saw his wealth, and saw that they were willing to trade; they saw עקיבא’s women, and they assumed he would allow their sons to marry them. Thereby, עקיבא’s desire for peace came back to haunt him and ultimately manifested itself through the suffering and embarrassment he was afflicted with in שכם.

The most obvious change in עקיבא life was his name. The first time he is referred to as ישראל is immediately
before the crimes of שכם were reported. This change is alluded to when יעקב fought with the angel and asked for a ברכה. At this point, יעקב was still being pursued and attempted to flee instead of confronting his brother, since he was so accustomed to always having to escape and run: from home, from ושה, from ולו and, now, from ושה again. יעקב was always searching for tranquility, always searching to escape and be temporarily at peace rather than face the struggle. This time, the angel did not let him; the angel forced יעקב to fight and refused to allow him to escape.

After their battle, the angel gave יעקב a ברכה he had been forced to fight for: a name that signified his ability to defeat both angels and men alike, ישראל. His new name represents a man who creates his own destiny, who is not interested in superficial peace. His new name proclaims a man who is willing to endure any turmoil in his life in order to create a nation for هو ברוך הקדוש.

Although יعקב could have technically obtained this new name during this confrontation, he was not officially called ישראל at this time. In the next verse he is, once again, called יעקב, because had not yet acknowledged his own potential; he was still focusing on externals. He was unable to appreciate the great destiny that was
being shaped in that very transformative moment; he was not prepared to accept the great burden of his destiny on the weak shoulders he had yet to strengthen. But, at this moment, the destiny of יִשְׂרָאֵל had been set regardless of whether or not יעקב could perceive this. He would be the father of a nation who would now be forever prohibited from eating the הַנַּשֶּה in honor of this momentous altercation.

Although יעקב did not instantly become יִשְׂרָאֵל, the moment he received the בְּרָכָה marks the beginning of a transformative process. This process began with Hashem’s decision to grant a new name for יעקב following his confrontation with שְּכם. Through these events, ישראל learned the about the significance of destiny and the true serenity of inner peace, thus earning him the right to apply his new name.

Despite the fact that יעקב asked no questions and overcame his need for externals, there are more verses after this momentous occasion where he is still called יעקב. In the wake of
this meaningful change, tragically died in childbirth. The verses state that selected a monument in her honor but, nevertheless, continued to travel to the next location after his wife's tragic death. This incongruence marks the inception of his embodiment of his new name. On an individual level he was still and had to mourn his wife. On a global level, he was becoming . had to ignore the pain and continue to move, to travel, to become a nation, to fulfill a destiny. gradually changed into the embodiment of purpose, accepting the yoke of his formidable new name. Furthermore, when slept with , the verses describing this incident once again uses the name . When heard what had happened, he did not attempt to escape from the event that he was just informed of. Instead, he accepted reality and the scenario's significance in shaping the nation's destiny.

From these events, it is apparent that must learn to strive for and relate to peace the same way eventually did as well. must see that "Peace is not something you wish for. It's something you make. Something you do, something you are,"
and something you give away. It is important to acknowledge, however, that , despite his accomplishments and understanding of true, innate peace, was never able to fully transform into . This is demonstrated in the that describe his pain after he heard about the tragic events that befell his beloved son,. He was so inconsolable, so distraught that he reverted to his old nature and began to search for superficial peace again. He was unable to completely overcome his internal desires.

Honing the ability to look inward for peace, rather than seeking external enhancements is a difficult task. It relates to a bigger inner task: acknowledging that we are not merely individuals, but also a people who are forming and fulfilling a destiny. If we search merely for our own personal contentment, what will we contribute to the Jewish future?

Conversely, praying for peace is a duty performed daily; we beg for the peace of , a peace within one’s self. If one examines the of it becomes apparent that the peace we request for our nation and is not peace from our enemies. This can be seen directly in the of : .

38 Robert Fulghum

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Robert Fulghum
pray. On the contrary, what we yearn for is a state of being. This is the peace that we pray for every day; a peace within oneself which comes from הרוח הקדוש והא.hו.

Ultimately, peace can be understood as “not merely a distant goal we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.”\(^\text{43}\) Ultimately, the search for peace involves a battle within one’s own heart and mind.

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Martin Luther King Jr.\(^\text{43}\)
Why do Innocent People Suffer, and How to React to it?

In many places, the Bible declares that often those most precious to Hashem suffer the most. This is a very difficult concept to understand, since we generally base our faith on 3 fundamental ideas: That Hashem is Omniscient (He knows everything), Omnipotent (He can do anything and is all Powerful) and is just and good. If this is the case, then why do the innocent suffer? If any one of these attributes of Hashem were to be removed then we wouldn't be able to ask this question. However, if all three are true, we are faced with a very difficult dilemma. This very question was actually articulated in the Torah by none other than himself:

ויאמר הראני נא אתכבדך:
ויאמר אני אעביר כל טובי על פנייך וקראתי בשם ה:',
לפניך וחיי:
ויאמרה הנה מקום אתי ונצבת על הצור:
והיה בעבורי כבדי ושמתיך בנקראת הцентр והצתי פיך עליך עד עבורי:
והסרתי את כפי וראית את אחריך ופני לא יראו.

Many people interpret this literally, to say that asked Hashem to reveal His physical appearance. However, this is difficult to understand, as knew that Hashem is not a physical being with a form or body. Therefore, we can view this as a request by to “see” Hashem’s "Glory" in the sense of understanding His method of operations. Here, admits that he does...
not understand all of Hashem’s ways, and asks our question: How can He inflict suffering on people who appear innocent?

Attempts to respond to this problem largely fall into two categories: one approach is that suffering is actually a positive experience, and the other is that the suffering is only given to those deserving of it, even if we can’t understand why.

Perhaps we can begin to understand a Jewish perspective on suffering by looking at the Hebrew word used to describe it. יسور, derived from the word מカー, connotes both punishment and teaching. This implies that there is a higher purpose to suffering, that there is something to be learned from the difficult experiences, and that some sort of growth should take place as a result of it. יسور, both large and small, ultimately come to teach us and to help us to become better people.

The idea that suffering is meant to be a teacher is discussed by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch when he writes,

Suffering is a great teacher. Suffering teaches you the limitations of your power. It reminds you of the frailty of your health, the instability of your possessions, and the inadequacy of your means which have only been lent to you and must be returned as soon as the Owner desires it. Suffering visits you and teaches you the nothingness of your false greatness. It teaches you modesty.

Thus, suffering allows us to understand the transience of our lives, that nothing is permanent or constant, and that our lives can be turned upside down in the blink of an eye by circumstances out of our control. In מאליהו מכתב, Rav Eliyahu Dessler extends the idea of the capacity of suffering to teach us a lesson when he states that, "A person who is broken-hearted has a

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3 ראה Horeb, Volume 1, p36

4 מלתא סאליוו, חלך א טמי, 23
Why do Innocent People Suffer, and How to React to it?

greater tendency to think about his ultimate purpose in this world. This can lead to more elevated behavior. Thus, suffering teaches us to change the perspective that we have on life and forces us to consider our greater purpose as our finite years slip away. Lastly, this idea is expressed in דברים קה יבש אטר ב' א"ר ר' וש aplik מטפיכר, דברים that Hashem is like a loving father; He is just trying to teach us a lesson.

The word סורים also connotes the idea that suffering is supposed to help us become better people. This leads into another aspect of our perspective on suffering: that it is meant to be utilized to grow spiritually and form a greater connection with Hashem. Rav Dessler also addresses this in מיכאל מכתב: סוכט סיסלה:

A person who utilizes suffering to arouse himself in spiritual matters will find consolation. He will recognize that even though the suffering was difficult for him, it nevertheless helped him for eternity. When you see yourself growing spiritually through your suffering, you will even be able to feel joy because of that suffering.

Thus suffering is meant to act as a wakeup call for us to immerse ourselves in spirituality. Ultimately, this will allow us to view suffering in a much more positive light.

Another idea we find in our sources is that suffering befalls a person because Hashem is expressing a desire to bring that person closer to Him and to forge a deeper connection. If a person, in his anguish, recognizes that he needs to turn to Hashem and spirituality, he will be able to build a stronger connection to Hashem. This is one of the ultimate purposes of suffering. The suffering therefore acts as a ladder to bring him closer to Hashem.

5 דר"י הח.5
6 מבלי ס؀אילס học א, ספ' 265.
Furthermore, the suffering of the righteous can also potentially help strengthen their own commitment if they keep their unwavering commitment to Hashem despite the anguish and pain they are confronted with. Furthermore, the Gemara adds that their steadfastness even in adversity serves to obligate others who might use suffering as an excuse for relaxing moral standards. Therefore, suffering provides the opportunity to grow spiritually, by using the anguish as a path to connect with Hashem on a deeper level.

The Gemara states that we are obligated to make a blessing over misfortune just as we make a blessing over the good. This leads to an even more dramatic conclusion: whilst the suffering may appear as a negative experience, it is really of ultimate benefit and purpose for us. The words 'just as' show us this perspective. When something good happens to someone, he responds with gratitude. The greater the good, the greater the feeling of gratitude. Apparently, this should also be our attitude toward suffering. When someone suffers a little, he should realize that it is truly for his benefit. When he suffers in more extreme cases, he should realize that Hashem means it as an even greater benefit. Thus, suffering is ultimately a beneficial and meaningful experience.

This idea can also be seen when analyzing Hashem's response to Moshe in Shmos when he asked this question. Hashem responded אני אעביר כל טובי עליך וקראתי בשם ה'. This response provides two ideas on the perspective of suffering. Firstly, it is important to note that Hashem chooses to identify Himself by the name known as the Tetragrammaton, as this is the name that signifies Hashem's compassion and kindness. This therefore
suggests that everything in reality is Hashem’s good even if it
doesn’t appear so to us. Additionally we are told that ‘all’ of
Hashem’s goodness will be testimony to His quality of mercy. It
seems from here that we would change our perception on suffering
if we would see ‘all’ of the story. When we see only our half of
what’s going on, it leads us to think that Hashem is not all Good,
but if were are able to understand the whole picture, we would be
able to view suffering as a manifestation of the good and kindness
of Hashem.

also recognized this, and verbalized it in his
beautiful and uplifting . He knew even in difficult situations
that the suffering is ultimately beneficial. Viewing suffering as
meaningless only increases one’s pain. However, if one searches
for and finds the meaning and purpose in suffering, it becomes
much easier to bear.

Suffering has additional purpose to it, as it allows us to
acquire the three spiritual things that much of our life revolves
around. teaches us that there are three spiritual acquisitions
that are so valuable that they can be acquired only through
suffering. According to the is acquired through
suffering, is acquired through suffering, the is acquired
through suffering. Consequently, there is great benefit to
suffering, as these things have a value beyond our imagination.

Another encouraging perspective on suffering is that the
evil in the world indicates the work we still have left to do. Evil is a
manifestation of a world that is still incomplete and is waiting for
man to do his part and finish the job. When Hashem responded
to when he asked why righteous people suffer, He said
-To help understand why there is suffering on Earth, Hashem told him to stand ‘alongside Me’. This echoes a
similar idea in when man was created in the image of

ברכות ה. 10
Hashem, which highlights that man is given a role to play in completing Hashem’s work. Hashem then told רַפָּאֵל to set himself upon a rock. The Hebrew word for rock, צור, comes from the root which means to form, fashion or shape. Thus, the rock alludes to the purpose of man as being a partner with Hashem in the creation and completion of the world. To allow us to exercise this power, Hashem purposely left the world incomplete with the existence of suffering in it. By allowing sickness for example, Hashem provides us the ability to create cures, and with the existence of famines, we can develop new methods of agriculture. Therefore suffering exists to enable us to fulfill our role in helping Hashem complete the world.

All these ideas come under the first category of Jewish views of suffering - that the suffering is actually a positive experience. However, we must also consider an alternate view on the suffering of the righteous - that the suffering, contrary to our beliefs, is deserved.

This possibility presents the immediate question of how it is possible that those who are righteous and dedicate their lives to תורה possibly deserve punishment? A possible response to this is that the real question is how can humans make judgments that a person does or does not deserve to suffer? We may be able to make a long list containing all of a person’s praises, but if we have not taken into account all human responsibilities, then our judgment is incompetent.

For example, the גמרא tells us that certain people were marked for destruction at the fall of the first дом. To the objection that these people were righteous and therefore undeserving of destruction, the גמרא answers that whilst in terms of their individual responsibilities they were exemplary, they failed to make sufficient effort to try improve their neighbors. Conse-
quently the suffering of the righteous can be deserved only due to the sufferer’s failure with respect to human responsibility, which we may often not account for when judging whether someone deserves to suffer or not.

Additionally, a concept exists that those who suffer in this world will be better rewarded in the next.

Because the righteous suffer in this world, they will enjoy their reward in the next world untainted by sin. Similarly the גמרא states:

Thus, another aspect of the Jewish view on suffering is that it is beneficial for the righteous to suffer in this world as they will merit only reward in the next world.

Whichever approach one takes regarding the purpose of suffering, it is important to also consider how we are meant to respond to it.

In ויקרא, אבתר’s sons were killed by Hashem, אבתר’s response was silence - אבתר וידם. This response of אבתר is a paradigm of one approach to how we should respond to tragedy and suffering. According to רשי, his silence enabled him to receive the reward that Hashem spoke directly to אבתר regarding the next ממלכה. He gave to Bnei Yisrael. Silence is praiseworthy as it demonstrates that you trust Hashem and are able to therefore conquer
your emotions, feelings and questions. There are two benefits to this response of acceptance. Firstly, by accepting suffering, it enables us to acquire תורה according to אבות פרקוי. When the Torah is acquired, we are rewarded with the tremendous gift of the תורה. Secondly, acceptance of the situation that someone is faced with can actually reduce the amount of suffering.

This is discussed in the book השם המופש, which claims:

"While you should try to protect yourself from harm, if you do suffer, the best tool is acceptance. Accepting your situation greatly minimizes the amount you actually suffer. The most unfortunate person in the world is one who has not learned how to accept setbacks and misfortunes. Either this day or the next he, like everyone else in the world, will inevitably drink from the cup of suffering, which is either a test or an atonement. By failing to accept suffering, the pain you feel will be much more acute and harsh than necessary."17

As a result, it’s of tremendous benefit for us to face hardships with acceptance of Hashem’s ways that we can’t fully understand, as it will minimize the suffering that we are experiencing.

Ramb"18, however, provides another approach to reacting to suffering through his interpretation of אהרן’s words. In his opinion, when it says אהרן וידם, it means that first he cried and let out all his emotions, and only then was he silent. Consequently, an alterna-
tive response to tragedy is to first cry and release one’s emotions, and only after that natural, human reaction can one then come to recognize that this is what Hashem wanted, and then withhold future displays of emotions.

Yet another reaction to suffering could be the appreciation that we won’t always understand the big picture, yet must have אמונה in Hashem nonetheless. Perhaps this is hinted at in the fact that פרשת מקץ ends on a bad note, which is then only resolved at the beginning of the next פרשה. The חכמים could have simply extended מניח so that it would end on a good note. Perhaps, though, they were trying to communicate the lesson that we don’t always see the whole picture. Sometimes we have to appreciate that even though the suffering is bad now, we just have to wait to realize that everything turns out good in the end.

The גמרא teaches us the principle of לטובה זו גם. It tells us a story about רבי עקיבא who was travelling by donkey through a small village and couldn’t find anywhere to stay. He took this in his stride, assuming that there was a reason for his difficulties. As a result, he camped out in the woods outside the town, content that he had his lantern to read and a rooster to wake him in the morning. But, soon he experienced more difficulties as his donkey ran off, his rooster died, and his lantern blew out. Despite all of this רבי עקיבא still accepted the situation. The next morning he went back into the town and discovered that the entire population had been massacred by a gang. He suddenly understood that all his difficulties were ultimately for the best - if his lamp would have been on, the gang would have seen him; if his rooster was alive, it would have made noise and he would have been discovered. It is important that when suffering comes our way, we should acknowledge that even if we can’t understand it, it is ultimately for our benefit.
A similar idea is mentioned in תהילים whereדוד writes 20שכְּנַן וֹרֶד which refers to the stick used to punish the sheep by pushing them back to their place whilst theמשען refers to the stick used to direct the sheep. Thus, theשכְּנַן represents misfortune and suffering, whereas theמשען represents good tidings. Both of these equally comfort him, showing thatדוד understood that even Hashem’s sometimes harsh discipline is comforting because it shows Hashem’s love for us.

We must also use our suffering as a reminder to improve ourselves. Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm says that "when some people suffer, they complain about their situation. At the opposite extreme are people who have developed a philosophical attitude toward suffering and do not even feel it. The properתורה attitude is to utilize suffering as a reminder to improve oneself"21.

Lastly, we must realize that only in hindsight can we gain perspective on suffering. Whenמשה first asked this question toHashem of why there is suffering in the world, he said, "Show meYour face". Hashem’s response was that "No human being in this lifetime can see or apprehend the meaning of My ways." Hashem did however showמשה His "back", thus indicating that it is onlyhindsight that will provide meaning and perspective to suffering.

What this can mean is that a full understanding of this question will still never be fully understood by us mere humans, and perhaps in hindsight, or only inהבאעולם, will we truly understand the concept of suffering.

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20 תהילים כנ
21 חכמה ומוסר, חלק ב, עמ 62
Unsung Heroes: קול אשה and Jewish Women in the Arts

No human being appreciates feeling muzzled or limited, but for artists, for whom creative expression naturally serves as a method of communication, the sensation is particularly unbearable. For Jewish women passionate about singing, music, and the performing arts, the halachic restrictions that limit when and where they can perform are difficult to reconcile with an intense desire for catharsis and communication through these media. However, through halachic analysis of the parameters of קול אשה and exploration of existing opportunities, the future of Jewish women in the arts can be realistically assessed and revolutionized.

The concern that a woman’s voice has the capacity to arouse illicit thoughts in men first appears in ברכת מזון in a discussion regarding קריאת שמע. Various aspects of femininity are labeled ערוה, which can be defined as potential sexual incitements, in the presence of which reciting שמע is forbidden. חסדא רב and רב ששת both consider parts of a woman’s body to be ערוה – the שוק (leg) and hair of a woman, respectively. שמואל, however, declares that קול אשה והוא ערוה – a woman’s voice also qualifies as provocative. His source

ברכות מזון: אברær ובי מזון, קול אשה ערו, שמואל: ברך ברך נברך וברך והרוחנו הנלו
עזרך עזרו חכמים, אמר שמואל: קול אשה ערוה, שמואל: על קולך יראך נא, אמר
בר ששת: שער באשה ערוה, שמואל: ועוצר נברך והרוחנו.  "

Talia Lakritz

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Talia Lakritz

is a פסוק from הַּשְׁרִים פסוק: שָׁרְתִּים פסוק defines עַרְבּ, a beautiful appearance.

The juxtaposition of these qualities prompts Rowling to label a woman's voice ערֹוה, an object of desire.

From this source alone, it would appear that hearing a woman's voice is only considered forbidden to men while reciting שָׁמְעַה קריאת. However, halachic authorities such as רמב"ם categorizes this halacha under ביא תוכני הלכות, proving this, as well.

The fact that רמב"ם categorizes this הלכת under לכהל under'REP, proves this, as well.

The fact that רמב"ם categorizes this הלכת under לאורך ביאא, proves this, as well.

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The fact that רמב"ם categorizes this הלכת under לאורך ביאא, proves this, as well.
According to the גמרא in נדה 9, one answer can be understood through the creation of אדם and חוה. רש יד explains that man was created from the ground. The ground possesses no acoustic abilities; drumming on dirt produces no sound. But woman was created from bone, from אדם's rib. Bone can be carved into instruments and employed to create an array of sounds and tones – clearly a more aesthetic material.

If women are inherently more aesthetically pleasing beings than men, this could explain why at fancy events in Western culture, men generally sport fully-buttoned tuxedoes while women bare arms, legs, and daring necklines. This could be why men's clothing is generally long and loose while women's garments are expertly cut, seamed, tailored, and fitted to accentuate the curves of the female form. This could be why a market for men's cosmetics does not extend beyond aftershave and cologne, while entire floors of department stores are dedicated to women's beauty products. And this could be why a man's singing voice is not considered enamoring, while a woman's is labeled ערה. This does not mean that women should be viewed as sex objects, too lecherous to be allowed in the public sphere. But it does mean that, by nature and by God's design, a woman's sexuality is more obvious. Therefore, it would seem that men are prohibited from hearing a woman sing because her voice has the ability to, in the words of the גמרא, "heat up [a man's] inclination".
like fire in straw cut up for fodder” more than a man’s voice does for women.

The extent to which a female voice affects a man’s desires is a debate amongראשונים in terms of whether theאיסור isדראוריתא orדרבנן. Some believe that hearing a woman sing isהתורה מןאסור as it will undoubtedly lead a man toהרהורי עבירה or more serious transgressions, violating the Biblical commands ofואחרי לבכם אלהי אחריו ותתורו ולא תתורו עיניכם andasmuch as, a command only alluded to, and since there is aספק if singing will lead to sin in every situation, it is anאיסור דרבנן.

It is apparent that theהלכות ofאשה קול are a man’s responsibility to adhere to, but women are also restricted by default. If it isאיסור for men to hear women sing, that means that women arefree to sing only under specific, controlled conditions. The parameters of these conditions vary amongפוסקין.

Some פוסקין interpret theהלכה strictly and rule that under no circumstances may a woman sing where men are present and...
may hear her. The author of "שבועת אישה" writes that even if a woman is גזענה התויה ביבר, she must be careful that no man comes to sin because of her. At a שבת table with other men, she can move her lips, forming the words of קבולת שמחה, but her voice cannot be audible at all. Even if even rules that a girl over the age of eleven must refrain from singing at her family’s שבת table because her father is not permitted to hear her voice.

Other halachic authorities adopt a more lenient approach. When asked about recorded music, such as female singers on the radio, רחל יוסף responded that there is room to beicie if the man has no relationship with the singer and does not know what she looks like. Having an image of the singer, even if she is not present, is equated to a live performance during which the man would be looking at her. Since the appearance of the performer could induce עבירה, a man may listen to recorded music of a singer he has not seen a picture of. Another such "loophole" is if the woman singing is a פנינה, meaning that she is unmarried and in a state of ritual purity. But since nowadays single girls do not go

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17 "שבועת אישה" גסימן חיים מים באר שבועת אישה, "כשרה אשה לכל נכון,_bal עליו ערוה שהיא איש עם שמיסבה,time כל יום משה边界,ובshrufת גם קמק יהו באחרית,כל מוקד לא מזכירה лиי בערבית המורוד,היא רבעים הלוהות שלן בכל ובין אדם על זה.

18 סוף הלילול Clarence Z, סוי גותי, להט שאלות שלטייól המויות (עומת). לירושלים בנהוית, עםário בצאורים הדלא ב NoSuch, נודע שליד המרכז, אם יהודה בלתיי נכון במרי, עפ"צ סימן ח. "שעויقال על יהודה,ובעה ישי אשיה למד אוסקר"בבריס (ס"ל) בלש, ופשक שלא באה שליה. מתהיה, "ם ספג שלום הלבבי והשנתנה,משהנה הלברכתי והיואן כפריא מטיב...ותאות "עדפי" לא זא זאך והשתנה את זה הלבק ביןريا שלריוס הלוח.

19 "שבת יינא פרמי עדארה פסוק י, "הניחו לוד" kol פנינה מודה, אלא למד השואר או איכא "למצות".
to the מקוה, such a הרה is purely theoretical (other than for a children’s performance).

In a תשובה regarding a co-ed Jewish youth group in France, the איסור combines multiple factors to allow singing on תשב in a mixed setting. In a תשובה addressing a co-ed Jewish youth group in France, the איסור combines multiple factors to allow singing on תשב in a mixed setting. זמירות arouse נשיא and not הרהורי עבירה, 21 and since the singing was לשם נשיא and not לשם חיבה, there was little chance of it leading to sin. 22 The songs were sung as a group, making it difficult to distinguish individual voices, 23 and forbidding the girls from singing זמירות would cause them to feel inferior in a time when women are educated and self-assured. 24 Considering that the mission of the youth group in question was to strengthen Jewish commitment at a time when assimilation was rampant, the איסור applied the principle of לה לעשות עת תורתך הפרו – awakening the girls’ love of God and Torah was worth the leniency in ההלכה.

From this תשובה, there appears to be basis for allowing women to sing קודש שירי in a group, even when men are present, as both ר’ במאי והר’ רשף permitted the practice in 21 ש”ח הרש”י איסור על חול א סימן על איסור את בגרותם האיסורים של איסור זה חס螗 לתורה תורתך הפרו. 22 אם ש”ח הרש”י איסור על חול א סימן על איסור את בגרותם האיסורים של איסור זה חס瑭 תורתך הפרו. 23 והרש”י איסור על חול א סימן על איסור את בגרותם האיסורים של איסור זה חס瑭. 24 אם ש”ח הרש”י איסור על חול א סימן על איסור את בגרותם האיסורים של איסור זה חס瑭. 25 והרש”י איסור על חול א סימן על איסור את בגרותם האיסורים של איסור זה חס瑭.
Germany. Additionally, the article states that in situations where the songs are not lustful in nature and the men do not intend to derive pleasure from a woman’s voice – i.e., lullabies for children, wailing over a deceased, and songs of praise to God – the prohibition of a woman’s singing voice does not apply.

Labels such as "erotic," "sexually provocative," and "dangerous" have been used to describe a woman’s singing voice. Yet the article also mentions that it is important for women to rejoice in God’s judgments and calls on Joel to rally the women to give praise to God in joyful song. The prophet Jeremiah prophesizes that the courts will once again fill with songs of praise and healing from both women and men. And the Talmud names a woman’s singing voice as one of the three things that pacify a person and return him to a calm state of mind.

Perhaps the most famous example that illustrates the problem is the story of Miriam after the miracle of the split of the Red Sea. The Torah describes how Miriam takes her drum and hastens to sing to God in praise of the miracle. How could it be that a woman’s voice is both a breach of modesty and a powerful tool that brings beauty, healing, and holiness into the world?
exulted gratitude, singing "לה שירו גאה גאה כי,賓ו רמה ורכבו סוס!" as the other women followed her lead. The מפרשים describe מרים as the conductor of a call-and-response שירה for the women, just as מֶשֶׁחָה was for the men. Raphel Rapoport explains that the inclusive language of מרים (as opposed to the feminine להן) teaches that the men and women "were fully equals in expressing the whole deep meaning of the song, and in realizing the high mission of the nation which is expressed therein." No one called מרים a זונה or a צהופר for her exuberant display of jubilation. Quite the opposite – the תורה records מרים’s musical debut as a dynamic piece of the narrative of סוף Карיעת זאנים.

The תורה clearly validates a woman’s right to artistic expression through music and song, but the halachic restrictions remain and the various leniencies discussed above are unfit for a
creative, artistic woman seeking to use her talents in a professional setting. A compelling singer or actress can hardly hide her identity and appearance from men if she releases music or performs onstage, and the hodge-podge of a youth group is incompatible with a skilled artist who is serious about her craft.

Furthermore, the fact remains that most, if not all, secular outlets for such a talent are for mixed audiences. Performing on a professional level outside of a strictly observant Jewish context is also impractical due to issues other than אשה קול, such as Friday night shows and thematic elements such as language and sexual content. Therefore, adhering to ההלכה while navigating the field of performing arts as it is today proves to be a near-impossible feat.

Must a talented singer who dreams of sharing her gift onstage be forced to accept the limited prospects? Must a woman whose identity is deeply entrenched in her musical endeavors be satisfied with singing זמירות at the שבת table and crooning lullabies to children at bedtime?

The Arts and Torah Association for Religious Artists (ATARA) was founded to ensure that the answer is no. ATARA acknowledges that God established a binding system of ההלכה by which we must live. But it believes that since God also created individuals with the capacity to communicate through music, dance, and theater, artistic expression through these media while adhering to halachic standards must be possible. In addition to organizing conferences, concerts, collaborations, and annual workshops, ATARA serves as a network for religious artists, understanding that such outlets are necessary for their נסיעה and overall spiritual well-being. 35 Though its members and projects are still largely confined to select locations in Israel and New

http://artsandtorah.org/content/statement-purpose
York, ATARA’s existence alone proves that the difficulties and frustrations of religious women participating in the arts have been formally recognized, if not yet fully addressed and resolved.

Another such breakthrough was the inclusion of The Heart That Sings, a musical film starring mostly Orthodox actresses and produced exclusively for women, in the 2011 Jerusalem Jewish Film Festival. Though men were asked to skip the screening, they were not barred from attending – executed within ḥalakha up to that point, the responsibility to uphold the integrity of the project shifted to potential male viewers. The experience sparked illuminating dialogue between the secular Israeli and religious Jewish populations, provided talented Jewish singers and actresses a framework in which to flourish, and demonstrated that אשה קול is not a fringe position of the ultra-Orthodox but a workable, mainstream practice.

Even with increasingly accessible opportunities for women to realize their potential in the performing arts, there are still vexing limitations. Male artists can play at mixed events such as weddings, while female artists cannot. Male singers can release songs and music videos to the general public and attain a certain degree of fame, while female singers must limit their audiences to women only and keep their careers veiled in modesty. How can a woman come to terms with the confines of אשה קול that affect her life and embrace the narrow scope of by-women-for-women entertainment?

Restraint ultimately increasing perceived value is a theme apparent in halachic guidelines. Regarding the ramifications of a

http://www.artsandtorah.org/content/performance-opportunities

The Jerusalem Post 12/25/2011 – "Women-only movie sparks debate, understanding" by Robin Garbose.

woman’s state of נדה, ר’ מאיר asks why the תורה instituted seven days of ritual impurity. The logic, he explains, is basic human nature. Over time, a man becomes familiar with and accustomed to the physical component of his relationship with his wife. To prevent complacency and monotony in their intimacy, she is forbidden to him for seven days, so that when reunited after time apart, she is zachorah bein shelomeh beis mitzvah l’havim.

A woman’s restrictions in אשה do preserve the beauty of her singing for the inner circle of her family and spouse; the rarity with which her voice is heard ascribes greater importance to it than if strangers heard it constantly. But more importantly, the woman herself recognizes the significance of her own talent and the depth of her love for the performing arts. Since halachic opportunities for female performers are fewer by definition, when a woman finally can revel in the heat of stage lights and release the clear, vibrant power of her voice, singing becomes a highly uplifting and even transcendent experience.

The גמרא’s statements that a woman’s voice is both ערוה and a source of healing and beauty are not contradictory; in fact, they complement each other. The determining factor is context. If a woman uses her talent to sing publicly in circumstances ranging from mildly immodest to sexually explicit, her voice is ערוה – provocative and unfit for the public sphere. But when she sings to inspire and affect other women, to praise God, or even seductively in the confines a marital relationship, her voice perpetuates the
highest forms of קדושה, and is not only permitted, but must be heard.

There are still potentially discouraging barriers. But if the future of Jewish women in the arts is to broaden and develop, pioneers such as הנביאה מרים are crucial to increasing the availability of creative outlets. Only once מרים took her drum and began to sing did all of the women at the סוף כי they raise their voices. If those women unsatisfied with existing opportunities channel their frustration and creative passion into improving and expanding the field, their efforts could revolutionize the condition of observant Jewish women in the arts.
Why Do We Celebrate Ḥanuka on the 25th of כסלו?

What is the significance of the date of Ḥanuka? Some people offer the reason that the name Ḥanuka is a cute acronym; since ישראל בני rested on the 25th of כסלו, we name the holiday חנוכה. Although this is an amusing reason, however, when we look at several sources, we can see that there are much deeper explanations for why we celebrate חנוכה on the 25th of the month, as well as why we celebrate חנוכה during כסלו.

First let us examine why we specifically celebrate חנוכה on the 25th of the month. The name חנוכה carries another meaning: חנוכה הבית חנוכת. From here we can infer that one aspect of חנוכה was the rededication of the בית המקדש after it was defiled by the Greeks. Looking at פרס חגי, we see that the original date for beginning the construction of the second בית המקדש was the 24th of כסלו. Therefore is seems that there is a thematic connection between חנוכה and the building of שני בית.

חגי was a prophet during the time period of שבעת שבעת ישראל; when ישראל בני returned from exile and started rebuilding the בית המקדש. When closely examining פרס חגי, we can see that the nation needed encouragement in order to rebuild the בית המקדש. They were unenthusiastic because although they had been given the freedom to

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1 Based partially on a shiur by Rav Menachem Leibtag. See http://tanach.org/special/chanuka/chanuks1.htm.

2 קצורים שלוחת פאר קלים,

3 דנה 2:18
return to the Land of Israel, they were still under the rule of another nation and many of their brothers had remained in בבל instead of coming back to ירושלים.

Therefore, חגי related a prophecy: on the 24th of כסלו, the ruling nation will be overturned and be destroyed. After hearing this prophecy, ישראל בני realized that the only way to bring the nation together again was to reestablish the בית המקדש and, to that end, they started to build on the 25th of כסלו. Unfortunately, we do not see the second part of חגי’s prophecy come true until approximately 200 years later—in the time of the חשמונאים!

In the book of מכבים—a historical work relating the events of the period), we see that the Greeks started offering sacrifices to their “idol alter” in the בית המקדש on the 25th of כסלו. It seems like they specifically chose this date in order to spite the Jews by ridiculing them and saying, “Your prophecy has not been fulfilled because we are still controlling you!” Three years later, after the Jews defeated the Greeks, they decide to purify and rededicate the בית המקדש on the same date. It seems that the חשמונאים believed that their impressive military achievement had finally fulfilled the words of חגי, and was cause for an annual celebration. This point is strengthened by רש”י’s commentary on חגי 2:6 where he interprets the words ואהיה השמים ואתמרעיש אתארץ as the miracles that Hashem performed for the חשמונאים. Now it is slowly coming together why the 25th of כסלו was chosen to celebrate חנוכה. However, there are even more connections between חנוכה and the time period of ציון שיבת which we are going to explore.

During חנוכה שבת we read from זכריה ספר as the הפטרה. זכריה was another prophet who lived during the time period right after

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4 חגי 2:20-23
5 מכבים א 1:59
6 רש”י צו כ’ 6
Why Do We Celebrate חנוכה on the 25th of כסלו?

In the הנביא, זכריה sends a message to rejoice because ה' is returning to the nation again. However, this is only on the condition that יהושע, the great Cohen at that time period will follow ה' commandments - meaning that בני ישראל have to prepare themselves in order to have ה' be amongst them again. The pinnacle of the הנביא is at the very end of the הנביא when זכריה sees a vision of a menorah surrounded by two olive branches. He does not understand the meaning of this until an מלאך says that this image is a message to בבל, the political leader of the Jews at that time, to show that victory will come from ה' spirit and not by force or power.

We can clearly see how this prophecy was also fulfilled during the time of the המגינים. The המגינים were definitely not stronger or more powerful than the Greeks that they defeated; therefore their victory must have only been because of Divine intervention, just as זכריה had prophesized. ה' involvement in this war is further seen by the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days.

This can teach us an important message for today's generation. We are in a similar situation to the people in שני בית. Many Jews have returned to Israel and we even have political independence (as חגי had predicted). However, we have not yet defeated our enemies through ה' power. Therefore the holiday of חנוכה serves as the perfect time for retrospection on how to improve ourselves according to הנביא and hopefully the words of ה' will take on additional meaning, and the spirit of ה' will help us overthrow the nations who are mightier than us.

Now that we have discovered the meaning behind celebrating חנוכה on the 25th of the month, we must analyze reason why חנוכה is celebrated during the month of כסלו. We see significance of
the month of כסלו through a Gemara in זרה הרד. This Gemara discusses how we are not allowed to trade with idol worshippers during their pagan holidays and then surprisingly says that the source of origin for these holidays is אדם הראשון! According to a Midrash, when אדם had noticed that the days were getting shorter in the winter, he thought that the world was returning back to its original state of complete darkness as a punishment for his sin in עדן. He therefore did תשובה and started noticing that the days began increasing. When אדם realized that this was the cycle of the year, he established an annual celebratory holiday. We can see that the celebration of our annual חנוכה matches up to אדם’s holiday since they both occur during the longest nights of the year. This also shows us the depressing effect long nights can have on an individual. אדם’s dark thoughts about death were instigated by the dark atmosphere. His perspective on life only brightened when he turned to הר. We can say that הר was the “light” to the darkness that אדם was experiencing.

We can now make the connection of why חנוכה takes place during the winter month of כסלו. It is intended to be a holiday that offers encouragement to the Jews that they can overcome the hindrances standing before them. The light of the olive oil in the menorah is a symbol of hope during a time of darkness. Therefore, the next time we are feeling depressed and discouraged by the obstacles we are facing as a nation, we can remember the miracles of חנוכה to give us the energy to defeat our obstacles and help us grow both spiritually and physically. These points teach us that with הר’s help and involvement, we can defeat our enemies and then hopefully we will be זוכי משיח and the 3rd בית המקדש!
Now that we are blessed with a Jewish State, and that is becoming even easier and more popular, Jews of the Diaspora are often faced with the question of whether to come to ארץ ישראל or to remain in לארץ חוץ.

At times, this decision can pose a genuine dilemma. One of the common factors that sometimes comes into the equation is the desire to engage in קירוברחוקים (Jewish outreach), in לארץ חוץ. This is a modern version of a centuries-old conflict that dates back to early generations of Jews who wondered where to live, drawn as every Jew should be to the Land of Israel, while feeling that their particular calling in life beckoned them back to the Diaspora.

There are many conflicting opinions regarding this topic, ranging from רמב"ם's seemingly straightforward approach forbidding Jews to leave ארץ ישראל except in a few specific situations, to the late Lubavitcher Rebbe's active encouragement of Jewish שליחים moving all over the world to bring religious Jews and Judaism to places and people everywhere.

This debate begins with the story of אברם אבינו in בראשית. Repeatedly, אברם was promised that ארץ ישראל would be given to

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1消息称ו, הליכות מתיבות ומזהות היה – אמרו לצבאות מאיר ישראל שהובאה ארץ עליה, אלא למדרש חזרת ואילו שבאות אחר הפרשיטות, באך לא סופר בחזרת אברם אלא ובך大家都在 העבודה והתשובה של דרישה, בד פירוט ארץ ולא הובא אברם כל בתיו חלקים מחủובי, אלא בסופו חזר אוים בכל מקום מחודש ובראש הנון, ולא מכריזו אוותים accumulator אחר, כך לא על חומרי מסוים ונ costo, אלו על פ.skyop לצבאות אני מתוחכם בכל מקום

fatbren הוביל את חזרת ומזהותיהם של acre medic, שהוביל על חומרי מסוים ובראש הנון, ויאמר לחובה לצבאות אני מתוחכם בכל מקום

2לדוגמה, פרושת פסוק הוא – בו יתייחסו את האברכים בחזרה אברכים ל strftime חזרה את האברך

הוא מניח מִשְׁפָּדִים דְּרַּחַם מְנַעֲרֵת נְדוֹר פְּרָט.
his descendants. If 'ו promised ארץ יישאר to Abrahem and his children, it is a fair assumption that 'ו intended the Jewish Nation to inhabit it. The אֶלֶף הַלַּשְׁנָה affirms this statement, declaring that “one who dwells in the Diaspora is like one who worships false gods.” Similarly, רבי comments in דברים that “those who dwell in ארץ, it is as if they are worshipping זרה שַׁוְּאָכַל.”

In the יeshayahu מַשְׁמַע הוהי gives a روות for the following purposes: to study תורה, to get married, to save one’s property from being taken by gentiles, or to uphold a merchant job that requires traveling. Nevertheless, he concludes this statement with the condition that, after accomplishing such goals, one must return to יישאר ארץ.

This emphasizes the importance of living in יישאר ארץ via his claim that those who abandon the land with the intention of settling permanently elsewhere are met with 'ו’s disapproval. He mentions the case of כֶּלֶל and מַחֲלָה, great men described in the book of רות. Although they left יישאר ארץ with great pain and out of desperation caused by a famine, they were found worthy of death in 'ו's eyes.
Rabbi David Slavin quotes the statement in the קדש that "ישראל is the heart of the world, for it is the portal to heaven," and explains that living in ישראל is the only direct way to connect to הוא ברוך הקדוש. Even the sincerest of תפילה uttered in חוץ need the help of תפילה from ישראל to ascend to the הכבוד.

In the following הלכה, רמב"ם refers to a פסוק in ישעיהו declaring that whoever dwells in ישראל will have all his sins forgiven. He also quotes a פסוק in דברים testifying that anyone who walks four cubits in ישראל merits the entrance to הבא עולם.

Furthermore, Rabbi Slavin mentions a גמרא asserting that "the only way that any Divine influence enters the world is through ישראל." From this גמרא we see that those who live in ישראל receive blessings directly from ה'.

8 א"כרך זוהר קפג וישב פרשת:
9 התענית ב': - כ רצונךUGHT נוספים וחטא לנו מקרם רוחו미:
10 ישועה לנד - כלים אלמרถาม עליהם ועש ובעheiroון:
11 דברי התזית - הורחנינו גומנו כור וטוביו קים ונקטות שתרציה כיפור אמתה טע
12 דבורי הבננה - הורחנינו גומנו כור וטוביו קים ונקטות שתרציה כיפור אמתה טע
13 שנענה תוריה, הלכות מלכיס מלכותנו: מב - לולא יחר את אבד אברהם ישראל אפיל שירבדו ערה"ל או יחר והחר את אבד אברהם אפיל שירבדו שכרו של yal המגלה לארץ שאחרים vector חוץ לארץ,igator שאחרים vector חוץ לארץ שאחרים vector חוץ לארץ שאחרים vector חוץ לארץ שאחרים vector חוץ L'Ven, א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלות את ואחרים א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלוחות א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלוחות א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלוחות א"כרך את הגומנו הנפשות הנלוחות Aן או ראתם ישראל לא באנו, כתショップנו לאתת מרחיצים לוחצאת ארץ כ לפניו גלבלי
14 ונהנית א"
Although רמב"ם presents a powerful argument based on sources in הלכה as to why we must live in ארץ ישראל, there are also many statements in the תורה and חז"ה that express our obligation to assist and care for all fellow Jews, regardless of their current location. For this reason, רמב"ם’s conditions for leaving ארץ ישראל can potentially be interpreted to include teaching תורה, as a component of the permission granted to go to לארץخارיץ in order to learn תורה.

In the 2008 publication of Binah Magazine#15, Eileen Fine brings forth examples of לחברו אדם בין מצוות that, based on the powerful concept of ארץ כל ארים, בזה זה ארים ישראל"א when necessary. She quotes the phrase לרעוא כמוךבתך. Perhaps, this can be interpreted as wanting for others what we want for ourselves; in order to share our passion and dreams with our brothers, the fulfillment of our own aspirations must be delayed. This applies to the circumstance where our aspiration is to live in ארץ ישראל. No matter how worthwhile the goal, this aspiration must sometimes still be temporarily sacrificed.

In addition, רבי are required, according to the תורה, to give תוכחה and help fellow Jews correct their misguided ways. Some commentators explain the mitzvah of עדת אדמת אדמת to include helping return a person’s "lost" soul. It becomes our obligation to involve ourselves in קירוב, bringing unobservant Jews closer to a lifestyle of שמירת מצוות. It is possible that our ambitions to live in ארץ ישראל must be postponed, despite the importance of this מצוה, in order to fulfill the obligations of teaching Torah and קירוב יהודים.

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#15 See: [forYourInspiration/MitzvahOfKiruv/The_Kiruv_Impe](http://www.kiruv.com/SSI/articleToPrint.asp?PageURL=forYourInspiration/MitzvahOfKiruv/The_Kiruv_Impe)rtive0.xml&teaser=The+need+for+community-wide-outreach

#16 שומעים לך.

#17 וקרואו יתף.
promised that they would emulate His ways, through His commandments, and represent Him by being a light unto the nations. On one hand, it is likely that we have the greatest capacity as a people to influence the inhabitants of the entire world by remaining a united nation together in ארצות ישראל. Yet, if we are to travel even to the remotest of destinations and demonstrate our concern for every single Jew, we have an even greater opportunity to produce this light of influence. For these reasons, people who choose to leave ארץ ישראל to search for disconnected Jews and bring them closer by communicating the beauty of the תורה and Judaism can certainly claim justification in doing so.

It is my opinion that as a whole, we should not have to choose between these two different lifestyles. In order for ארץ ישראל to function correctly, it is necessary for Jews to complete both tasks; both are necessary, noble positions that must be upheld within the Jewish community. Living in ארץ ישראל is a privilege not to be taken lightly. A person who makes תשובה is making a significant effort to connect to הר קדוש and associate with our collective heritage. I do not think, however, that living in לארץ חוץ and doing outreach is any less admirable. If a person can successfully relocate to ארץ ישראל, he is fulfilling a מצוה. Nevertheless, if a person believes that he will effectively fulfill a different מצוה in לארץ חוץ, he has the backing to do so, as this is important as well.
While there are no explicit mentions of משיח in the תורה, there are four allusions to it. The first is in בראשית. During יעקב’s ברכה to יהuada, he said, יבא כי עד רגליו מבין ומחקק מיהודה שבט יسور לא שילה (ולשי עמים לו יקחת ו). According to both אוןקלוס and יונתן תרגום on this פסוק, יבוא refers to משיח.

The next allusion is in במדבר, when בלעם gave his blessings to ישראל בני. He said: מישראל שבט וקום מיעקב כוכב דרך קרוב ולא אשורנוününโล, ומקים פאתי שתומחץ בני כל רקר: hät. Again, אוןקלוס says that this is talking about משיח.

In דברים, משה discussed the time that ה will gather בני ישראל from where they are scattered: הושב וה召回 אליו ושם אם השם אלהיך יקחך משם שמים והשם אלהיך יקחך מאלהי. This is the only time that משיח is hinted to in the תора.

It is puzzling that although משיח is not explicitly mentioned in the תורה, רמב"ם lists belief in it as one of the thirteen אמונה imperative, and says that one who does not believe in משיח is a בטורטスピו. רמב"ם says that one must believe that משיח will come, and must continue to believe and to wait even if this process is delayed.
He also tells us that one is not allowed to assign a time for his coming. And anyone who doubts this is deemed a כופר, one who denies the תורה, ח, and the words of הנביאים.

How does רמב"ם understand that you are a heretic, if you do not believe or wait for משיח even though this is not plainly mentioned in the תора? According to רמב"ם, Estáehd understands this from a story told in רביה שמעון. רמב"ם asks when משיח is coming. And anyone who doubts this is deemed a כופר, one who denies the תורה, ח, and the words of הנביאים. That is his opinion. What you do not know is that he will end up in גה"ם because he did not believe that My salvation will come. Rather, you should be like your father, ישעיה, who said, "לישיעתך קוויתי ה', Wait for the salvation because it is near you, as it says, Because you would not come to Me, даже if it is near. The קטן מצוות ספר (ἅρμπα) 10 says that believing in משיח is an essential part of the יתרות עשרת. He explains that the word אנכי is a word of redemption. When he told יוסף that He would go down with him to Egypt, את אנכי, he uses the word אנכי. Then when he told מלאכי about משיח, he again said אנכי. According to the סמסטר, 13 the אנכי of אנכי שלח אתכם refers not only to
the משל of מָשִׁיחַ, but also the משל of מציאת מציאת. That means that believing in מָשִׁיחַ is one of the מצוות מצוות. By this, Rambam explains that because all of the מצוות מצוות are commandments, then we also refer to believing in מָשִׁיחַ, but waiting for מָשִׁיחַ as well.

Though we now understand where רמבם got his idea from, it may still be difficult to accept. Most beliefs in Judaism can be deduced from logic, or based on historical occurrences, and are not completely dependent on blind faith. But regarding מָשִׁיחַ, we must believe that he is coming and wait for him, even though there is no logic that would lead us to believe in מָשִׁיחַ. It is one of those things that you just have to believe and that is it.

We have to believe in מָשִׁיחַ, but actually waiting for מָשִׁיחַ, which includes an action on our part, is even harder. Belief is defined as “the feeling of being certain that something is true.” But to wait means to look forward eagerly to something. delineated belief – הלימה – and waiting – לחכות – as two distinct obligations when it comes to the מָשִׁיחַ. And furthermore, in מסכת שבת, רב아 says: בשעה שמכניסין אדם לדין אומרים לו: נשאת ונתת באמונה,.CurrentCulture,ดนש,فعהל כ ха hay. ברכת תורה, מצאת לישון, סלפתי שמחה, הנה דר דרכון דרכון – One of the first questions we will be asked when we get to שמים after our death is, “Did you wait for מָשִׁיחַ?” So it seems that it is not enough to believe – we also must wait for the Redemption to come.

We must wait for מָשִׁיחַ every day, as is also stated in our סידורים (based on רמבם), אףAppComponent רמבם שלמה, ובאר שהחיים, שא עוד יא: (ך”מקרא) וְאֵלֵכִּים וּבַאֲרוֹמָה. Also, מָשִׁיחַ not only must be expected, but also expected.

It is difficult enough to believe in this abstract concept of מָשִׁיחַ, but how are we to look forward to something that we cannot imagine? What does waiting for מָשִׁיחַ consist of?

Cambridge online dictionary

http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/wait?s=t
Every day, we pray for מְשִיחַ repeatedly. One of the main parts of תפילה where we mention מְשִיחַ is in מִשְׁתַּלְתָּךְ קרית מְשִיחַ. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, writes in hisשיחות לקוטי:

Not only must we hope for מְשִיחַ every day. We must hope every day, every hour, that מְשִיחַ will come.

Thankfully the rabbis have helped us implement this requirement. Every day, three times a day, we ask for מְשִיחַ in שמונה עשרה. We speak about מְשִיחַ several times throughout our תפילות (between our private שמונה עשרה and החזרת צ”), so מְשִיחַ is on our minds when we pray. But what about our the rest of the time, when we aren’t immersed in prayer?

In מציעא בבא, we learn that if a worker does not demand his wages from his employer, the employer is not required to pay him. Theחיים חפץ learns from this that we need to ask for the גאולה like a worker asks for wages. If we do not demand the גאולה, המ is not required to give it to us. Theיוסף בית אורח חיים סימן קפח explains, הב יד וחר עשתה רברס במק sikת בות נ rall רד צ”ל [פלטוט].19 is waiting for us to demand the גאולה before He is going to give it to us.

If we are supposed to wait for מְשִיחַ and demand מְשִיחַ, one might think that knowledge of when he is to arrive would be necessary. In ויחי פרשת ויה, it says, קי’ו ויה אל מ带到 המפורמא ואיהלאاح הא ביכיו ויה:19
Waiting for מְשִׁיחַ, “at the Bus Stop”

If we know when מְשִׁיחַ is coming, would we really wait for מְשִׁיחַ before that? For example, if you knew a bus was coming at exactly 11:00, you would not be waiting anxiously at 10:50, wondering why the bus is not there yet. מְשִׁיחַ is the same way. If we knew מְשִׁיחַ would come at a set time, would not wait for it. In ישעיהו, ה’ is quoted as saying, בָּעָתָה, מִגֶּדְתֵּן יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַל כָּל אֶדֶם, which means “in its time I will hasten it.” This seems like a contradiction. How can something be in its time, but also be hastened?

רש י索赔 that if ישראל are worthy, then מְשִׁיחַ will come early, but if not, then it will be in its time. This means that in fact, there is a set time for מְשִׁיחַ, but he could come at any time as long as we try to hasten his coming. Perhaps this is why it is prohibited to attempt to calculate the time of the Redemption: if we set a time, then no one will work hard before that time to bring מְשִׁיחַ. However, if we do not know the time, we will try to work hard to bring מְשִׁיחַ as soon as possible.

If it is not allowed, why do people attempt to calculate the time of מְשִׁיחַ’s arrival? Perhaps because מְשִׁיחַ is such an abstract concept, many become disillusioned and believe that he is not coming. Many of the calculated dates that were set have already passed. In the גמרא, נחמני בן שמואל раб said that even those that calculated a date that had passed should still wait for מְשִׁיחַ, because if they do they will be rewarded. раб explained that even if the predestined time for מְשִׁיחַ has already passed – we just have to do раб to bring מְשִׁיחַ here.

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21 אַשְׁרָי הֹוָא אָמַר מַעַרְבָּר מֶנָּה:
22 ישעיהו ס כב:
23 סנהדרין צ פב:
משיח can come any day; he is just waiting for us to demand it and do so. Not only do we have to believe that משיח is coming, but we have to actively wait for him every day, not only in our תפילות, but every hour in everything we do. It is up to us to bring משיח sooner, and if we set a date, we will not have that motivation.

We can understand this with a parable: A man was running late for a meeting, and he was at the bus stop waiting for the bus that was supposed to come at 9:00. It was already 9:05. The man kept looking at his watch and wondering why the bus was taking so much longer. That is the way it should be with משיח. We should wonder what is taking משיח so long. If it were a bus we were anticipating, we would constantly be looking at our watches, money in hand and ready to go. It should be the same way with משיח. He could come any second, and we should be waiting anxiously and impatiently at the bus stop, wondering where he is.
Rosie Weinstein

Blowing the Lid off Sherry Casks¹

Let other poets raise a fracas
'Bout vines, an' wines, an' drucken Bacchus,
An' crabbit names an'stories wrack us,
An' grate our lug:
I sing the juice Scotch bear can mak us,
In glass or jug.

O thou, my muse! guid auld Scotch drink!
Whether thro' wimplin worms thou jink,
Or, richly brown, ream owre the brink,
In glorious faem,
Inspire me, till I lisp an' wink,
To sing thy name!

Let husky wheat the haughs adorn,
An' aits set up their awnie horn,
An' pease and beans, at e'en or morn,
Perfume the plain:
Leeze me on thee, John Barleycorn,
Thou king o' grain!

Robert Burns (1785)

¹ I'd like to thank my father, Eliyahu Weinstein, for providing me with much of the sources, analysis, and support required to write this article.
Scotch whisky is an alcoholic beverage enjoyed not only by the Scots, but also by many in the Jewish community. However, it can present serious כשרות problems, because it is often aged in casks which previously contained sherry or other non-kosher wine (סתם יין).

**Historical overview**

It is stated in Tractate זורה that if regular wine and תרומה wine are inadvertently mixed, the resulting mixture is permitted to drink if the proper שיעור of שחר is attained. In the times of the gemara, wine was normally diluted in a ratio of 3 parts water to 1 part wine. According to one interpretation of the gemara, the 3 parts water added to the regular wine and the 3 parts water added to the תרומה wine when combined are מبطل the one part תרומה wine, with the regular wine not counting in the calculations (because of the principle עילוי לא הוראה את היהיר [.]). The other way of understanding the gemara, which would require the traditional 60:1 שיעור of ביטוי, necessitates two wine cups of unequal size. See, for example, "ן". So in general, when יין סתם (inadvertently) mixed with water, the resulting mixture is permissible to drink if the amount of water is at least six times that of the wine. The ערוך שולחן שולחן indeed rules this way.² It also permits the drinking of other beverages aged in casks which previously contained יין סתם,³ as long as an extra condition is fulfilled – that the wine in the cask’s walls detracts from the taste of the beverage within.⁴ Much evidence exists to indicate that this last require-

² שולחן שולחן תורן ייד כלת
³ ייד כלת
⁴ עלות סתם ו. שד מ"ק כ"ה

While there can be halachic differences between סתם יין and יין סתם, all wine discussed here is assumed to be סתם יין only.
ment is generally not satisfied for scotch aged in sherry casks. In any case, wine casks used for the purpose of improving the taste can be problematic regardless of whether the taste is in fact improved.\(^5\)

In what many considered to be a tremendous חידוש, Rav Moshe Feinstein, זצ"ל, extended the שולחן ערוך's 6:1 rule to the case of wine intentionally added to whiskey, even if it improves the taste and even if the wine itself can be tasted.\(^6\) However, the פנה של ייצחק addressing both wine poured into whiskey and scotch aged in sherry casks, disagreed, adding an extra condition: in addition to the 6:1 whisky-to-wine ratio, it must be true that even an expert cannot detect the actual taste of the wine. With regard to scotch aged in sherry casks, the ייצחק's advisors felt this second condition is always satisfied, and he ruled only assuming it is indeed true. However, in reality, it could actually depend on what types of cask were used. For example, scotch aged exclusively in a first-fill sherry cask (i.e., one used for the first time after containing sherry), and even more so if it is cask strength (not diluted by water before bottling) may have a much stronger sherry taste than a scotch aged in a second or later fill, or one aged in a combination of ex-sherry and ex-bourbon casks (the latter type of cask presenting no קשורת concerns). Expert tasting notes for heavily sherried scotch share many of the descriptions given to pure sherry. Additionally, it should be noted that the aroma of oloroso sherry, the most common sherry used for casks in the scotch industry, is quite strong, much stronger than that of other wine, and thus perhaps more easily detectable in the scotch.

\(^5\) For a discussion, see שולחן ערוך ת"א סב עד סב. Already matured scotch finished in wine casks may be particularly problematic.
Entire thickness vs. kdei klipa

The history up to this point is well known; however, there is a misconception that Rav Moshe’s famous response addressed scotch in sherry casks, when in reality it addressed only wine poured into whiskey. The 6:1 rule as it applies to wine casks requires more discussion. When it is known for sure that Scotch was stored in the cask for at least 24 hours, the six to one ratio in Shulchan Aruch requires that the thickness of the vessel be attained against the entire thickness (volume) of the cask, since we don’t know how far the wine penetrated into the cask walls. (This is similar to the halachic requirement for a vessel that had non-Kosher food cooked in it and then was used to cook Kosher food, except in that case 60:1 is needed.) So accepting the 6:1 ratio as the measure for ביטול, the liquid capacity of the cask must be at least six times the volume of the walls of the cask.

There is another opinion, namely that of the צבי חכם, which holds that wine never penetrates into a vessel farther than קליפה כד (a thin scrape’s worth), a literal reading of the Shulchan Aruch. According to this view, 6:1 would easily be attained since it is measured only against the קליפה of the cask walls. Rav Moshe explains this in depth in ase haredavim in his book Geshem veYoros Mesha. In any case, the predominant view among the majority of authorities is not to rely on the צבי חכם opinion. Furthermore, one could argue that relying on דורי קליפה in this particular case of wooden wine casks, even in conjunction with other opinions, may be particularly problematic, since it can be demonstrated (by breaking open a wine cask stave and observing the visible wine stain line) that the wine indeed penetrates much farther than קליפה כד.
Blowing the Lid off Sherry Casks

There are those who attempt to save this view even in this particular case by saying it must be that the area beyond the קְלִיפָה has no effect on the cask's contents and so halachically can be ignored. However, such an assumption would be highly questionable. First of all, scholarly wine journal articles suggest significant interaction between the wine-stained wood and the liquid contents of the cask, as evidenced by the tannins extracted from the wood in this region and the effects on the wine. More importantly, it is interesting to see how the איש חזון, one of the few prominentAsStream אábíן who support the קְלִיפָה view, addressed a few questions on this view. A suggestion אב in suggests 1/6 of the total contents penetrates into the cask walls. To this he was forced to say that 1/6 is actually the size of the קְלִיפָה. And due to an opinion of the הרוא תוספות that says the contents of a typical כֵּלי have a volume sixty times that of the קְלִיפָה, the איש חזון was forced to say that there is evaporation within the קְלִיפָה, leaving only part of the קְלִיפָה against which the שיעור ביטול is measured. That is, he was not willing to entertain the possibility that קְלִיפָה allows penetration beyond the קְלִיפָה. This is so even though the answers he gave would mean that the interior diameter of the long-term wine storage vessels אב could be no more than an inch or so wide, which is difficult to assume. And then there is the אָב אַראָי אִיב which says that the suggestion to kasher the wine cask by using a tool to scrape out a קְלִיפָה's worth inside the cask since wine penetration allegedly is only up to קְלִיפָה does not work because "We plainly see red wine stains penetrating farther than this measurement." That is, he accepts the common sense

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interpretation of הַכְּלִיפָה רָא. Note also he did not offer as a solution that one could simply scrape out up to the visible wine stain.

The result of all this is that for scotch aged in sherry casks, even Rav Moshe himself might require 6:1 against the entire thickness of the כָּלִיפָה. So what is the actual ratio of the liquid capacity of a sherry cask to the volume of the cask’s wood? While many intuitively believe the actual ratio must be far, far greater than 6:1, a simple and convincing geometric argument is to approximate the wood volume of the cask as the difference in volume between two cylinders—the one which includes the wood of thickness as measured at the cask’s bilge (that is, at its thinnest) and the one which does not include the wood—of the same height and head diameter (see illustration) as the cask in question, and compare that to the stated liquid capacity. Since the calculated wood volume for the case of the cylinder will be less than for the actual cask (which has bulging walls and varying wood thickness), this will give an upper bound on the ratio.

Illustration from:
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flbbm/heritage/cooper/barr_elmaking.htm
**Blowing the Lid off Sherry Casks**

**Dimensions of a sherry butt**

The internal dimensions obtained for an old sherry butt (the most common type of sherry cask) are head diameter \( d = 25.8" \) (65.532 cm), bilge diameter \( D = 32.0" \) (81.28 cm), height \( h = 42.4" \) (107.696 cm).\(^\text{12}\) While there can be minor variations in these parameters, the approximate size and shape, selected to fit on old Spanish galleons, has not changed much in centuries.\(^\text{13}\) While often rounded in the literature to 500 liters, the exact standardized capacity for a butt is 490.7 liters,\(^\text{14}\) or equivalently, 490,700 cu cm. A prominent distillery, in response to an email query, stated that the stave thickness of its butts is 3.0 cm at the bilge and 3.3 cm at the head for Spanish oak, and 2.6 cm at the bilge and 2.8 cm at the head for American oak. The head thickness was assumed to be equal to the lower of each pair of numbers (a conservative assumption based on research). The chime will not be included in the wood volume calculations.

**Upper bound on the liquid-to-wood ratio for a sherry butt using cylinders**

The formula for the volume of a cylinder is just \( \pi r^2 h \), where \( r \) = the radius, and \( h \) = the height. So for Spanish wood, a conservative approximation for the wood volume is \( \pi[(65.532/2)+3.0]^2(107.696+2x3.0) - \pi(65.532/2)^2(107.696) = 93,673 \) cu cm, so an upper bound on the liquid-to-wood ratio is \( 490700/93673 = 5.2 \). For American wood, a conservative approximation for the wood volume is \( \pi[(65.532/2)+2.6]^2(107.696+2x2.6) - \pi(65.532/2)^2(107.696) = \)

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\(^\text{12}\) [http://home.clara.net/rabarker/Barrels.htm](http://home.clara.net/rabarker/Barrels.htm)

\(^\text{13}\) [http://www.whisky-distilleries.info/Fabrication_EN.shtml](http://www.whisky-distilleries.info/Fabrication_EN.shtml)

\(^\text{14}\) [http://www.winebarrels.com/bitspiecesnew.html](http://www.winebarrels.com/bitspiecesnew.html)
80,367 cu cm, so an upper bound on the liquid-to-wood ratio is $490700/80367 = 6.1$.

**Barrel volume approximation formula**

However, we can do much better than that. There is a well-known, remarkably accurate formula approximating the volume of a wine barrel by assuming its sides are bent to the arc of a parabola$^{15}$:

Given height $h$, bilge diameter $D$, and head diameter $d$, the formula for volume $V$ of a barrel is

$$V = \frac{1}{60} \pi h \left[8D^2 + 4Dd + 3d^2\right].$$

Using this formula on both the interior (without the wood) and exterior (with the wood) dimensions of various casks (bourbon, Bordeaux, Burgundy, hogshead, Cognac, puncheons, Madeira, sherry butt, port pipe) produces ratios in the range of around 3.8-5.2 to 1. The most common wine cask used for aging scotch, the sherry butt, produces a ratio of around 4.3 using Spanish wood and 5.0 using American wood:

**Liquid-to-wood ratio for a sherry butt using the volume approximation formula**

First let’s see how well the formula approximates the liquid capacity: $(1/60) \pi 107.696 \left[8\times81.282 + 4\times81.28\times65.532 + 3\times65.5322\right] = 490,818 \text{ cu in} = 490.8 \text{ liters}$. Amazing! The external volume using Spanish wood is $(1/60) \pi (107.696 + 2\times3.0)$.

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$^{15}$ Solution to Problem 341, *The American Mathematical Monthly*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Apr 1914), pp. 127-128. See also [http://cambelt.com/cs/p=tr_math_volume/barrel&toc=trtoc](http://cambelt.com/cs/p=tr_math_volume/barrel&toc=trtoc). The appropriateness of the formula for the cask in question can be verified by comparing the formula-produced interior volume to the stated capacity. The formula works rather well for all casks tested. It should be noted that the actual capacity of a cask can differ somewhat from the stated capacity since the staves forming the cask are bent into shape by hand.
Blowing the Lid off Sherry Casks

\[8x(81.28+2x3.0)^2 + 4x(81.28+2x3.0)(65.532+2x3.3) + 3x(65.532+2x3.3)^2] = 605,635 \text{ cu in} = 605.6 \text{ liters}. \]
So the Spanish wood volume = 605.6 – 490.7 = 114.9, and the liquid-to-wood ratio is 490.7/114.9 = 4.3. The external volume using American wood is \((1/60) \pi (107.696 + 2x2.6) [8x(81.28+2x2.6)^2 + 4x(81.28+2x2.6)(65.532+2x2.8) + 3x(65.532+2x2.8)^2] = 588,849.7 \text{ cu in} = 588.8 \text{ liters}. \)
So the American wood volume = 588.8 – 490.7 = 98.1, and the liquid-to-wood ratio is 490.7/98.1 = 5.0.

So for all casks in question, the 6:1 ratio is not attained, even allowing for a significant margin of error. There are other barrel approximation formulas in the literature, some more and some less suited to the particular shapes of the casks considered, but most give rather similar results.

Chaticha Na’aseit Neveila

Up until now, the discussion has been regarding scotch aged exclusively in sherry casks. But most scotches are aged in a combination of ex-sherry and ex-bourbon casks (the latter type generally presenting no halachic problems). In this case, do we need 6:1 against just the wood of any sherry-cask aged scotch, or do we need 6:1 against all the sherry-cask aged scotch? This seems to depend on whether we apply the rule of נועשית עצמה חתיכה נבולה in a case of בלח לח (liquid mixtures). The רמ"א is machmir to say we do, except in a case of מropolis הפסד, and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אグルות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעתיים), and many agree (see, for example, דיב השלושת בצ"ה, while Rav Moshe (אגרות יד ב"ה:לו) was מקיל (at least in a case of הדחק שעaviours, the maximum allowable

16 This is a halachic principle which says that when a permitted entity absorbs the taste of a forbidden food and becomes forbidden as a result, the entire entity becomes transformed into a forbidden object. For the object to become בטל subsequently, the quantity required for בטל was need to be calculated against the entire absorbing entity, and not merely the amount of איסור that was absorbed.
percentage of sherry casks in the mixture to attain 6:1 would be one part sherry cask-aged scotch for every six parts bourbon cask-aged scotch, that is, $1/(1+6) = 1/7 = 14.3\%$, and if we don’t, the percentage would rise to around 65\% or higher, depending on the thickness of the sherry cask wood. Both of these numbers would rise a bit further for all but cask strength whiskies due to water dilution before bottling.

**Label issues**

Given the new openness of distilleries, as well as easy and increased access to information the internet provides, for a particular scotch one can often find out not only that sherry casks are used, but sometimes even the exact proportion. The easy access to information may put into question today’s application of Rav Moshe’s dictum that if the bottle label doesn’t say anything, one has no obligation to find out more information. It’s one thing to have to visit, mail or phone a distillery, quite another to make a few clicks on its web site to find out what everyone else already knows. It also happens to be true that the vast majority of bottlings—whether sherry casks are mentioned on the label or not—are a vatting from a combination of ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks in varying proportion depending on the bottling.\(^{17}\) \(^{18}\)

\(^{17}\) “Contrary to popular belief, very few whiskies are aged exclusively in bourbon barrels – most ex-bourbon aged malts are vatted with a (varying) percentage of whisky which was aged in ex-sherry barrels.”

http://inebrio.com/thescotchblog/?p=138

\(^{18}\) “We can achieve consistency by vatting about 100 casks prior to bottling. These will all be pre-selected; those that are not selected go for blending. We also have a cask type mix recipe, specifying the proportion of various types of cask. Throughout the company we have about 10\% sherry casks but the usage varies from brand to brand. We don’t bottle a 100\% sherrywood whisky as we feel that the sherry masks the flavour of the whisky itself. When we select a style, Lagavulin or Dalwhinnie for example, we will also select a cask recipe. Having
Research shows there are numerous reasons why, despite a sherry cask costing almost ten times as much as a bourbon cask, a distillery might choose not to advertise this, even though it clearly values sherry casks in the recipe. The differing policies of kashrut organizations making various inferences from a label not mentioning sherry casks when no such inference seems to exist can be hard to fathom. For example, there are scotches known to be 100% or near-100% aged in sherry casks whose label makes no mention of sherry casks. So what is the kashrut status of such a whisky? The current kashrut guidelines for single malt and blended scotch whisky were devised in an era when information was lacking or very hard to come by. In this new era of increased openness and easier access to information, perhaps these guidelines need to be revised.

**Dried out or rejuvenated casks**

Some seem to think it takes perhaps a year from the time sherry casks are emptied of sherry until they are filled with scotch, and so halachically these casks would be considered dried out. This assumption simply is not true in general.'20 '21 '22 Others seem played with it we will decide that, say, one in five casks should be sherry wood—20% is quite high for us. We will also specify refill and Bourbon casks...We’re trying to produce a malt that tells you about a distillery and reflects the character of that distillery, and keep it consistent from year to year. That involves everything, from the buying of barley, the mix of casks, to the age of maturation.” Excerpt of an autumn 1994 interview with Dr. Alan Rutherford, head of the production subsidiary of United Distillers and responsible for 27 malt distilleries, http://www.1fw.co.uk/whisky_review/swr15/article15-3.html

19 “Prior to being shipped, each cask receives ‘one for the road’ in the form of 5 litres of wine, helping to maintain freshness during a 4-6 week journey to Scotland. (This is of course emptied prior to filling with spirit in Scotland).”

to think a rejuvenation process (scraping out and scorching the inside of the cask) is applied to all casks and that this would render them kosher for use. Again, both assumptions seem not to be true.

“Seasoned casks are kept fresh en route to Scotland by giving them four to five litres of ‘transport sherry’ (emptied of course prior to filling with new make spirit in Scotland).” “No Spain no Grain,” Whisky Magazine Issue 53 (Jan 2006)

“My requirement is that the cask must not have been sitting around and be all dried out. Ideally the wine is emptied out completely, the cask resealed and shipped to Scotland within a couple of weeks. Most arrive dry but they do have a lining of crystals of tartrate and such like. The fortified wine casks are dry to moist but none of our casks has any lees swilling about in it. If that was the case you could ask if the flavour was coming from that but there must be some wood maturation for success. Any wine in the cask would be strictly against the law and the rules of the Scotch Whisky Association as it would potentially be considered as an additive.” Interview with Dr. Bill Lumsden of Glenmorangie, http://www.lfw.co.uk/whisky_review/Intro_Edition/Intro_8.html

Concerning bourbon barrels, “A barrel may have stood in the open for several weeks, even up to a year in the case of ‘cull’ barrels [lower grade barrels expected to need repairs] before being shipped, which progressively reduces the level of residual liquid. Meanwhile, the fastest door to door service is around 21 days.” “America—the stave,” Whisky Magazine Issue 52 (Nov 2005). But sherry casks from Spain have a much shorter trip to Scotland than bourbon barrels from the United States, perhaps accounting for some of the average time difference between the two casks. Distance aside, a delay in the delivery of sherry or other wine casks could mean the cask will be teeming with dangerous bacteria caused by the wine. Casks expected to sit too long before arrival may have to be subjected to sulphur candle treatment, which can impart an unpleasant odor into the scotch and lower its value. So it behooves the distilleries to expedite their sherry cask shipments. See, e.g., “Wood is Where the Magic Happens (Or Is It),” http://bruchladdichblog.wordpress.com/2008/08/06/wood-is-where-the-magic-happens-or-is-it/

“The more you use the cask, the less extract there is, which is why producers like Glenmorangie and Macallan only use first and second-fill casks for their
malts. Third-fill casks are either sold on or used for grain whisky or fillings for blends.” “A suitable cask for treatment,” Whisky Magazine Issue 2 (Mar 1999)

24 “For the port, sherry and Madeira [finishing casks] we get one fill and that’s it, we can’t use them again and I then sell the old casks. They are very expensive casks and there are potential savings to be made by refilling with wine to revitalize them but it is not our practice at the moment; as a whisky purist I am uneasy about going down that route.” Spring 1999 interview with Dr. Bill Lumsden of Glenmorangie, http://www.lfw.co.uk/whisky_review/Intro_Edition/Intro_8.html

25 “However, first fill casks not delivering The Macallan’s required range can be withdrawn (and used for blends), while star-performing second fills may go on to provide a third fill. When no longer appropriate for ageing malt, certain second fill Macallan casks are utilised as marrying vessels (being essentially inert with a minimal wood extractive influence)...There don’t seem to be any shortcuts in rejuvenating Spanish oak casks. We’re better off buying fresh wood stocks from Spain, rather than sending an empty cask to Spain for dechar, rechar, dechar and putting it into a bodega system for three years.” David Robertson of The Macallan, “Let’s do the char char,” Whisky Magazine Issue 34 (Oct 2003)

26 “The whisky industry frequently subjects used casks to various rejuvenation treatments to increase their effect on the maturing distillate[1, 36]. Most often this will be a recharring procedure sometimes in conjunction with the scraping out of the exhausted inner layer of wood. The change from using ex-sherry casks to used bourbon barrels has led some Scotch whisky manufacturers to specially treat their casks before using them for whisky maturation. Cask wood may be treated with white wine or allowed to absorb a very sweet, dark sherry under pressure. This has been reported to raise levels of total esters and sugars in the cask and claims to result in the mature whisky being mildly flavoured by the previous beverage. Other methods involve the use of steam, wine or ammonia treatments to simulate sherry cask flavour.” Mosedale, JR, Peuch, J-L, Wood Maturation of Distilled Beverages, Trends in Food Science & Technology, Volume 9, Issue 3, March 1998, Pages 95-101, available at www.sciencedirect.com

27 “How ex-sherry casks are treated, once whisky distillers get their hands on them, differs by distiller. Most will empty the cask of any residual sherry, nose
Summary

This article presents what is hoped to be a clear, concise summary of the problem of scotch whisky aged in sherry casks, and raises some new issues as well. For further reading on the sherry cask problem, see the thorough treatment given in http://bit.ly/sherrycasks2 by Akiva Niehaus.

28 “Recharred casks can either be filled with spirit, or undergo additional ‘re-seasoning.’ European oak casks, for example, may be filled with sherry to help ‘recreate’ the original influences, prior to filling with spirit.” “Let’s do the char char,” Whisky Magazine Issue 34 (Oct 2003).

29 A halachic requirement for the scorching of the inside of the cask to be considered a kashering is that the outside of the cask would at some point be at the temperature (too hot to touch); see also וְלָא אֲסַל עַל יִפְסָל בְּצַבָּא לְאָסָל עַל יִפְסָל בְּצַבָּא and רָצַו פֶּרֶץ נָעָם וְלָא אֲסַל עַל יִפְסָל בְּצַבָּא. It is debatable whether this is so; videos of the process seem to show the handlers holding on to the cask. Furthermore, the level of scorching for an ex-sherry cask (toasting) is lower than that for an ex-bourbon cask (charming).
Examining the Concept of the Evil Eye

Superstitions exist in many cultures and result in various customs designed to ward off evil spirits and misfortune. In Judaism, it would seem we have a similar belief conceptualized as the הרע עין.

In earlier generations, there existed a prevalent notion that certain individuals had the ability to give someone an “evil eye,” bringing bad luck. Many historians assume that this belief prevailed because of the collective fear of witchcraft and sorcery. My grandmother related an incident that occurred to her father as a young child, in the early 1900’s. A neighbor who was suspected in the community to be a harbinger of bad luck or witchcraft visited unexpectedly. After her departure, my infant great-grandfather suddenly passed out and his mother, beside herself with worry, insisted that her husband retrieve their guest. The woman returned to their home and, after abiding by the custom to spit in order to remove the effects of the curse triggered by the הרע עין, the baby was revived. Although it would be impossible to prove whether this incident was truly caused by the הרע עין, it is a testimony to the influence of this particular superstition.

Curiously enough, the Talmud contains dozens of anecdotes of similarly eerie events, to which we may attribute the influence of the many different customs in existence to dispel the הרע עין including the customary phrase ייןicans עין הינו (Yiddish for “let it be without the evil eye”) utilized in everyday speech.
In an account found in the Talmud, רבי שמעון בן יוחאי was somehow able to reduce someone he “placed his eyes upon into a pile of bones.” In the story related there, רבי שמעון בן יוחאי was reported to the Roman officers by a fellow Jew for making a disparaging remark against the Romans. This treacherous act resulted in a Roman-decreed death sentence against רבי שמעון, forcing the great sage to go into hiding. Following the subsequent passage of time, the threat of the death sentence finally abated and רבי שמעון בן יוחאי was able to return home. Upon encountering the informer, רבי שמעון was incredulous that he was still alive, and cursed him with his הרע עין, reducing him to a pile of bones.

Fortunately, this does not appear to have been a common practice among the sages, but it does occur a few other times in the Talmud. A second incident occurred when רבי ששת, who is reported to have been blind, was traveling to show his respect at a royal demonstration. He was confronted by an individual who disrespectfully inquired, יצן לא ירא היום, whole pitchers go to the river, where do broken pitchers go?” This comment was an implication that the Rabbi had no reason to go to such an event because of his disability. This disparagement earned the cynic an instantaneous death through רבי ששת’s הרע עין.

A third episode describes a student of יוחנן רבי who scoffed at his Rabbi’s teaching that in the future, God will create precious stones of giant proportions. Time passed and the student, while on a sea voyage, witnessed angels creating the immense stones depicted by his teacher. After inquiring about their purpose, the student received a response identical to the lesson he had deemed ridiculous. Upon his return, he approached יוחנן רבי and admitted...
that the rabbi was not mistaken and his words were truly wise. In response, יוחנן retorted, “Had you yourself not seen it you would have still contradicted the words of sages⁴,” and annihilated the doubter with his הרע עין. Though these stories are recorded in the Talmud, they are not necessarily relevant examples of הרע עין. The people manipulating this mystic capability were wise sages who we can’t usually compare to the whole nation. Therefore, if there is a widespread belief in הרע עין, there must be a more rational explanation of the concept.

A statement in אבות⁵ reveals a more conventional concept also known by the term הרע עין. This concept refers to a natural flaw within human nature, rather than some supernatural force of superstitions and mystical occurrences. הרע עין is mentioned as one of the evil influences that have the power to remove a person from the world. In this משנה, three of these forces are discussed, specifically the הרע עין, the הרע יצר and הרע עין. שנאת. In רמב"ם explanation⁶, he refers to each of these principles in terms of their manifestation in human thought and nature. He interprets הרע עין as הרע עין (wickedness of the soul), הרע יצר as תאוותנות (desires), and הרע עין as לממון התוותות (diligence in the acquisition of wealth). רמב"ם concludes his analysis by exposing these descriptions to be symptoms of melancholic diseases. These illnesses cause a person to be repulsed by his fellow man and foster feelings of contempt and loathing. Even the tranquility that his soul may find in the solitude of deserts, forests and desolate locations will not prevent these feelings from taking their toll on the individual and, undoubtedly, remove him from the world.
Similarly, רשב”ץ infers that when an individual focuses his interest on another person, he, too, will experience the detrimental effects of his covetous desire in the form of a disease; namely depression. The persisting feelings of discontent, which sustained his，在 the form of a disease; namely depression. The persisting feelings of discontent, which sustained his covetous desire, will pervade his conscience until his death.

רבי יונה Rabbeinu8 offers a similar interpretation of the concept of covetous desire, although he does not go so far as to call it a malady. Instead, he comments that this desire is describing someone who is unhappy with his lot in life and, therefore, looks with hostility upon his fortunate neighbor, brooding on the injustice of his circumstances. These feelings of self-pity and hatred can only negatively impact himself and his neighbor, as stated by contemporary scientists:

This excerpt discusses the negative energy, which is created through these feelings of covetous desire. It illustrates the full extent of its destructive power, for it is not limited to the harm it will undoubtedly cause to the subject of his envy, but also the influence it possesses over the person harboring such feelings. The הוניק חכמי claim that even if he may have had the ability within himself to fulfill his wishes and achieve what he envied, these destructive thoughts would impair his capabilities and result in him being removed from the world.

In this commentary, יונתן Rabbeinu9 alludes to a פסוק in שמות10, which describes the feelings that שאול fostered against דוד, as an example:...
example of הרע עין. In the verse, these emotions are expressed as עין, which רלב"ג advises should be read עין עין meaning to study or examine. In his commentary he attributes this word use in the פסוק to illustrate וד’s tendency to scrutinize וד with hostile thoughts. רלב"ג’s analysis of this diction is similar, but he emphasizes that וד’s thoughts about וד were constantly occupied by hatred and murderous desires. Mentioning this citation illuminates the strength of these evil thoughts and the ominous consequences sure to ensue.

רשב"ץ begins his פירוש on the משנה by referencing רמב"ם’s opinion and enhancing it to relay הרע עין as a craving which necessitates the attainment of immeasurable wealth. One who is characterized by this focus and determination would perpetually strive to attain this goal and willingly compromise his own safety by becoming involved in dangerous situations in order to fulfill this purpose. The רשב"ץ concludes this thought by refuting its legitimacy, proclaiming it to be the description of רעה עין, not הרע עין!

This recognition begs the question: what is the difference between the concepts of הרע עין and רעה עין? יונה רבינו addresses this in his commentary on יא. He describes על עין as the speculation of corrupt ideas and, despite obvious similarities, יונה רבינו explains רעה עין differently, stating that it represents the attribute which
opposes charitable acts, namely, or stinginess. He further expounds on the concept of רעה עין in his commentary on מנה שמעה לא. Although he describes רעה עין as an idea that opposes the positive characteristic of generosity, he insists that stinginess is not necessarily a malevolent quality in itself. Instead, יונה רבינו holds stinginess to be sinful, because it is the foundation of all depraved deeds. The reason for this definition stems from the deterioration resulting from the individual’s refusal to act generously when the opportunity presents itself. As emphasis for this certainty, יונה רבינו mentions a פסוק from קהלת which is developed by רביה מדרש רב in אבות מסכת אבות. With this statement, יונה רבינו expresses his dismay at witnessing the lack of goodness in the world. He describes the acts he witnesses to be exploits worth nothing, mere embodiments of immorality, which is an appropriate description of the characteristic represented by the רעה עין, an aversion to the performance of moral deeds and the implementation of indecent behavior.

Furthermore, this trait of רעה עין impairs the individual’s capacity for growth and improvement. יונה רבינו emphasizes this deficiency with a reference to a verse in שמואל reports who was referred to as נבלו the man who was called הזה he-blind man. This strange terminology is explained by יונה רבינו as an indication of his self-serving

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14 קהלת א:ט ו’ll - "משת אל יוכל לחקקי י!’ו אל יוכל לckptית"  
15 מדרש רבי י’h הכהנ - קהלת רביה שרא  
16 שמואל א:כה - "לא א💤...אולב ה’ לא א attività המים על בנב יוכל מכן בנב"  
"שרא..."
Examining the Concept of the Evil Eye

miserliness. The implication of describing him with the phrase "יבלו לוע" is that he was incapable of elevating himself or developing his character. This persona of נבל is illustrated further in משלי 17, as cited by רשב"ץ. The עזרא אבן comments on this פסוק indicating how it describes a miserly person who will never be enticed by the valuable guidance of the sages, just as a generous individual has no desire to heed the foolish declarations of liars. By interpreting the פסוק in this manner, אבן אבר היא is stressing the full extent of the manipulation of the רעה עין, a character flaw that inhibits an individual’s crucial tendency to strive in order to improve his misguided ways.

בחיי רבינו 20 begins his פירוש on ט המשנה 21 by confirming that עין רעה is the opposite of טובה עין. He quotes רמב"ם 22 who states that the latter is a sense of satisfaction with one’s lot and the former is a sense of dissatisfaction and derision. This feeling embodied by the עין רעה is a person’s need to search relentlessly and implement different methods in order to obtain objects with which to enhance his lifestyle. This person will never be satisfied, even in the best of circumstances, and will remain in a state of being which is often classified as העין צרות.
naomi shore

according to רשב"ע,23 describes an individual who enviously observes his friend or his friend’s possessions. This pervasive jealousy has the power to injure the person or thing on which his envy is concentrated. Therefore, the Talmud encourages the use of various precautionary measures to avoid incurring or causing the blight of the הרע עין. One such precaution is the suggestion to avoid standing in a friend’s field, עומדתاهلשהיאבשעה,24 which explains is either to prevent a loss through the curse of the הרע עין or to avert causing damage through the 'burning' gaze of one’s הרע עין. Additionally, there is the advice given to hosts cautioning them from displaying extravagant possessions when they accommodate guests in their homes; אלאלאעינאמשוםאיאעינאמשוםגנבי,25 lest their guest be overcome by the הרע עין or decide to steal the expensive item. Therefore, the גמרא recommends that the hosts should only use this item ל公网安备התמביןurger and never ל ConcurrentHashMap, in order to avoid flaunting their wealth before their guests.

These practices and others similar to them may seem to be mere superstitions, but that is a misunderstanding. Rather, these are moral directives, and their preventative capabilities are particularly powerful. They cater to the delicate predictability of human nature and prescribe awareness of the dangers of jealousy in the hopes that, in this way, the הרע עין can be suppressed. There is a report in ברכות26 of רבי יוחנן, a particularly attractive man, who claimed he sat outside the מקוה in order for the בניםسلוקןכיביסתכלןמטבילהואתייןישראל,כוותידשפיריזרעאלהו.רבנןליהאמר:קלאמסתפiaeישאומיאמעינאמר?להואמר:אתינאקאדווסמשלערעאאנא,בישאעינאביהשלטהדלא,דכתיב:בןעיןעליפורתבןיוסףפורת,אבהורביואמר:עיןעליאלאעיםילאל.חנינאברבייוסירבי

23 תר"ע,ュא,ב:אבותעלוכיח
24 קד: yan קב
25 קד: yan קב
26 ח"כ - יבשימrowsers דעיה חק אוזרโรงงานתאשורי,אבר:יכפוקבנהו
שראלאתיינאמשיבלאמשיבךב,מעהךרעהרשפדהמונח.אמרההלרבענן:אל Alecפתפי
מרמענייבשלאאמרלך.אמרמרעהידעקאאתעה,ואלאשםברעה٭אнима,דכתיב:ןב
פורדםוףימפורתםעלען,אמרבראἐוה:אלאתקיושלעלונאלאעדם.בריווהברדבירהנהו
women who exited and gazed upon him to have abundant children. Other rabbis approached him and queried whether he worried about the curse of the evil eye and replied that he had no reason to be concerned for he was a descendant of Joseph. This concept is discussed in a later portion of the same tractate, which describes what seems to be a superstitious belief concerning immunity to the effects of the evil eye, possessed by the progeny of Joseph. In rabbinic literature, they are portrayed as individuals with the ability to overcome the negative effects of the evil eye. Also included within the formerly mentioned segments of this tractate is a discussion that identifies fish as an animal that cannot be controlled by the evil eye. This connects aptly with the previously asserted statement about the descendants of Joseph through the blessings which Jacob bestowed upon his sons, and especially the sons of Joseph – blessing them, as it would seem, with the mysterious properties possessed by fish. Perhaps this reflects a blessing that they not only be fruitful like fish, but also that they be immune to the control of the evil eye like fish.

As a final point, there is an intriguing orthographical similarity between the Aramaic word בישא עינא and the Hebrew concept of בושת פנים. The Aramaic word בישא means evil or bad, and thus בישא עינא is the translation of הרע עין. In Hebrew, the word בושת means bashful,
virtuous or shamed. In the text it declares that it gave three good gifts, namely: mercy, and (God’s evident kindness when disciplining). The first and third are self-explanatory, but the second begs description. In the passage, the author included the following excerpt as a means of definition:

This piece implies that in order to attain righteousness, must be instilled. When a person is aware of a higher power, he is prone to inspect his actions and avoid transgressions. This means that the definition of is a form of humility – establishing a set of personal ideals; a realization that is in command and our goal is to abide by His decrees. Our objective should be to attain a level of righteousness, a paradigm of self-elevation and perfection.

An antithesis of this attitude can be found in where it describes ’s reactions to the sins they committed. They lapsed in their fulfillment of, and, and perpetrated abominations. explains that, not only were of their sins, they did not intend to rectify their ways and return to by doing. This is an example of obstinacy; through their lack of humility or ideals and intensified feelings of entitlement they refused to admit the errors of their ways. As a result, they brought an upon themselves in the form of God’s wrath.

From this comparison, the Aramaic provides another agreeable definition for the concept of is the opposite of.
In short, the הרע עין is an exceedingly complex concept. Disregarding its superstitious appearance and mystical connotations it becomes clear that the idea of הרע עין encompasses the most unsavory characteristics of human nature: greed, jealousy, aggressive thoughts, dissatisfaction, stinginess, limiting personal growth and lack of humility, ideals or a sense of self-entitlement. These insidious emotions have the ability to completely occupy a person’s mind and intentions, which will only lead to sin. The lesson to be learned from this is the importance of sensitivity, both to one’s personal deficiencies and to the feelings and weaknesses harbored by a friend. By instilling this meaningful idea, aspiring to behave with a modicum of צניעות and concerning ourselves with the feelings of others, there is the potential to become refined, righteous והר COMMENTS. Jews.
A Parallel Dichotomy

Work, kids, and money are often major stresses in our everyday lives. Living in a society with a “workaholic” mentality, we are always striving, pushing, and fighting to make our futures successful. We tend to think we are invincible and can achieve any level of success as long as we try hard enough, but our efforts never seem to be enough. We are constantly pushed down by a society showing us that we are not doing our best which essentially fuels our ambitions to work even harder. However, this may be because our society lacks the Jewish outlook of בטוחן. A person who genuinely trusts וה and realizes that He alone determines the success of our efforts will not feel an overwhelming compulsion to constantly work harder. At the same time, though, we must ask: does having complete בטוח in וה mean that we do not need to put in any effort at all?

The term וה is used to describe our attempt at an active contribution to our successes. Just like we cannot expect a tree to grow when it was never planted; we need to take some action towards our success. Before וה, Adam sinned, he was in גן עדן and וה gave him everything that he needed to sustain himself without any physical effort. After he sinned, though, he sunk from that level to a lower one that required וה. The punishment of וה for his sin is stated in the פסוק, ובזעת אפיך תאכל לחם. He then had to work and guard the land since the miracles that kept the land fertile were taken away. Thus, וה became necessary.

1 פספסות, שמות וה, תרכז p. 187
2 בראשית יג風格
Having established that both בטוח and הנסיעות are necessary, it becomes necessary to attempt to ascertain the proportions and boundaries of these two values.

בטוח, according to ישרים מסילת, is displayed when a person puts all of your burdens on ה. One has to have complete faith that ה will take care of everything he needs. If you think you would ever be in a situation where no one will save you, then it is as if you do not have trust in ה.

This means that בטוח and הנסיעות can work hand in hand. Realizing that everything comes from ה, no matter how hard you work for it, clarifies that even though you can be doing your הנסיעות, at the end of the day, if ה does not want it to happen, it will not happen, and conversely, even if you do not work so hard for something, it could still happen.

‘ה put us in a world that was filled with bad and good, and He gave us the difficult task to find the good. By choosing it, we gain spiritual and physical strength. Spiritually, we are submerged in materialism and profanity and we struggle to find ה in our lives, but when we find Him, His presence elevates us. Physically, searching for פרנסה in this world is a constant challenge because we are always in competition with each other. Our struggle is to not get pulled into the mentality of secular society and to realize that we need to do our הנסיעות, but we cannot do it without בטוח.

An entire פרק of תהלים is devoted to the message that without the blessing of ה, no human initiative can have any success. Our efforts are nothing without ה and He can decide to give us something simply because He loves us. This, however,
leads to another question: if nothing can be accomplished without His blessing, then why is human effort necessary at all?

People like to eat from the produce of their labor, but, on the other hand, even though we try to do everything, we know it all comes from 'ה'. This statement highlights the paradox. What in fact is the point of both בטחון and השתדלות if they cancel each other out?

The גמרא tells us that our פרנסה for the entire year is predetermined on הַשָּׁנָה. Some people who are vigorous workers think it is a מצוה to work based on the פסוק that says 'ה',7 but this is not accurate. There is no מצוה in that verse; the פסוק says one may work, not that he must work. However, the גמרא8 says that we have to work because if you learn all day, you will wind up spending all of your time asking for money to survive, and then you will not have any time left for learning.

Since our פרנסה is predetermined, no one can take it away from us and we have to have בטחון that 'ה' will give it to us. Working will not change the outcome of how much money we make, but since we are no longer on a high enough spiritual level to witness open miracles, we have to do work as part of our השתדלות. This explains one aspect of the paradox.

There is another aspect of בטחון that is unrelated to making a living. In תהלים, when המלך says, he is trusting in 'ה' to save him when he goes out to war. From this psalm we learn

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5 שור, חלק שני, מים שני, דך תקף 6 לברך הוא 7 שמות כז 8 בהרכא הל 9 הוליא כז
about a מצוה to not be afraid when going to war. When you are in this situation, you have to have complete trust in ‘ה or else all the Jewish blood that was spilled will be on your hands if you lose. War is something that is totally out of our control and you cannot win a battle unless you have complete trust in ‘ה. Although the need for בטחון is readily apparent in such an extreme situation as war, it is actually equally relevant in all circumstances.

When יוסף was in jail, he tried to do his השתחוות by asking the נשיאים to remember him when the נשיאים got out of jail and yet Hashem punished him with another two years in prison. He knew that he would only be saved by ‘ה and not by doing השתחוות, but since he was not on a high enough spiritual level to merit open miracles, he knew he would have to make an effort. However, he was only supposed to do the minimal amount of השתחוות so it would not overshadow trust. Unfortunately he failed in this task and there is much we can learn from his choice in terms of the necessity of putting in only minimal effort.

The least amount of השתחוות, R' Zundel of Salant says, is what allows the world to attribute its success to “natural causes”. יוסף had to stay in jail for an additional two years because he did too much השתחוות. He asked the נשיאים to remember him twice and he only needed to say it once. The הלוי בית says that there is a השתחוות scale; the more בטחון you have, the less השתחוות you have to do and vice versa. יוסף was on such a high level of בטחון and because

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10 רמ"ב, הלכות פלאים, פרק שבעה, הלכה ט"ו
11 ז"ח, אבות אבות, פרק ב,/Resources, ח"ג
12 פירושי ת)set, בדואות מ"ד
13 רש"י, לבושת מ"כ
14 ספות סלמה, הלך א, בשنوיה השתחוות, p. 188
15 בד הלוי על התורה, פרשיות מכם, ח"א
of this, he should not have asked the ר様 של מתקים to remember him twice, but only once.

The world that we live in is filled with worriers. We are born into a society where each person fends for himself and pushes his way up the social scale so he will not be at the bottom. Winston Churchill, as quoted in מאליהו מכתב, said, “We have left nothing to chance”. This epitomizes our society's mentality; we cannot trust in anyone else but ourselves for success. People think they can control everything, which highlights the lack of בטחון. Ironically, though, this overconfident mindset causes us to worry. Since people attribute their success to their own actions, they worry that if they are not alert all the time they will miss out.

If we find the correct balance between our בטחון in ג‑ and our והשתדלות, the way we live will change. When there is more בטחון in our lives, we start to focus on things that are more important, such as learning תורה, working on ourselves, and building a relationship with ג‑. In fact, Rav Aharon Lichtenstein says that the greatest source of faith is "the רוגי של האחרון Himself." 18

Our history also proves that there is what to believe in. ג‑ has saved us from countless tragedies when nothing seemed to be working out for our people. ג‑ is present in this world and all we have to do is open our eyes, put in the effort, and find that balance in our lives. When we do, it will propel us to lead lives that are more focused on תורה, and become better Jews.

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16 יולו שור, חול משי, פרק שלא, ד' מהכיב
17 מכתבים שלימין, חלק א, ב MatSnackBar והשתדלות, p. 188
18 ראוה Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, Leaves of Faith: "The Source of Faith Itself"
FACULTY
Cibud av vam – l’פרנס אह הדורות

cibud av vam is a great מצוה, and one needs to be meticulous in its fulfillment. The רמב"ם points this out: זכרו ילוד דרך הבוב אתי ואמי המונותא בז"ש שירק.²

The importance of this מצוה is learned from the comparison between the obligation to honor one’s parents and the obligation to honor ה'. Just as it is written about honoring ה', כבד ה' את מהונך, the same expression appears in the command of honoring parents, כבד אמה ואביו בכהי

금 in his commentary on the תורה, expands this comparison in his explanation of the order of theדברות עשרת:

The importance of this מצוה is learned from the comparison between the obligation to honor one’s parents and the obligation to honor ה'. Just as it is written about honoring ה', כבד ה' את מהונך, the same expression appears in the command of honoring parents, כבד אמה ואביו בכהי.
tion of honoring הָדוּרֶה. He brings examples of this, first from the תְּנֵי הָדוּרֶה and then from other places in דִּבְרֵי הָדוּרֶה. He points out that הָדוּרֶה includes monetary support, and that is indeed the מקו וְהָדוּרֶה connects the concept of כַּבָּד הָדוּרֶה to the first five commandments in the לוֹדִי. We find in the דִּבְרֵי הָדוּרֶה an explanation of the connection between the כַּבָּד הָדוּרֶה of the last five commandments in the לוֹדִי.

The continuation of the דִּבְרֵי הָדוּרֶה goes on to state that if a person has the means and yet does not honor his parents by financially supporting them and providing for their needs, he is considered as if he has committed adultery, kidnapped a person, given false testimony and been envious of others’ possessions.

Included in the דִּבְרֵי הָדוּרֶה of honoring one’s parents, is the obligation to support them, making sure provision is made for all their needs. The general rule is that if the parents have enough money to support themselves, then the child is not obligated to pay from his own funds in order to honor them. However, if the parents do not have the financial means to support themselves, then the child is obligated to support them from his own money.

It is written in the דִּבְרֵי הָדוּרֶה:

This is the וְרָם וְהָדוּרֶה אֲוֹרָה אֲוֹרָה כְּבוֹדָה, אוֹרָהּ אֲוֹרָה כְּבוֹדָה. אֲוֹרָהּ אֲוֹרָה כְּבוֹדָה. אֲוֹרָהּ אֲוֹרָה כְּבוֹדָה.
The Baraita starts with the question of what is the definition of יראת (awe) in contrast to כבוד (honor). The answer is that יראת includes not standing or sitting in one’s parent’s place, not contradicting their words and not ruling on a halachic discussion between one’s father and a חכם. On the other hand, כבוד includes providing food, drink, clothes and an escort to accompany one’s parent. The distinction is that the מצוה of כבוד obligates the child to do positive actions in order to honor his parents, whereas the מצוה of יראת obligates the child to refrain from any action that would take away from their honor.

The actions listed in the גמרא are brought solely as examples because it is a מצוה to help one’s parents in providing for all their needs, to do their will and to carry out their desires. The basic rule of כבוד is that כבודם זהו רצונם.

As a result of this, the אמוראים are divided on whether a child is obligated to pay out of his own pocket in order to honor his parents, for example to provide them with food. יודה רב says that a child is indeed obligated to honor his parents from his own expenses. However, אושעיא בר נתן is of the opinion that a child should honor his parents out of the parent’s expenses. The גמרא recounts that ירמייה רב asked and he was told to act according to the opinion of אב שליך, the opinion of נתן רב.

In terms of the actual ההלכה, most of the פוסקים rule that a child is not obligated to pay out of his own pocket in order to provide for his parent’s needs. Rather, the parents should pay for their own needs, according to the decision of רבנן in the גמרא.

This is also the ruling in the ורט and ערוך: משקהו שמיאכילו זה והם לא אומרים ש:this rule is the following: ו 圣ו ה סון is the following: A W This is also the ruling in the and and זה שמיאכילו ומשקהו שלמה אב והם אומרים שהזה: W This is also the ruling in the ורט and ערוך: משקהו שמיאכילו זה והם לא אומרים ש: Despite the fact that a child is not obligated to spend his
own money on supporting his parents, someone who does spend his own money fulfils the מצוה of ואם אב כיבוד.

This is implied in the words of ר' איגר עקיבא: ... לא תנה תורת אלא כיסו בחסרוןカリ בא, אם אבומ extinct, וממילא לא בא כיסו בחסרוןカリ בא. Here, ר' explains that there is a כיסו לחסרוןモン�, falls into the category of никто מכאן בא כיסו בחסרוןカリ בא, and therefore his reward is reduced. However, someone who does this still fills the מצוה according to the דין.

Even though a child is not obligated to honor his parents from his own expenses, a child is obligated to be idle from his work in order to serve his parents himself, as it is written in the ערוך שולח תור: ... בגוון לבзванו אבר, he explains that there is אבר נאות ובגוון לבзванו אבר an obligation to serve one's parents if the exertion itself is part of the honor. Otherwise, there is no obligation to honor them with his own presence. The פוסקים say that the obligation still stands even if as a result of not working, the child has to resort to begging in order to support himself. The original source for this is the גמרא: מיתיבי: נאמר (שמות כ א) הבאר האביך ואה אביך (ילך אביארכו ידך), and אבר נאות ובגוון לבзванו אבר. The new Beth体现了 this obligation

10 נאמר בבראשית ת' אבר נאות ובגוון לבзванו אבר.


12 "מה אבר נאות ובגוון לבзванו אבר?" Leviticus 19:27.

13 יש"ת עדין א"ב ס"מ פ"כ. 
ThisGemaraquotesabrideBarayahexplainingthatjustlikethereisanobligationtohonorיוwithone’smoney,sothereisanobligation
to honor one’s parents with one’s own money. TheGemararaises
a difficulty with this: If we said already that the money used to
honor one’s parents should come from the parents then how is a
child required to give from his own pocket? TheGemaraanswersthat
the child is obligated give meshes by refraining from work in order to
serve his parents. TheGemaraexplains the words of the
Gemara:
...יכיןורא באים בכבר את האב את אמו מברך את אביי
سور את המטחש ואת האור את אביו ואת אמו ואת והוא
מחזר הוא אף לא בין אימו وبين אביו
"ברך报道称 חזור לו המטחש"

TheRa"Aexplains this idea within the context of a
discussion on the fact thatיוis more פידמקon
His own כבודthan on
אבותו. He explains that when it comes to
יו, if a person
has no money then he is exempt from the
משנה. However, whether a
child has money or not he is obligated to honor his parents, even if
as a result he is forced to resort to begging for his own livelihood.
TheRa"Acontinues to explain that we are not talking about a
situation in which the child supports his parents from his own
money, because theהלכהis
משותافة הבורג. Rather, in this situation a child
honors his parents in person and as a result of not working, he is
forced to beg. So it is written in the
Ђו: "הוא בגווי לכהב
"ברך报道称 חזור לו המטחש"

In contrast to these opinions, there are those who opine
that a child should only refrain from working if he has enough
money to ensure his sustenance for that day. TheRa"A, for example,
explains: "וזא הוה השם והם שלם על בתי". And so it is written in

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14 רביעי אשכול קדישא פרק ראשה ס Retrieving 14
15 ההנהו ידך ана פתח
16 באור מהו אפ"ש ס"דן ד
This means that a child is only obligated to stop working when he has enough to sustain himself for that day. Therefore, according to their opinion, if a person does not have enough to sustain himself for that day, he would not be obligated to refrain from working in order to serve his parents.

This דין that a child should support his parents אב משלא only applies to a case when the parents have enough money to support themselves. However, if the parents do not have enough money to support themselves, the child has an obligation to support them, as the רמב"ם writes: אופר ואופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אופר אפוקס

According to many of the ראשונים, the obligation of the child to support his parents when they do not have the means to support themselves is actually not part of the מצוה of ואב כיבוד, but rather is included in the מצוה of צדקה. The רא"ש writes:

The רא"ש explains that in a situation where the parents cannot support themselves, then we force the child to support his parents, and take from the child צדקה to give to his parents. And so is the opinion of many of the פוסקים. For example:

17 רשב"ע צויד רמה
18 רפב"פ הלכות 먹رسم ה
19 רשב"ע צויד רמה
20 רא"ש קידושין פרק א סמך נ
The *יוסף ב* is in the words of the *רא"ף*, who wrote that as a result of the *דין* of *צדקה*, we take from the child to support the father. He is also in the words of the *רמב"ם* who writes that if a parent can't support himself then the child is forced to provide for him. The *יוסף ב* learns from these sources that in this case, a child is obligated to support his parents, according to the money that he has. According to this opinion, a child is not obligated to provide for all his parents' needs. Rather, he is only obligated to give according to the amount that he is obligated to give to *צדקה*. This is also the opinion of the *חדש ב*: שיש ולכשא צדקה באך אין בריך לוחץאין את למסות על זה.

The *ה"ד כ* explains the the *يضב* of a child being obligated to support his parents as a result of the *דין* of *צדקה* rather than as a result of the *דין* of *איב כיבוד*: לאב אין אב וח"כ ורבין ורברב לוהן לוהן לאב לוהן לאב וח"כ לוהן אברל Mali מלקולא דוד חפצי יד קורי משת מבר בח ירא ישיא ווהנות המכת נפש ממה שלוחות לכול.

The *ה"ד כ* explains that there is no limit to the *يضב* of *איב כיבוד*, whereas there is a limit to the *يضב* of *צדקה*. Therefore, if a child would be obligated to support his parents as part of the *דין* of *איב כיבוד*, then he would be obligated to give even the coat off his back.
However, if the child is obligated to support his parents as a result of the דִּין צָדָקָה, then he is only obligated to give according to the halachic limitations of צָדָקָה which depends on the amount of money he has. This is the פָּסָוק of the רַמְשׁוּם לַרְחֹמָה

Another proof that a child is obligated to support his parents because of the מצוֹה of צָדָקָה and not הורֵעָה כֹּבֵּד is written in the שִׁךְךָ:

The שִׁךְךָ explains that the דִּין בית only force someone to comply with a מצוֹה if it is a תַּשְׁאָה לְצַוָּה. רַמְשׁוּם לַרְחֹמָה also explains that this is the opinion of the ראשונים and therefore the דִּין בית do not force people to comply with this מצוֹה. Therefore, if the הלכה is that we force, the child then the original obligation must have been a תַּשְׁאָה לְצַוָּה that includes within it a תַּשְׁאָה לְצַוָּה. The שִׁךְךָ explains:

The שִׁךְךָ also explains that a child is obligated to support his parents as a result of the צָדָקָה. He continues to question the רַמְשׁוּם לַרְחֹמָה who mentions the דִּין as a תַּשְׁאָה לְצַוָּה. The שִׁךְךָ says that this is the opinion of the ראשונים and so it's not relevant to write about this.
He concludes by bringing the Tosafos in Kamah Baba who raise the difficulty that the reward is also written about the mitzvah of tzedakah.

However, there are poskim who explain that even though the child is obligated to support his parents as a result of the din of tzedakah, he has a greater obligation to his parents than to other 'ains.

They explain that a child is obligated to supply them with all their needs, giving even more than the amount that he is 'ivri to out of tzedakah.

The "Ram" explains:...
The סופרCHAHAM explains that one of the דינים of the מצוה of צדקה is that one is obligated to give to family members before other עניים, and there is no one closer than a parent. Therefore, with other עניים, there is a tzaveh צדקה in order to give to as many poor people as possible. In contrast, if one's parent is in need, he should give everything to the parent without dividing the money, in order that his parent not lack anything. In other words, the actual obligation to give is based on צדקה, but one's parent takes precedence over other עניים as a result of the מצוה of ואם אב כיבוד. Thus, both מצהו - מצוות - both play a role in the final decision.

The סופרCHAHAM also adds an extra dimension to the דין of providing for one's parents canlı מצהו. He explains that this is not from the parents’ expenses. Rather, the meaning is that the child should not lose out financially in supporting his parents. Therefore, when a child supports his parents as a result of the דין of צדקה, he does not lose anything as he is already מחזק to give that money צדקה.

However, the רדב"ז expands the amount that one has to give to a parent as צדקה:

ויהי ידוע ששאל"מ שבתוח אחוה צדקה ששלח מכוה צדקה לא זיワーク כשאר עניים אלא אף תוחתת וחברת מים ששלות צדקה עם אביしたり והולך ועל פי
cי הרוחות...

The רדב"ז explains that one does not give צדקה to a parent in the same way as one gives to other עניים. One is obliged איב צדקה to support one's parents as other people with the same socio-economic level are accustomed to support their parents. This view also combines both מצהו צדקה to produce the final decision.

Additionally, there is an opinion a child is obligated to support his parents as a result of the מצוה of צדקה. However, if the child has enough money to support his parents and nevertheless
supports them out of money designated for צדקה, תדוק, תדרך, תדריך in the name of the הורים.

משה דרכי writes in the name of the מרדכי:

It is written in the name of יהודה רבי that someone who feeds his parents עני מעשר will bring קללה upon himself. However, there is a ברייתא that says that it is מותר to give עני מעשר to his parents. He resolves this apparent contradiction by explaining that the ברייתא is talking about a situation in which both the father and the son are עסוקים and then he is permitted to feed his father from עני מעשר.

But, if the son has the financial means to support his parents then he will bring קללה upon himself if he acts in this manner. This is the פסק of the מרדכי א:

If the child does not have enough of his own money then he is not required to beg in order to support his parents. This is because the obligation to support one’s destitute parents is only as a result of the מצוה of צדקה. So it is written in the טוש:

If a child has enough money to sustain himself for that day then he is obligated to beg in order to sustain his parents. However, if he has less than this then he is not obligated to beg.
Even so, according to the חיב איש בן איש, it is proper that a child should do this for his parents because of ארץ דרך. \textsuperscript{36}

שנווכת למנב את ההורים בראשי

\textsuperscript{36} יש מִי שֵׁיהֶב, שְׁבַשְׁמָוֶן אוֹפֶן אָלַי בָּתַי לֶאֶמֶר לַחָי יָאִין. שְׁבַשֹּׁמֶן אוֹפֶן אוֹפֶן לַחָי יָאִין.
Letter to תלמידות

Dear תלמידות,

As Rav Pam מחברות notes in one of his שנות, the גמרא asks an intriguig question. Why is it that converts to Judaism often suffer trials and tribulations? A number of suggestions are offered. The final response is that it is due to their delaying their conversion somewhat. The גמרא proceeds to bring proof from מגילת büoz because נבש רות that she should receive full reward for all that she had done because she joined the Jewish people with alacrity.

The גמרא, at first glance, is quite strange. Since when are non-Jews expected to convert? And if there is no obligation of conversion, why should they suffer for delaying that decision?

Rav Yaakov Emden explains: It is true that a non-Jew is not required to accept מצוות ג. But once he decides that the ultimate spiritual truth is achieved by leading a full Jewish life, he must do so without delay. Whenever a person has an awakening to perform a מצווה, he must do so immediately.

The importance of רות is also evident in the continuation of the מגילה story. When reading the final chapter of רות, there is a feeling of contentment and joy. After living a life of childlessness, widowhood and poverty, רות finally married a great wealthy individual, and we anticipated that together they would build a בית בישראל נאמן. One almost expects the final words of the מגילה to be: "And they lived happily ever after." חaza"l, however, tell us that this was not the case. On the very night of this wonderful marriage, סנה died (leaving behind a pregnant bride). What message are we to derive from this sudden unsettling event?

1 הבמות מה.
At the beginning of גפרק, נעמי told רות that בועז would be at the threshing location that very night, and she urged her to rendezvous there with him. רות listened to her mother-in-law without delay. Subsequently, when בועז realized that רות would like him to be the redeemer, he assured her that he would immediately take care of the matter. The next morning he sought out אלמוני פלוני. After some negotiations, בועז was awarded the rights of redemption and he proceeded to marry רות. Within a few hours, בועז died, on the day that presumably had been determined the previous יום כיפור. What would have happened if רות had delayed meeting בועז by even one day? How different would history have been if בועז had procrastinated with his plans to be appointed the redeemer? It was only due to their זריזות that they merited being the forbearers of דוד המלך and המשיח המלך.

Often in life we sense a feeling of תהתעוררו – a spiritual awakening, a desire to take another step in our lifelong quest for improving our רוחניות and relationship with the העולם של רבונו. But all too often we delay just a little – and a little becomes too late. Our enthusiasm wanes and our best intentions remain just that – intentions.

The גמרא in זרה עבודה 2 tells the story of דורדיא בן אלעזר who led a life of depravity. In the midst of one of his sinful acts, he suddenly felt the urge to do תשובה. He turned to the mountains, to the land and the sky and to the heavenly bodies begging them for assistance, but his requests were denied. Realizing that it was solely up to him, he began to cry uncontrollably and died. A heavenly voice announced that ר' דורדיא בן אלעזר was invited to a life of הבא עולמו. When Rebbe, הנשיא יהודה רב, heard the story he cried and said יש קחנו לעמול, בי, אשר ישועה נשאה – A person is capable of acquiring the World to Come in one moment.
The story is uplifting, but why did Rebbe cry? Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz explains: It is true. A person can acquire his  העולם הבוא in one brief moment. But how many people are presented with that one moment and fail to take advantage?! The opportunity presents itself, but all too often we delay until it is too late.

You have merited spending the year learning in ארץ ישראל and developing a love of ירח and שמיים. These feelings can leave an everlasting impression on your lives, but only on condition that you seize the opportunity to incorporate them in your decision making, your actions and your goals. You have experienced a ten month "אחת שעה". Use it well, and ובעזרת 'you will acquire the ability to thrive in this world, and reap the benefits טוב כל הברכה א"ל.

ברכה לך טוב
Eliezer Lerner

ועבר לך מגן וホームן ושב"ך.
Inscribed on Jewelry

I. Introduction

In recent years, it has become popular in the Jewish community for young women to wear jewelry that has been engraved with verses from the Torah or quotes from rabbinic literature. Unfortunately, some serious halachic issues arise when dealing with this type of jewelry or other materials that contain pesukim (verses), such as embroidered cloth or yeshiva sweatshirts. In this article, we will address and analyze the various halachot related to this question to determine whether it is permitted to buy them, wear them, and bring them into the bathroom or other unclean areas.

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1 I would like to thank Rav Daniel Mann, Dayan at Kollel Eretz Chemdah and rebbe at the Gruss Kollel in Jerusalem for his help and suggestions in preparing this article.

2 See for example http://oneofakind-store.com/main.sc and http://www.judaicawebstore.com/jewish-jewelry-C2.aspx and the vast range of options available on these sites for engraving jewelry with Jewish sayings. This author discovered that many of his American seminary students studying in Israel for the year either already own or have thought about purchasing such jewelry.

3 The halachic issues discussed here overlap somewhat with the general question of properly disposing of Torah works through burial, commonly referred to as geniza or sheimot. However, we will focus mainly on those sources relevant to our discussion as well. For a summary of the numerous sources and poskim who address that issue, see for example Piskei Teshuvot (Orach Chaim 154:15-18),

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Rabbi Eli Ozarowski
II. The two concerns of the Rambam

The first source to deal directly with a similar issue was none other than the Rambam (Teshuvot HaRambam 268), who was asked about whether embroidering a *pasuk*, or verse, on a garment was permissible:

Concerning a garment (“*tallit*”\(^4\) on which a person chose to place *tzitzit*, and he wanted to beautify himself with mitzvot and embroidered its edge using superior craftsmanship and wrote on the edges a *pasuk* from the section of “Vayomer” (Bamidbar 15:37-41)... please instruct us our teacher, is that which this person did appropriate and permitted [for others] to follow in this, or has he sinned... The answer is that this action is considered a sin and is not permitted in any way...

Thus, the Rambam rules that it is not permitted, and then offers two reasons to justify his *psak*.

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\(^4\) Rambam here uses the term “*tallit*” to describe the garment, which in earlier times often referred to a standard garment (see for example the Mishna, *Bava Metzia* 2a) as opposed to what we often refer to as *tallit* today, namely the full size *tallit* which is worn exclusively in shul. See footnote #15 for a discussion about whether our type of *tallit* would be included in this prohibition.
Reason #1

“The first reason is that one may not write individual verses from the Torah [outside of a Torah scroll], rather he may [only] write three words and no more.” As the Rambam goes on to explain, it is forbidden to write individual sections of the Torah, and certainly individual pesukim, outside of a Sefer Torah or Chumash. This is based on the Gemara (Gittin 60a) which states that individual sections of the Torah may not be written down for a child to study, either because the Torah was given all together (“chatumah nitnah”) or because it was given in sections but eventually transmitted together as one unit (“megilah nitenah v’idabak”). According to some opinions, this halachah may be Biblical in origin.5 Both Rambam (Hilchot Sefer Torah 7:14) and Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 283:2) rule in accordance with this Gemara, permitting only an entire book of the Chumash, such as Bereshit, to be written individually, but nothing less than that.

However, many later poskim have noted6 that following this ruling would create serious concerns, since many shuls and

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5 See Turei Even (Megillah 8b) who maintains based on Rambam (Hilchot Sefer Torah 7:1) that this halachah is a Biblical one. Rambam there states that the mitzvah to write a Sefer Torah is derived from the verse “And now write for yourselves this song, (Devarim 31:19)” which he interprets to mean that the Torah must include this song (Parshat Haazinu) in it, but one cannot write any individual parsha by itself. Since writing a Sefer Torah is a biblical mitzvah, Turei Even proves that the prohibition of writing individual sections must also be biblical in origin. However, others suggest that it is only rabbinic and not Biblical.

6 See Rosh (Gittin 4:20) who explains the Rif mentioned below as being concerned that most people at the time could not write an entire Sefer Torah from which to study. See also Shach (Yoreh Deah 283:3), Taz (Yoreh Deah 283:1), Bach (Yoreh Deah 283:1), Beer Heitev (Yoreh Deah 283:1), and Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 283:1) who all allow this practice.
educational facilities at the time lacked sufficient copies of the regular Chumash, thus making it difficult for children to study Torah, among other things. Therefore, they claim that we can rely on the rishonim such as Rif (Gittin 28a in pages of the Rif), Mordechai (Gittin 407), and others, that do not rule in accordance with this Gemara, based on the concept of “Eit Laasot L’Hashem,”7 “It is a time of emergency,” which is occasionally employed by the Gemara to permit violating certain prohibitions to ensure that the Torah not be forgotten.8 This has indeed become the widespread universal custom, and even today it is assumed to be permitted to write individual sections of the Chumash.

Based on this, it might appear that this reason of Rambam is not a relevant factor in our discussion to prohibit using rings or other jewelry with pesukim engraved on them, since the custom has evolved to permit writing individual pesukim. However, acharonim, later authorities, debate whether the permissive ruling is limited to cases where it is necessary for educational or spiritual purposes, such as studying Torah or davening. Some, such as Taz (Yoreh Deah 283:1), Beer Heitev (Yoreh Deah 283:1), and Mishnah Berurah (Orach Chaim 638:24), recommend against writing such pesukim for unnecessary educational purposes,9

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7 Literally translated as “it is a time to do [something] for Hashem,” taken from Tehillim (119:126).

8 This concept is discussed elsewhere in the same sugya, or Talmudic discussion, in Gittin, concerning the famous allowance of writing down the entire Torah She’baal Peh, the Oral Torah, due to concern of being forgotten despite the prohibition in doing so.

9 These poskim do not use the expression of an outright prohibition, but rather “lav shapir avid,” “it is not appropriate to do so.”
such as writing *pesukim* on the wall as a fortuitous sign,\(^{10}\) while others do not limit the leniency in this way and permit writing *pesukim* even in such cases.\(^{11}\) According to the more lenient approach, perhaps one could argue that this particular concern of writing *pesukim* is not violated, since the presence of the *pesukim* may serve as a *siman tov,* a positive spiritual sign, or a constant reminder of G-d or some other Jewish value (depending on the particular verse engraved) similar to the writing of *pesukim* on the wall in a Sukkah, and he forbids the practice for this reason as well as the second reason of disgrace discussed below. See also Maharit (2:3) referred to by *Pitchei Teshuvah* (*Yoreh Deah* 283:1) and Machatzit HaShekel (*Orach Chaim* 40:1) who is stringent concerning writing verses from scripture above the *bimah* in shul on Yom Kippur to increase the intensity level of the davening. He feels that this is not sufficient reason to be lenient about this question. Interestingly enough, *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 40:1) and *Mishnah Berurah* (*Orach Chaim* 40:3) actually quote this Maharit as being lenient about this question, but in truth he is stringent, at least in the context of our topic (though he rules that the second reason of the Rambam is not a problem in this case). Perhaps they meant that he was lenient concerning the second reason of causing verses from the Torah to be disgraced. It is noteworthy as well that the *Mishnah Berurah* permits having *pesukim* on the wall in shul (see next footnote) yet forbids placing *pesukim* in the *sukkah* partially due to the concern of writing *pesukim* outside of a *Chumash,* which appear to be contradictory.

\(^{10}\) The *Mishnah Berurah* here is discussing writing and placing *pesukim* on the wall in a Sukkah, and he forbids the practice for this reason as well as the second reason of disgrace discussed below. See also Maharit (2:3) referred to by *Pitchei Teshuvah* (*Yoreh Deah* 283:1) and Machatzit HaShekel (*Orach Chaim* 40:1) who is stringent concerning writing verses from scripture above the *bimah* in shul on Yom Kippur to increase the intensity level of the davening. He feels that this is not sufficient reason to be lenient about this question. Interestingly enough, *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 40:1) and *Mishnah Berurah* (*Orach Chaim* 40:3) actually quote this Maharit as being lenient about this question, but in truth he is stringent, at least in the context of our topic (though he rules that the second reason of the Rambam is not a problem in this case). Perhaps they meant that he was lenient concerning the second reason of causing verses from the Torah to be disgraced. It is noteworthy as well that the *Mishnah Berurah* permits having *pesukim* on the wall in shul (see next footnote) yet forbids placing *pesukim* in the *sukkah* partially due to the concern of writing *pesukim* outside of a *Chumash,* which appear to be contradictory.

\(^{11}\) See *Shach ad loc.* who does not specifically limit the leniency as do *Taz,* *Sefer Bnei Yonah,* *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 40:1) and *Mishnah Berurah* (*Orach Chaim* 40:3). Furthermore, a number of *acharonim* are lenient when the script used is invalid for use in a *Sefer Torah,* such as *Tashbetz* (1:2) cited in *Pitchei Teshuvah* (*Yoreh Deah* 283:2). Thus, script which does not qualify as Assyrian script, the type of script used in a *Sefer Torah* (discussed later in the article) would be permitted according to them. Rav Eliezer Melamed, *Peninei Halachah Likutim* Vol. I, p.125, rules that one may be lenient on this issue, assuming that the script used is not valid for use in a *Sefer Torah.*
According to the more stringent opinions, it would seem inappropriate to engrave pesukim on jewelry, because it does not serve as a critical educational tool for study. Rav Hershel Schachter felt that this is the accepted approach and such jewelry is therefore prohibited for this reason.

Although one could argue that the presence of a pasuk or rabbinic saying simply enhances the beauty of the jewelry but does not specifically add any religious dimension to the experience of the individual wearing it, students this author has spoken to indicate that they specifically choose this jewelry because of the religious element they perceive it contains. Rav Asher Bush (Shoei B’shlomo Siman 59), in discussing a shailah asked to him about murals or pictures of stories in Tanach with pesukim written in small letters underneath, comments that based on the above sources, it is problematic to write pesukim in this context. Although he acknowledges that perhaps such pictures can create an element of spiritual inspiration, which could perhaps be equivalent to the educational needs described above (at least according to the lenient view and perhaps the stricter view as well), he notes that since the words were so small that they could barely be read, any inspiration derived would be solely from the picture and not from the words. Therefore, Rav Bush felt that writing pesukim under the picture was problematic. In our situation though, perhaps one could argue that if this type of jewelry really does inspire a person religiously to constantly think about Hashem and the Torah wherever they go, then this problem is not of serious concern. Interestingly enough, a number of seminary students related that at times when non-religious friends of theirs saw their ring or necklace, they inquired about the nature of the quote and where it was taken from. This, in turn, led to an entire discussion about Judaism and the Torah. This argument, if a person finds to be realistic for them, could be strong enough to obviate this concern, at least according to the lenient opinion. However, unfortunately it does not appear to hold sufficient weight to solve the second concern of bringing it into the bathroom and other unclean areas, in which case it should still be prohibited according to Rambam and Shulchan Aruch.

Written communication from 26 Tamuz, 5772 (July 15th, 2012).
Reason #2

Rambam describes his second concern as “stronger than the first one” and this would therefore appear to be the more serious problem with embroidering or engraving pesukim:

“The second problem... is that he brings verses from the Torah to be degraded, since the tzitzit are [only] objects used for a mitzvah and do not contain intrinsic sanctity; therefore it is permitted to enter the bathroom with a garment containing tzitzit, and to step on it and use it... and how can we free verses from the Torah which were written with sanctity from Hashem to [be exposed to] these unclean areas and degradation?” Thus, Rambam explains that when the pesukim are embroidered on clothing, they will inevitably be taken into the bathroom and other places which are considered to be unclean. This is because any garment with tzitzit, which are classified as tashmishei mitzvah, ritual objects, do not contain kedusha, holiness, like that of tefillin or Sifrei Torah, and are therefore not prohibited from being brought into unclean areas.14 Consequently, the words of the

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14 In earlier times, most regular garments worn had four corners and therefore were obligated to have tzitzit attached to them. Consequently, Rambam here may be referring exclusively to a standard garment and explaining that since one would walk into the bathroom with it, any pesukim written on it would be subject to degradation and therefore forbidden. However, it is unclear whether he would also forbid embroidering pesukim on the full size tallit which is generally worn in shul alone. Beer Heitev (Orach Chaim 24:4), Shaarei Teshuvah (Orach Chaim 24:4 citing Radbaz (4:45, note the printer’s error in Beer Heitev citing 1:45), Ginat Veradim (2:26), and others), and Mishnah Berurah (24:9) all cite this rule prohibiting the embroidering of pesukim in the context of buying a beautiful “tallit” which presumably refers to the full size tallit, known as a tallit gadol (and Ginat Veradim says explicitly he is referring to the tallit worn during
Torah on the tzitzit will be subjected to terrible disgrace which is prohibited. Although the Rambam harshly criticizes one who embroiders pesukim into a garment, it would appear that he agrees the nature of the prohibition is only rabbinic, given the lack of any such direct prohibition in the Talmud, as well as the fact that it is only a decree due to a concern of the potential negative consequences, which is usually rabbinic in nature.

The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 283:4) codifies this Rambam as well, ruling that it is indeed forbidden to embroider pesukim into a tallit, and the Beit Yosef, written by Rav Yosef Karo himself, makes mention of both of these reasons offered by the Rambam. Based on this case, it would appear that even if one would argue that the first reason above is not sufficient to absolutely forbid our case of using pesukim in jewelry or other clothing, it would still be prohibited to make, and most probably buy, such an object based on the second reason. Even if a person attempts to be careful not to bring it into unclean areas, it is very difficult to assure that it is never taken to the bathroom. Although some davening). However, Leket HaKemach (Hilchot Tzitzit) referenced by Beer Heitev suggests that Rambam’s ruling does not apply to the full size tallit, since most people are extremely careful to treat it properly (see Mishnah Berurah 21:14 who notes that the custom is to refrain from bringing it into the bathroom), and he therefore permits making a berachah on a tallit which contains pesukim. Ginat Veradim also allows using a such a tallit after it was already made (though he does not sanction doing so initially) by saying that nowadays people do not bring the tallit gadol into the bathroom, thus the potential concern is not relevant (and therefore one is not required to store the tallit permanently, as the Rambam ruled in his case—see section VII for more on this). See also sources quoted in http://www.shaimos.org/guidelines.htm.

See Shach (283:6), Taz (283:3), and other commentaries that cite both reasons as well.
poskim, such as *Shach* (*Yoreh Deah* 283:6), do permit writing pesukim on the Torah scroll covers since it can be virtually assured that they will not be brought to inappropriate places, in our case, there is certainly a much greater chance that people will wear the jewelry into the bathroom, and these objects would not qualify for the leniency used for the *Sifrei Torah*.

It is also possible to engrave quotes from sources in rabbinic literature, mainly from *Pirkei Avot*, Ethics of the fathers. Would quotes from the Sages be included in these concerns as well or are they limited to actual pesukim? It would seem that they are, since Rambam (*Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah* 6:8) declares that “all holy writings, they and their interpretations and explanations are forbidden to burn or destroy by hand etc.” The expressions “interpretations and explanations” would seem to include the

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16 Many poskim discuss similar situations concerning bringing newspapers, magazines, or other material containing words of Torah into the bathroom and treating them with sanctity. See for example Rav Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss (*Minchat Yitzchak* 1:18) who suggests that perhaps in this context, bringing them into the bathroom is not considered a serious degradation to their holiness; Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah* 2:134) who forbids sending out business cards with blessings or Hashem’s name on it since some people will not treat it properly; Rav Menashe Klein (*Mishneh Halachot* 7:183), and other sources cited in *Piskei Teshuvot* (154:#15). See also *Teshuvot V’hanhagot* (2:466) where Rav Moshe Shternbuch classifies newspapers which include words of Torah in them as regular objects without sanctity, since the majority of the paper contains non-holy words and thus the degradation of bringing a few words of Torah dispersed throughout the publication into the bathroom is not recognizable. This issue may arise concerning newspapers or magazines such as *The Jewish Press* or *Mishpacha*. R.Chaim Dovid HaLevi (*Aseh Lecha Rav* 5:26-27) rules that one may not take any Hebrew newspaper into the bathroom because it is written in *Ktav Ashuri*, Assyrian script. See below in section IV as well as footnote #28.

17 See a few examples like this at [http://www.oneofakind.co.il/shopassets/files/NEW_WisCohnGodspeedCom.html](http://www.oneofakind.co.il/shopassets/files/NEW_WisCohnGodspeedCom.html)
words of Chazal as well, and this is the source that most poskim cite to require burial of old copies of Talmudic texts and commentaries in addition to the Written Torah.18

III. How many words

Although the poskim do prohibit writing pesukim in the cases above, they note that if only a few words are written, this does not qualify for either category of prohibition discussed above. In the responsum referenced above as well as in Hilchot Sefer Torah (7:14), Rambam states that writing three words or less is not considered to be a Torah quote and hence does not contain intrinsic holiness.19 This ruling is codified in the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 283:3) as well, and even writing a number of lines with three words on each line is permitted. The rishonim derived the source for this idea from the golden tablet designed by Queen Helena, which the Gemara (Gittin 60a, Yoma 38a) comments had Parshat Sota, the section of the Torah discussing a rebellious wife (Bamidbar 5:11-31), engraved into it, and were written “serugin,” which according to some rishonim, including Rambam, Tashbetz (1:2), and RiMigash (cited in Tashbetz), means divided into sections (though Rashi interprets the word otherwise). Thus, they interpreted this to mean that if the entire section is written in separate lines consisting of three words each, such an endeavor

18 See sources referred to in footnote #3.

19 It is interesting to note that Rambam himself (Perush Mishnayot Sotah 2:4) rules that only two words may be written on multiple lines to avoid creating the holiness of a scroll, but three words are forbidden, which contradicts his position in the Mishneh Torah. See Sefer Mafteach, Frankel Edition of the Rambam, Hilchot Sefer Torah (7:14), who references sources that deal with this question.
would be permitted.\footnote{Concerning whether this rule of allowing multiple lines with three words each can be applied to our situation, see below, section V and footnote #35.} Based on this approach, one could allow wearing jewelry that only has three words engraved on it, such as the popular expressions "Deracheha Darchei Noam," “its ways are ways of peace” (Mishlei 3:17) or “V’erastich Li L’olam,” “And I will betroth you forever." (Hoshea 2:21).

However, some poskim are stringent to forbid even three words together, based on the requirement of sirtut, scratching straight lines into the parchment of a Sefer Torah to guide the scribe as to where exactly to write. The Gemara (Gittin 6b) requires writing any pesukim using this method of underlining such that an underline must be scratched into the parchment directly beneath the location where the words on each line will be written.\footnote{The same requirement of sirtut applies when writing books from the Neviim, Prophets, Ketuvim, Scriptures, and mezuzah. However, commentaries debate whether sirtut is required for writing the parshiyot, or Biblical sections, in the tefillin. See Tosafoth, Gittin 6b, s.v. amar rav Yitzchak. Both Shulchan Aruch and Rema (Orach Chaim 32:6) agree that most of the lines do not require sirtut, but common custom today is for scribes to do so anyway. For more on this topic, see Piskei Teshuvot (Orach Chaim 32:#11).} The Gemara records a debate between Rav Yitzchak who holds that writing even three words require sirtut, and a Tanaitic statement which states that four words require sirtut. Rambam (Hilchot Sefer Torah 7:16) rules in accordance with the second opinion that three words are permitted and four are forbidden, and this is how Tur (Yoreh Deah 284:2) quotes the Rambam’s opinion. But the Beit Yosef notes that Rambam (Hilchot Yibum 4:5) says that even writing three words is prohibited without underlining. Due to this debate, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 284:2) is stringent and rules that even three words are forbidden to write without...
sirtut.22 According to those poskim, such as Gra (Yoreh Deah 283:4), who equate the halachot of sirtut with those of maintaining the holiness of pesukim, perhaps even three words should be forbidden to engrave into jewelry or a tallit. This position is considered, but not accepted definitively, by many poskim addressing our issue. In fact, most of them do not take a stand on this point and consider both opinions.23 If we accept the first reason above for prohibiting writing these pesukim based on not writing pesukim outside of a Sefer Torah, then perhaps one should be strict about expressions with three words, since that halachah, as mentioned above, may be of Biblical origins for which we are generally stringent in cases of doubt. But if we adopt the second reason of potential degradation to the pesukim upon bringing into the bathroom, there may be room to be lenient when necessary for jewelry which contains only three words, since this reason is most likely only rabbinic in origin, for which we are often lenient in cases of doubt.24

22 For more on this question, see commentaries such as Nekudat HaKesef (Yoreh Deah 284), Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 284:1), and Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah 284:2).

23 See the responsum of Rav Yaakov Ariel (B’oholah shel Torah Siman 42) on our topic referred to below. Interestingly, Ginzei HaKodesh (9:3) maintains that if one can understand from the context that a pasuk is being cited, even three words would be considered holy, but if no one could extrapolate from those particular words that a pasuk is being quoted, then only four words together would constitute a scriptural verse.

24 For rabbis and educators confronted with this problem by students who may not always be willing to listen to a halachic ruling, purchasing jewelry with only three words from a pasuk may be a very helpful suggestion to employ for them, given that there is some legitimate halachic basis for allowing it.
IV. Ktav Ashuri

Another issue to confront regarding this type of jewelry is the permissibility of using Ktav Ashuri in a disrespectful manner. Ktav Ashuri is generally defined as the block Hebrew letters used in writing a Sefer Torah. The responsum of the Rambam quoted above raises this as an additional concern with embroidering the pesukim into the tallit: Since Ktav Ashuri used for writing the Torah is holy, it is not appropriate to use it for a mundane purpose. Although the case discussed was referring to a pasuk, apparently the Rambam felt that did not qualify as a holy purpose because it was on a garment rather than in a Sefer Torah or other holy book. This opinion is quoted by Rabbeinu Yerucham as well as Rema (Yoreh Deah 284:2), who cites it as “some say,” as opposed to codifying it as the definitive approach. A number of acharonim also accept this ruling as the practical halachah. For example, Pitchei Teshuvah (283:3) cites the Radbaz (4:45) who seems to be stringent not to use Ktav Ashuri on clothing even for regular non-Torah words, since the script itself contains holiness. Furthermore, the Gilyon Maharsha (Siman 284) cites the Sefer Beit Hillel that merchants do not conduct themselves properly when they post signs outside their stores in Ktav Ashuri describing the type of food they are selling. Finally, Aruch HaShulchan (283:14) also cites this opinion and appears to accept it at least in theory, explaining the logic behind it to be that since there are many secrets hidden in the actual letters, we can’t simply use them for anything we please. However, he acknowledges the reality that the script is widely used for non-holy purposes: “But what we can we do, since the printers print all secular material using Assyrian script and we do not have the power to protest, and He Who is merciful should atone [this] sin, and praiseworthy is the portion of the printer who is careful about this...”

Based on this, it would appear that perhaps it is problematic to use block Hebrew letters (which are sometimes, though not
always used for this jewelry) on such jewelry, due to the concerns of writing with *Ktav Ashuri* for what is possibly a non-holy purpose, plus the fact that this script may well be brought into the bathroom, which is an inappropriate location for a holy script.

However, it is also possible that the custom of using such block letters in general (such as for Hebrew newspapers) as well as in our case of jewelry can be defended for the following reasons:

First, some *poskim* claim that not all Hebrew block letters are included in the category of *Ktav Ashuri*. Rav Moshe Feinstein,25 Rav Yaakov Ariel,26 and Rav Eliezer Melamed,27 among others, claim that any slight change from the original script renders the script permissible. Rav Moshe notes that the Rambam himself supports this notion in his responsa where he comments that “because of this the *Sefardim* modified ("shinu") their writing script and gave the letters different forms ("tzurat acherot"), until it became similar to another script ("ad shenaaseh k’i’lu ktav acher").” This formulation, claims Rav Moshe, indicates that they slightly modified their script, which eventually led to a new script, but only slight modifications, such that it would be rendered invalid for use in a *Sefer Torah*, were truly halachically necessary to avoid the problem of using *Ktav Ashuri* for regular non-Torah matters.

Second, Rav Yaakov Ariel (in the above responsa) points to a comment by the *Chavot Yair* (Siman 109) cited by the *Pitchei Teshuvah* (Yoreh Deah 271:20) that it is “appropriate to avoid treating other books printed in *Ktav Ashuri* in a degrading manner,

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25 *Iggerot Moshe* (Yoreh Deah 3:120:1) in a responsa concerning using Assyrian script for writing a *ketubah*, or marriage document.

26 *B’oholah shel Torah* (vol.1 Siman 41) in a responsa concerning Hebrew newspapers.

27 *Peninei Halachah* op cit.
such as wiping oneself with them or throwing them on the ground, etc.\textsuperscript{28} According to this opinion, argues Rav Ariel, this script is only treated as partially holy, and would be permissible to use, as long as one treats it respectfully. Thus, in contrast to the first defense above, this argument alone would permit using the script but forbid bringing it into the bathroom, for example. However, Rav Ariel combines the two reasons together and thus defends the custom of all those Hebrew works that use block Hebrew letters.

According to the first lenient opinion, it would seem that from the perspective of \textit{Ktav Ashuri}, a ring or jewelry with block Hebrew letters would not be any more problematic than other papers written this way. Given that the custom is often to be lenient about block letters written in Hebrew newspapers and similar material,\textsuperscript{29} one should not be particularly bothered by this question, even if the other questions discussed in this article concerning this jewelry may still be problematic.

\textsuperscript{28} The \textit{Chavot Yair} and Rav Moshe both reference the Gemara (\textit{Bava Batra} 166b-167a) which deals with the writing of \textit{shtarot}, legal documents, which was done with block Hebrew letters, and prove from the examples of the style of letters discussed there that slight changes to the script remove the prohibition of \textit{Ktav Ashuri}.

\textsuperscript{29} See \textit{Piskei Teshuvot} (154:#16) and \url{http://www.shaimos.org/guidelines.htm} who cite numerous other sources concerning this question. In fact, Rav Ariel himself in the very next responsum (\textit{B’oholah shel Torah} vol.1 Siman 42) uses this consideration as an additional factor to be lenient for jewelry by expanding the argument that perhaps the only prohibition of writing Torah verses in questionable locations is when they are written in true \textit{Ktav Ashuri}, but otherwise they do not have holiness at all. However, R.Chaim Dovid HaLevi (\textit{Aseh Lecha Rav} 3:45, 5:26-27) does not agree with the first lenient approach mentioned in the text, though he does reluctantly accept it as the common custom. Nevertheless, he strongly argues that such material, even concerning secular topics, may not be brought into the bathroom.
V. Shem Hashem

Our discussion has focused mainly on the potential problems of engraving or writing pesukim in locations which may subject them to disgrace. However, Rav Eliezer Waldenberg (Tzitz Eliezer 16:30) notes that writing one of the actual names of Hashem is far more problematic in this context (and many others) than simply quoting pesukim, due to the additional prohibitions, some of them more severe, that are associated with it. First, a Biblical prohibition exists to erase or destroy Hashem’s name, as cited in the Gemara (Shavuot 35a, Makkot 22a) and codified in the Rambam (Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 6:1) and Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 276:9) based on the proximity of the pasuk “Lo Taasun Ken L’Hashem Elokeichem,” “You should not do so to Hashem your G-d,” to the command to destroy the mention of all idol worship in the Land of Israel (Devarim 12:3-4). In contrast, the prohibition of causing disgrace to pesukim appears to be only a rabbinic prohibition, as evidenced from the Rambam (Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 6:8) who states that “holy scriptures are forbidden to destroy or burn, and one who does receives rabbinic lashes.” Second, the Rema (276:13) states that a special prohibition exists to write Hashem’s name outside of a Torah or other holy book, since it could become disgraced, and therefore it is not used in personal letters. Third, Rav Waldenberg points out that one is forbidden to stand unclothed in front of Hashem’s name, as recorded by Rambam (Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 6:6), a situation which could occur frequently with such a ring or piece of jewelry.

In this context, the Pitchei Teshuvah (276:27) cites the Chavot Yair (Siman 16) who discusses a question very similar to ours, namely whether it is permitted to write the name of Hashem on a ring which it is certain will not be disgraced or brought to an unclean location. He continues that even if this is permitted, perhaps it should still be forbidden due to a prohibition from deriving benefit from Hashem’s Name. The Pitchei Teshuvah then
cites Rav Yaakov Emden (Sheeilat Yaavetz siman 140) who believes that a prohibition to derive benefit does indeed exist, and suggests covering Hashem’s Name with something else if you want to use the ring, which he argues thereby avoids the prohibition to derive benefit. Other authorities disagree, but Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:136) still concludes that it is appropriate to act in accordance with the stringent opinion in this case.

In sum, engraving and wearing a ring with the Name of Hashem on it involves many more problems than simple pesukim, and therefore should be treated even more stringently than cases of pesukim on clothing or jewelry.

Although most of the jewelry in question in fact does not contain actual Names of Hashem, they are often substituted by the letter Daled or Hey with a dash written as " or "h. Does this qualify for the extra restrictions applied to the Name of Hashem as well? Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:138), in discussing the practice of writing ב"ה, which stands for Baruch Hashem, Blessed is Hashem, on the heading of papers, compares this to the case of the Terumat HaDeshen (Siman 171) cited by the Rema (Yoreh Deah 276:10) that writing Hashem’s Name as two Yuds does not contain sanctity. Therefore, explains Rema, it is permitted to erase it, but only for a tzorech, or necessity, which the Shach (Yoreh Deah 276:14) interprets to mean a tzorech gadol, a great necessity, since the letter Yud is actually the first letter in Hashem’s name and as such should be treated appropriately.

30 See Panim Meirot quoted in Pitchei Teshuvah (276:25), as well as Iggerot Moshe (Yoreh Deah 2:136).

31 See many of the examples that are in this category at http://www.oneofakind.co.il/shopassets/files/Psukim_Names.html

32 See also Yabia Omer (8:Yoreh Deah 26) who has a comprehensive discussion of this issue.
too, claims Rav Moshe, Hey is one of the letters in Hashem’s name and should be treated equivalently. However, other acharonim, such as Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah 276:28), argue that this type of form has no sanctity whatsoever, and the Rema’s case of two Yuds is more stringent, presumably because Yud is the first letter of Hashem’s name, while Hey is not.

According to this, Daled, which is not one of the letters in His name, should be entirely permitted according to all authorities. On the other hand, Hey on jewelry or other surfaces, when written with intention to refer to Hashem’s name, would seem to be subject to the aforementioned debate. Nevertheless, Rav Yaakov Yeshaya Blau (Tzedakah Umishpat 16: note #88) claims that simply walking into bathroom with it is acceptable, and only directly degrading the paper itself, such as using it as toilet paper, is forbidden. Consequently, the name of Hashem spelled in this

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33 Aruch HaShulchan’s specific examples include writing דעששת “with Hashem’s help,” using a Daled for Hashem, and י“ק, Im Yirtzeh Hashem, “if Hashem wants,” using a Hey for Hashem. The second case should be parallel to Rav Moshe’s case of Baruch Hashem using a Hey.

34 It should be noted that although Aruch HaShulchan appears to perceive these cases as somewhat more lenient than the case of two Yuds, he still forbids them to be used for a degrading type of use, as does Rav Moshe. It is debatable whether bringing into the bathroom would be included in this category, see below in the text and footnote #32.

35 See Piskei Teshuvot (154:#18) and http://www.shaimos.org/guidelines.htm for a full list of halachic authorities who have debated this question and the various opinions.

36 He does add that this may be specifically (“b’frat”) when it is in a pocket. See below where the issue of coverings in the bathrooms is discussed at length.

37 In fact, both Aruch HaShulchan (cited above and in 276:24) and Iggerot Moshe focus primarily on cases of directly degrading the name, such as burning the paper, discarding it in an unclean location, and wiping oneself with it in the
manner would not add any additional halachic problems to those already discussed concerning such jewelry or similar materials.

**VI. Possible factors to permit the jewelry**

Although we have seen that there are some complications with buying and wearing this type of jewelry, there are other factors to consider which may avoid the problem in certain situations.

1. **Words on multiple lines and abbreviated pesukim**

The *Pitchei Teshuvah* (*Yoreh Deah* 284:1) cites authorities in the context of *sirtut* that permit writing only two or three words on one line, and then continuing the citation on the next line. Since Rambam (*Hilchot Sefer Torah* 7:14) rules similarly that no sanctity exists for a scroll containing multiple lines with three words each, it is reasonable to argue that this solution may be effective also for avoiding the question of writing a *pasuk* in our situation, and would not render the jewelry as a holy article. This is in fact the ruling of Rav Yisrael Belsky and possibly of Rav Moshe Feinstein in the context of wedding invitations. 38 Although

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38 Rav Belsky is cited at [http://www.shaimos.org/guidelines.htm](http://www.shaimos.org/guidelines.htm) (notes #124-126) discussing this option in the context of wedding invitations with *pesukim*, while Rav Moshe’s opinion is discussed in *Iggerot Moshe* (*Yoreh Deah* 4:38) where he mentions this suggestion. Although he states that this opinion “is seemingly a correct reason,” since verses in the Torah are not written in this...
most of the jewelry under discussion is not actually written this way, it may also be relevant when designing yeshiva or seminary sweatshirts. In fact, this year’s MMY sweatshirts had the verse “Harimi b'koach kolej mevaseret Yerushalayim,” “Raise your voice up with strength, announcer of Jerusalem,” (Yeshayah 40:9) designed on the sweatshirt with the first three words on one line and the last two words on the next. Thus, according to those who permit three words to be written together (and only forbid four), this may be permitted to design and bring into the bathroom. However, Sefer Ginzei HaKodesh (9:9 and footnote #30) rules in the name of Rav Eliashiv and Rav Nissim Karelitz that although perhaps valid in the context of sirtut, such a solution would not be allowed in our context, based on the Rambam himself in his responsum, where he notes that it can only be permitted when the lines are far enough apart that they would not be easily read together as one verse. Thus, in most cases where the lines are quite close together, it would be forbidden. An additional leniency is cited by the Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 283:2) that if some of the words are expressed only by abbreviations or by manner (“sheharei lekka shurot elu b’kra”), he still concludes that it is better not to write any pesukim on invitations, and notes elsewhere (Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:135) that he refrained from ever using pesukim in any form on the wedding invitations of their children. We should also note that even if Rav Moshe did allow it, he may have done so in that case because as he notes, placing the words on multiple lines demonstrates that the intention is just to use the words as a beracha, or blessing to the couple. In our case, though, the intention is probably to refer to the actual verse, even if written on multiple lines.

It is somewhat difficult, though, to resolve this condition with Hilchet Sefer Torah where Rambam does not mention anything about how far apart the lines are and whether they can easily be read together as one or not, implying that those factors are irrelevant. See Rambam, Frankel Edition, Hilchet Sefer Torah 7:14, Mekorot V’Tziyunim where he raises this question and leaves the matter unresolved. He also notes that Rambam (Perush Mishnayot Sotah 2:4)
cutting off the last few letters with a dash, this does not qualify as full words. This might be another method of avoiding the problem when fashioning the jewelry or designing a sweatshirt.

2. Switching the order of words

Rabbi Moshe Rosenstein reports\(^\text{40}\) that some poskim permit switching the order of the words in the pasuk to avoid the problem, since the current form is not read exactly the same as the actual pasuk. For example, the popular verse “Kol Sasson V’kol simcha,” “the voice of happiness and the voice of joy (Yirmiyahu 33:11 among other verses that use this phrase)” often used in reference to weddings either on invitations or in songs would be switched to read “Kol simcha v’kol sasson.” However, oral reports have circulated that Rav Eliashiv does not approve of this practice and does not consider it to be a valid leniency.\(^\text{41}\)


\(^{41}\) See [http://www.jemsem.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=414&Itemid=54](http://www.jemsem.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=414&Itemid=54). See also Halichot Shlomo (20:note #72) citing R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and Sefer Ginzei HaKodesh (9:note #18) who allow slightly modifying the language of the pasuk (which is different than simply reversing the order of the phrases). Thus, for example, they would change “Aaleh as Yerushalayim al rosh simchasi,” “I will place [mourning for] Jerusalem above my own rejoicing (Tehillim 137:6)” to “Naaleh es Yerushalayim al rosh simchasehu,” “We will place [mourning for] Jerusalem above our own rejoicing.
3. Other types of expressions found

It is important to note that although much of this type of jewelry worn contains references to verses from the Torah or sayings in Chazal, a significant number of them utilize other sayings. For example, the phrase “tamid bisimcha,” “always [be] in [a state] of happiness,” “ein davar omeid bifnei haratzon,” “nothing can stand in the way of a desire,” and “gam zeh yaavor,” “this too will pass,” are also quite commonly used, but are not halachically problematic due to the lack of content from the Torah or Chazal. Purchasing such jewelry with these types of expressions is probably one of the best suggestions to offer to individuals who wish to avoid the halachic problems.

4. Use for protection

Rav Eliezer Waldenberg (Tzitz Eliezer 16:30) rules that jewelry with Torah content is permitted to be both fashioned and purchased when worn specifically for the purpose of protection. Although when worn for medicinal value it would be forbidden due to a separate prohibition of curing oneself through words of Torah, Rav Waldenberg says he understands that in this case, this jewelry is often worn to engender special Divine protection and therefore it should be permitted to do so, assuming that it is covered properly in the bathroom (see below). However, Rav Daniel Mann (Living the Halachic Process, volume 2 pp.245-247) points out that today it is unusual for people to wear such adornments specifically for Divine protection. Although one might suggest that

42 See for example many of the quotes listed at

43 See Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 155:1).
those who wear jewelry with specific verses related to protection on them, such as “Hashem Yishmorcha MiKol Ra,” “Hashem should protect you from all evil, (Tehillim 121:7)” may in fact be doing so for this protection, it is still somewhat difficult to argue that in today’s society, people truly believe that these pesukim will in fact protect them from harm when worn this way.

VII. Intention

Another factor relevant to the discussion is whether the artisan who fashioned the jewelry intended to use the phrase as a pasuk or simply as a catch phrase. The significance of this distinction can be seen from the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 284:2) in the context of sirtut, where he rules based on Rabeinu Tam (cited in Tosafot Gittin 6b s.v. amar rav yitzchak) that one who employs phrases from verses in the Torah in his personal letters is not required to use sirtut, since his intention is simply to express a certain thought rather than use the words specifically to refer to a pasuk.44

Furthermore, Rema (Yoreh Deah 276:2) states that if a scribe wrote the expression “elohim acherim,” “other gods,” (based on Shmot 20:2) which refers to other idolatrous gods, the word

44 It should be noted that Shach does disagree on this point, claiming based on the Yerushalmi that one should be stringent to require sirtut even when using pesukim in a personal letter. However, Rav Shmuel Vozner (Shevet HaLevi 7:167) feels that the accepted halacha follows the Shulchan Aruch, and therefore permits using phrases from pesukim in a newspaper to wish a mazal tov. Rav Moshe Shternbuch (Teshuvot V’Hanhagot 2:466) also accepts this premise in the context of newspapers and magazines which contain a passing reference to words of Chazal, but are not written for the purpose of teaching or learning Torah. See also Yabia Omer referred to below as well as other sources cited in Piskei Teshuvot (154:#14 and note #99) concerning currency with the name of Hashem on it.
elohim is not sanctified even if the scribe intended it to refer to Hashem’s name, because the context proves that it refers to pagan gods rather than to Hashem. Based on these and other sources, many authorities state that any letters forming the name of Hashem are not treated with sanctity, including names of people or locations such as Beit El, Nechemya, and others.45 Although some act more stringently, this is considered to be the standard halachah.

Based on the considerations above, Rav Yaakov Ariel (B’oholah shel Torah siman 42) argues that perhaps there is room to be lenient that not only may one wear jewelry or rings (or sweatshirts) with Torah verses on it, it may even be permitted to bring them into the bathroom, since perhaps the verses are intended not as Torah content, but rather simply as an expression of friendship. For example, the phrase of “Ani L’dodi V’dodi Li,” “I am to my beloved as my beloved is to me,” found on a ring may not have been intended to refer specifically to the verse in Shir HaShirim (6:3), but rather is simply being used as a “catch phrase” to demonstrate a person’s affection or friendship for another individual. Similarly, someone who gives his wife a necklace with the expression “Eishet Chayil Mi Yimtza,” “A wife of valor who can find,” may possibly have in mind that she is a wonderful person rather than the specific pasuk in Mishlei (31:10) from which the quote is derived.

Rav Ariel explains, based on a responsum of Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer 4:Yoreh Deah 21), that we must ascertain the intention of the artisan who fashions the jewelry for these purposes, not that of the person who wears or buys the ring.46 If the

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45 See Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 276:28), Sdei Chemed, and Piskei Teshuvot (Orach Chaim 154:18).

46 Rav Ovadia’s responsum discusses the halachic status of Hashem’s Name engraved on a coin, and after citing numerous sources in his usual style, he
artisan intended to refer specifically to the *pasuk*, then it would retain sanctity, while if he wanted to employ the phrase as a catchy line, then it would not be sanctified.

Consequently, Rav Ariel suggests that without additional information, perhaps it can be presumed that the craftsman who fashioned the jewelry belongs to the majority of individuals who would not specifically employ the expression as a verse from *Tanach*. This is an especially logical conclusion given the fact that the prohibition of causing degradation to Torah verses is only rabbinic in origin, as discussed above (in contrast to the Name of Hashem). However, Rav Ariel limits his potential leniency to a case when the actual source in *Tanach* is not mentioned on the jewelry, but if the jewelry actually contains the citation of the verse, such as noting that the verse “*Eshet Chayil Mi Yimtza*” cited above comes from *Mishlei* chapter 31, then clearly the craftsman does refer to the *pasuk*, and thus the jewelry would contain sanctity.

Rav Daniel Mann (*Living the Halachic Process, volume 2* p. 247), however, does not fully subscribe to this avenue for leniency primarily because he believes that most artisans do indeed intend to refer to the *pesukim* when engraving these expressions. He comments that “if the words are borrowed from the Torah to be used as a catch phrase to describe a friend(ship) (e.g., *ani l’dodi* concludes that the coin does not contain sanctity since the individuals that fashion it do not have the intention of infusing it with holiness. One of his primary sources proving this contention is the Gemara (*Arachin* 6a) concerning a utensil containing the name of Hashem on it, where part of the issue revolves around whether the person who fashioned it intended for the Shem or not, but the intention of the purchaser is irrelevant. The same conclusion can be drawn from the examples involving *elohim acherim* as well as numerous other cases discussed in the laws of writing Hashem’s Name in a *Sefer Torah* where it is clear that in cases when intention is relevant, we follow the intention of the scribe who wrote it.
..., they may have no restrictions. However, usually the phrase is intended to recall its Torah content (e.g., “im eshkacheich ...”).

Moreover, one could argue that perhaps in our case the majority of jewelry containing Torah verses is fashioned by traditionally inclined artisans who are well versed in Tanach. If that is correct, one would surmise that most of the verses used are indeed being quoted specifically because of their religious content, and would not necessarily be subject to Rav Ariel’s limitation here. Truthfully, even Rav Ariel himself concludes at the end of his responsum that despite the room for leniency, “it is not recommended to purchase a pendant of this type.”

Nevertheless, Rabbi Moshe Rosenstein notes that even if we do assume that many of these expressions are intended as pesukim, certain expressions clearly are intended solely for their cultural content and not for their reference to pesukim or words of Chazal. Thus, phrases used commonly by the general populace and not meant to refer specifically to diurei Torah such as “im ein

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47 One of the primary suppliers of such jewelry is a company called “Hadaya Jewelry” which is owned and run by traditional (though not necessarily religious) Jews. When this author questioned them (through their website) about this point, they responded that “we have a book of sayings, most of which have biblical or rabbinic sources... You can have WHATEVER you like engraved as long as there is room for it...” It would seem that they intentionally use quotes from Torah sources, and therefore the engraved quotes would contain the sanctity of the original phrase. In addition, all of the quotes on their website are source referenced, perhaps indicating that they do intend to quote the pesukim themselves, even for those that are common expressions. However, they also noted that some religious customers request that they change words from the pasuk in order to avoid some of these problems, a request they are happy to accommodate. However, this may only be effective if the rest of the pasuk does not qualify as Kitvei HaKodesh based on the rules above, such as having three or four words directly from the pasuk that make it clear what is being quoted.
ani li, mi li” or “bimakom she’ein anashim, hishtadel lihiyot ish,” would be permissible, despite their origins in Pirkei Avot.

VIII. Using this jewelry if the person is not the one who bought it

We have seen up to this point that one should not purchase such jewelry when it contains pesukim or sayings of Chazal with more than three or four words, aside from the exceptions discussed above. This is indeed the position of Rav Ariel as mentioned, Rav Hershel Schachter, and other contemporary poskim, despite the fact that the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch formulate the prohibition as not embroidering rather than not owning or purchasing. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Yoreh Deah 2:136), in discussing wearing a ring with Hashem’s Name on it, also acknowledges the halachic difficulties in selling and buying such a ring due to concerns of being placed in unclean locations (which applies even to pesukim that don’t include Hashem’s Name). However, in contrast to wearing a ring with the Hashem’s Name on it, which the acharonim explicitly do not recommend wearing, it is not entirely clear from the sources whether it is appropriate or permitted to wear jewelry containing pesukim once it has already been purchased. Is it permitted to use if one receives it as a gift (they are very popular gift items)? Alternatively, if a person only discovered the halachic issues involved subsequent to purchasing it, is a person required to dispose of it or place in storage indefinitely? Or would we say that given that such jewelry is quite expensive, the person may be more lenient when they did not purchase it themselves? What should they do if a close family

49 Oral communication from July 15th 2012.
relative gave it to them and will be extremely upset and insulted if it becomes known that the person never wears it?

On one hand, the Rambam and *Shulchan Aruch* formulate the prohibition specifically as one of embroidering (and engraving on the garment would be equivalent) and not as one of wearing it (though certainly one has to be careful while wearing not to bring into an unclean area). Furthermore, perhaps one can argue that once it is already in the person’s possession, it turns into a bedieved, or post facto question, for which the halachah sometimes rules more leniently, so perhaps we would not be so stringent as to forbid wearing it altogether. This may be especially true according to Rambam’s first concern of writing *pesukim* outside of a *Sefer Torah*, since here the consumer did not write the *pesukim* themselves. On the other hand, given that the entire second reason of Rambam focuses on the dangers inherent in constantly wearing it, it would seem logical that we should always discourage or forbid wearing it as well, since the danger of bringing into the bathroom or other unclean areas most certainly is relevant.

An additional point to consider in this context is that the Rambam towards the end of his responsum states that it is praiseworthy for the owner of the garment with the *pesukim* on it to cut them off and bury them, and “this is obligatory to do.” This conclusion of the Rambam is indeed referred to by R.Moshe Chagiz (*Leket HaKemach Hilchot Tzitzit*) and *Ginat Veradim* (*Orach Chaim* 2:25),50 which would indicate that indeed one may not wear or even keep such objects around the house. However, the *Shulchan*

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50 Cited above in footnote #14. It is interesting that the *Ginat Veradim* actually only quotes the first part of the phrase that the person who cuts off the *pesukim* is praiseworthy, but then writes “*ad kan leshona,*” “this is the end of the quote,” and does not write “*v’chulei,*” meaning etc. It is thus unclear whether *Ginat Veradim* believed it is obligatory or just praiseworthy to cut off the *pesukim* and bury or store them.
Aruch and many of the other acharonim discussed above do not mention this comment of Rambam, so perhaps this is not required as practical halachah.

Rav Hershel Schachter\textsuperscript{51} and other poskim felt that one should not wear or even keep such jewelry around the house, but should make sure to keep it stored away where no one will see or use it. However, the author has heard some contemporary poskim rule that although perhaps unwise, it is permitted to retain and possibly wear once it is already in the person’s possession, especially in the situations described above where large sums of money were already spent or family relationships are at stake.

\textbf{IX. Bringing into the bathroom}

Is it halachically permitted to enter the bathroom while wearing such jewelry, or a sweatshirt with Torah content? Although as discussed ideally a person should not own them in the first place, this question may still be relevant for those poskim discussed above who are lenient when necessary and do not require storing or disposing of them when already in the individual’s possession. In addition, this may be an important question for rabbis and educators faced with an individual who insists on purchasing or retaining possession of this jewelry, but might agree at least to treating it properly. Based on the sources discussed above, it would indeed appear that according to most opinions, the Torah verses do contain sanctity (except for the possible exceptions discussed above) and thus should not be brought in to the bathroom while worn on one’s hand or around one’s neck.

Would it be permitted to bring inside the bathroom if one ensures that it is fully covered? To answer this question, we must

\textsuperscript{51} Written communication dated July 15\textsuperscript{th} 2012.
turn to a discussion concerning the sanctity of tefillin for which similar rules apply. In this context, the Gemara (Berachos 23a), codified by the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 43:6) states that one can bring them into the bathroom if they are placed inside some other container. According to the Mishnah Berurah (Orach Chaim 40:7), a container in this case is actually defined as a covering, even if it does not enclose the holy object on all sides.

However, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 43:7) cites the opinions of Sefer HaTerumah, Rabeinu Yerucham, and Tur that limit this rule to a bathroom away from home where there are no alternative locations to safely store the tefillin; but at home, where one can easily place it somewhere else, one should not bring the tefillin into the bathroom at all.

The implication of this statement, notes the Magen Avraham (43:14), is that when at home, tefillin may not be brought

52 This is the standard rule which is generally followed, however, there are actually numerous distinctions concerning the question of bringing tefillin into the bathroom, including whether he plans to don them again upon exiting, whether he actually goes to the bathroom or not, what type of Talmudic bathroom is being used, how big the container is, etc. For a full discussion of the material, see the Talmudic discussion referenced in the text, Tur/Beit Yosef (Orach Chaim 43), Shulchan Aruch there, and its commentaries. Concerning the status of modern day bathrooms which are not usually as dirty as those of old, see for example Rav Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss (Minchat Yitzchak 1:60), Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer 3:Orach Chaim 2), Rav Eliezer Waldenberg (Tzitz Eliezer 7:5), and Piskei Teshuvot (43:#2, 83:#4). For an English summary of the material, see Rabbi Dr. Ari Zivotofsky, “Your camp shall be holy: Halacha and modern plumbing,” Journal of Halachah and Contemporary Society, Spring 1995.

53 Ateret Zekeinim and Machatzit HaShekel in their comments to this halachah both note that according to this, even outside the house if one can easily place the tefillin somewhere safely when entering a bathroom, such as having a friend hold them or placing them in one’s wagon (or car in today’s times), it would still be prohibited to bring into the bathroom with one covering alone.
into the bathroom even when concealed in some other container. However, Machatzit HaShekel, cited by the Mishnah Berurah (43:24), suggests that if one places the tefillin container inside another covering or pocket of some sort which is not designated specifically for holding the tefillin, such as a pants pocket, it would always be permitted to bring the tefillin into the bathroom. This is because an object stored inside two containers is considered entirely halachically permitted.54,55

How do these rules concerning tefillin apply to jewelry or other materials with scriptural verses on it? It would seem logical that these would be subject to the same rules as tefillin and should not be taken into the bathroom with one covering, and perhaps not at all. Indeed, the Gemara (Berachos 23a) reports that Rav Yochanan gave some of his Torah writings to his students before entering the bathroom. However, in reality authorities debate this issue extensively, and three major approaches emerge from the acharonim. Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 43:14), followed by Beer Heitev (Orach Chaim 43:11), claims that in contrast to tefillin, one can allow entering the bathroom with pesukim using one covering or container alone which covers it entirely. He proves this by noting that Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah

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54 Some poskim are stringent to forbid even a case of two containers, see Aruch HaShulchan (Orach Chaim 43:13) who does not quote this leniency and Kaf HaChaim (Orach Chaim 43:30) who doesn’t understand why this solution was invented if they can easily be placed somewhere else, and therefore recommends not relying on this leniency. However, the lenient view taken by the Mishnah Berurah has been accepted as the mainstream halachic approach, as pointed out by the Piskei Teshuvot (Orach Chaim 43:#3) and others.

55 For a discussion and list of sources concerning the necessary qualifications for two coverings, which types of utensils are considered to be designated specifically for tefillin, and the status of a tallit bag, see Piskei Teshuvot (40:#5 and 43:note #12) and Rav Dovid Yosef’s Sefer Halachah Berurah (Siman 40, #6-7).
282:7), based on the Gemara (Shabbat 62a) and Rambam (Hilchot Sefer Torah 10:6), allows one to enter a bathroom with an amulet (which usually contained the name of Hashem on it) provided that it is covered with leather. Other acharonim rule this way as well, including Radbaz and Pri Megadim (Ashel Avraham 14), and this would indeed seem to be the simplest approach based on the sources. However, the Shulchan Aruch HaRav (43:6) claims that this leniency applies only to a bathroom outside the house where it may be difficult to find a safe place to store the holy object, but inside the house, he says one should be stringent since it can be placed anywhere in the house. A third approach offered by other authorities, such as Eliahu Rabbah, holds that one must be more stringent that other holy objects and scriptural writings always require two coverings and entirely parallel the halacha for tefillin, where two coverings are required.\footnote{See Shaarei Teshuvah (43:11) who cites this opinion and then claims that parents who place amulets with Hashem’s Name on them on their children require two coverings all the time, since children sometimes go to the bathroom in their clothes.}

Applying these opinions to our case, it would seem that according to the Magen Avraham and those authorities who follow his opinion, it would always be permitted to remove the ring or jewelry and place into a shirt or skirt pocket before entering the bathroom, which is not such a difficult solution. However, for those outfits that do not contain pockets, avoiding this problem may involve more difficulty. Perhaps in such situations, at least for necklaces, one can simply tuck it in underneath one’s shirt so that it is covered with at least one covering.

According to the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, the above approach only applies outside of one’s house where no easy solution exists to safely leave the jewelry outside of the bathroom, but inside one’s house, one would be obligated to remove it and place
it down before entering. The same should apply even outside the house in any situation where an easy solution exists, such as giving the jewelry to a friend, or placing in a backpack which remains outside, etc.\textsuperscript{57} One may also rely on the leniency of \textit{Machatzit HaShekel} and \textit{Mishnah Berurah} and place the jewelry inside a container of some sort and then place in one’s pocket, thus qualifying as two containers, but it may be easier to simply remove them completely and place down somewhere. Of course, a sweatshirt with Torah material would not be easy to place into any containers, and it would seem that removing it before entering the bathroom is the best option.

According to \textit{Eliahu Rabbah} and the more stringent approach, one must always either remove the jewelry entirely or place inside two coverings, such as a container inside a pocket, or a container in a backpack, in order to permit entering the bathroom with it.

Which of these opinions is accepted by recent authorities as practical halachah? The \textit{Mishnah Berurah} (43:25 and \textit{Shaar Hatzion} 16-18) cites all of the above opinions without issuing a clear definitive ruling.\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Aruch HaShulchan} (\textit{Orach Chaim} 43:13) in contrast simply quotes the Rambam allowing an amulet covered with leather to be brought into the bathroom, indicating that one covering alone suffices in his opinion. Finally, \textit{Kaf Hachaim} (\textit{Orach Chaim} 43:28) takes the other extreme and suggests that it is appropriate to always be stringent if possible not to bring them

\textsuperscript{57} See above footnote #45.

\textsuperscript{58} In the \textit{Mishnah Berurah}, he first cites the \textit{Magen Avraham}’s lenient approach, and then cites the more stringent approach of \textit{Eliahu Rabbah} only as “others say” rather than as the definitive ruling, while the \textit{Shulchan Aruch HaRav}’s middle approach is cited only in the \textit{Shaar HaTzion}. Thus, it would seem that he primarily accepts the lenient approach, but does not rule this way absolutely.
into the bathroom at all, and certainly not with just one covering.\footnote{59} \footnote{60} In the absence of a clear stringent ruling by the majority of halachic decisors and especially given the fact that the entire concern here is only a rabbinic one, if this situation arises it would seem that there is room to be lenient on this point when needed. Rav Daniel Mann and Rav Moshe Rosenstein both appear to adopt this approach as well.

\section*{X. Summary and conclusion}

Let us summarize and organize our findings concerning this issue.

1. It is halachically problematic to fashion or purchase jewelry which contains verses from the Torah or words from rabbinic literature, either because of the issue of writing \textit{pesukim} out-

\footnote{59} Rav Eliezer Melamed (\textit{Peninei Halacha Likutim I} p.123) states that most \textit{poskim} adopt the lenient approach but others are more stringent. He too does not give an absolute ruling, but appears to indicate that one can be lenient if they choose but those that wish to be stringent can do so as well.

\footnote{60} Concerning \textit{sefarim} and other papers containing words of Torah, many \textit{poskim} have ruled that one covering suffices when it is necessary to bring them into the bathroom, due to a combination of factors: 1) Printed or photocopied words of Torah may not contain sanctity anyway. 2) The binding may count as one covering as well. 3) Script which is not \textit{Ktav Ashuri} may have a more lenient status, as discussed above. 4) The status of our modern bathrooms today is debated by the \textit{poskim} and despite the fact that we are generally stringent, they are not definitively considered to be unclean. See Rav Eliezer Waldenberg (\textit{Tzitz Eliezer} 11:5) and other sources cited in \textit{Piskei Teshuvot (Orach Chaim} 43:#3) and \textit{Sefer Halachah Berurah (Orach Chaim} 43:8). However, reasons #1 and #2, which are generally viewed as the primary ones, do not apply to jewelry containing scriptural verses, and therefore it is more difficult to rule conclusively that one covering is always permitted.
side of a *Chumash* for non-educational purposes or more importantly due to the concern of potential disgrace of bringing such items into unclean places such as the bathroom.

2. If only two or three words (depending on which opinion is followed) are engraved in total or placed on one line, it would be permitted to buy as well as bring into the bathroom, since it does not contain any sanctity.

3. If only part of a word is used, the last letter(s) are cut off from the name, or abbreviations are used instead of the complete word, it would be permitted to treat them normally.

4. Hebrew text written in block Hebrew letters may also be problematic according to some *poskim* due to the issue of using *Ktav Ashuri* for mundane topics.

5. Jewelry which either contains phrases or sayings not found in the Torah or *Chazal* are permitted to buy and wear normally.

6. Sayings which are clearly being used for their social content rather than for their reference to a *pasuk* or words of *Chazal* may be permitted to buy and wear normally according to many authorities, at least if the source of the quote is not cited.

7. If one knows or suspects that the craftsman was either not familiar with or did not intend to associate the quote with the *pasuk* and does, it may be permitted according to some *poskim*, but it is best to avoid these as well.

8. Jewelry containing an actual name of Hashem on them may be more halachically problematic than others and should be avoided even more so than the others.

9. If an individual has already purchased the problematic jewelry or is given it as a gift, *poskim* debate whether it is permitted to wear it and retain it in the house, but it certainly must be treated with the proper respect.

10. In #8, one must cover the jewelry in a container or covering of some sort before bringing into the bathroom, and some require using two coverings or not bringing it in at all.
It is clear from the above discussion that serious halachic questions exist concerning this type of jewelry, both in purchasing as well as in wearing it. Although it may be commendable that many individuals today desire to keep some reminder of Hashem or the Torah with them at all times, it does not appear to be worth the halachic risk to do so. The best alternative options one can suggest, as previously mentioned, are purchasing those with sayings from other sources, or possibly three word expressions. Rav Yaakov Ariel, after proposing possible avenues of leniency as noted above, still concludes with the remark that “ideally it is not recommended to purchase such a piece of jewelry.”

Similarly, Rav Mann comments:

We often attempt to justify customs even when their correctness is questionable. However, not every practice is a custom, and the rabbinic reaction to a practice helps determine whether it becomes a custom. It is nice to see how popular Torah has become. However, our “vote” is that pesukim are better in sefarim than on jewelry or t-shirts. This fashion causes halachic problems for all and is forbidden for one who is not careful.

Rav Mann also notes that aside from considerations of buying it, many individuals often forget to remove their jewelry when entering the bathroom, thus violating a prohibition every time this occurs. One who finds themselves in the situation of owning or wanting to purchase one of these should certainly consult a rav for personal guidance. But it is hoped that the discussion of various problems associated with such jewelry in this article will generate increased awareness concerning this not so well known area of halacha and encourage extra caution at keeping the kedusha of pesukim intact.