Kol Mevaseret
A Compilation of Insights and Analyses of Torah Topics
by the students of Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim
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INTRODUCTION

It is our duty, to ourselves and to Am Yiisrael, to dream. To dream means to push boundaries, to spend more time than expected analyzing a complicated daf of Gemara, or to spend an extra hour after night seder learning to truly understand what you’ve learned.

These examples are representations of pushing boundaries, and this year, in MMY, we have collectively overcome every obstacle we found before us. Our year of learning has enabled us to dream in a more daring and adventurous fashion, and subsequently our future aspirations will push further boundaries, so that we can achieve ever more.

In Tanach, we see a number of incidents that exemplify the importance of dreaming. For example, Yoseph’s first elucidation of the cupbearer’s and baker’s dreams when they were imprisoned together highlights the importance of dreaming, as the dreams of his fellow prisoners ultimately saved his life. The dream that Yoseph then interpreted for Paroh while he remained imprisoned highlight the idea that dreams can even give insight into the will of God, as it says, 1

 יוסף איש ברמת הָעָנִיס וַיֹּאמֶר לְפַרְעֹה: יְאַלָּהֵי לָהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר נָשִׂיאוֹן לָהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים בָּלֻּד הָאֱלֹהִים נָשִׂיאוֹן לָהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לְפַרְעֹה בָּלֻּד אֲשֶׁר נָשִׂיאוֹן לָהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לְפַרְעֹה הִגִּיד עֹשֶׂה לֹהִים.

Yoseph was subsequently elevated to the position of Mishneh Lamelech, which was an unprecedented action showing that when Hashem wills something, nature and politics alike yield to make the impossible possible. 2 Yoseph’s ability to understand the dreams of others not only saved his life but also gave him an immense connection to Hashem.

Although we do not have the abilities of Yoseph, we too can dream, and realize our desires. Hashem has given us the ability to live

1 מאברשת מעמש

2 Artscroll Stone Edition Tanach, p. 102
with hope, and the more we aspire the closer we are to Him. Our dreams can excite us and ignite our passion in all aspects of life, and can, metaphorically speaking, save us from a monotonous existence.

Daniel’s visions are also a source of inspiration. While exiled in Bavel, Daniel served as Nevuchadnezar’s and subsequently Belshazzar’s dream interpreter. Not only was Daniel exceptional at understanding his master’s bizarre dreams, he was also capable of recognizing Hashem’s omnipotence.

Daniel had a vision in which he saw four beasts, each representing great empires. The fourth beast destroyed the other beasts, but eventually was annihilated and everlasting redemption began,

Thus he said: The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgment shall sit, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and to be destroyed unto the end. ¹

There is a reference to dreaming in this excerpt, which itself stirs the imagination. Rav Saadia Gaon was puzzled by the reference to ‘two times and half a time’, and came up with a mathematical calculation to interpret it as meaning 1,335 years. He got to this number by understanding the phrase ‘two times’ to refer to the 480 years from yetziat mitsrayim until the first Beit Hamikdash was

1

דניאל: כג-חכ
constructed, and the 410 years during the period of the first Beit Hamikdash. He believes that the expression ‘half a time’ represents half of 890, which is the sum of 480 and 410. Half of this number is 445 and then if you add this to 890 you get to 1,335.

This calculation was thought to reveal the time of the final redemption; albeit, with hindsight, we know that this was merely a possibility, rather than a certainty. Even though the year where we thought we would gain redemption has passed, the dreaming continues. When one realizes that there is a tangible basis for his emunah, he can feel free to dream, knowing his dreams will eventually come true.

Daniel, like Yoseph, used his abilities to dream and to interpret visions to save himself and ultimately Bnei Yisrael. The exceptional emunah that Daniel and Yoseph had, allowed them to survive in the most trying of circumstances. We must learn to dream like them, to edge closer to the final redemption.

Rav Yehuda Amital, zt”l, in his speech to Yeshivat Har Etzion’s first graduating class said, ‘I have a request to make of you, our alumni...you, our partners in this grand dream: Don’t stop dreaming.”

Several weeks ago, Rabbi Haber informed us of his surprising decision to leave MMY at the end of this year. He explained to us that the reason he is doing this is in order to fulfill this message; he had a dream to start a women’s learning institution, a goal that he accomplished with immense success. Now he will be following a new dream, and we should all see his continued aspiration as an inspiration.

This year’s Kol Mevaseret is dedicated to Rabbi Haber, to his past and future achievements. May his dreams inspire us all.

Liora Richman

E. Reichner, By Faith Alone, The Story of Rav Amital (2008), p. 15
הנהך
The story of Pinchas ben Elazar is an intriguing and confusing conclusion to Parshat Balak, containing a number of ambiguities and apparent contradictions. The Mefarshim attempt to clarify this sugya in different ways and many fascinating and diverse pictures emerge.

The first question that needs to be addressed pertains to the nationality of the seducers. In earlier pesukim, they are referred to as Moavi (Moavi בְּנוֹת אֶל לִזְנוֹת), however, Zimri brought a Midyani woman before the Ohel Moed אֶת אֶחָיו אֶל יַּקְרֵב. Abarbanel gives an interesting response to this problem. He concludes that the women in this parsha were, in fact, Midyani, and that Bil’am had persuaded Midyan’s leaders to force their daughters to disguise themselves as Moavi women and to sin with the Jewish men. Bnei Yisrael knew to be wary of the Midyanim.
but not of the *Moavim*, since the nations were at peace with one another.\(^2\) This explains the shift in the *pasuk* as well as the fact that *Bnei Yisrael* subsequently attacked *Midyan*.\(^3\)

*Abarbanel*’s opinion is further supported by the fact that while it is mentioned in several places that *Bnei Yisrael* had complaints against *Moavi* men, and *Moavi* men cannot marry into *Bnei Yisrael* even upon conversion, the *Moavi* women are exempt from this restriction, as in the case of *Rut*. However, not everyone accepts this opinion. It appears that *Rashi* believes the women were in fact *Moaviot*. In support of the opposing arguments, one could say that the *Moavi* women were forced by the men of their own country to seduce *Bnei Yisrael*, which *Rashi* does hold, and therefore *Hashem* doesn’t hold them responsible for this action as much as *Moav*’s other sins.

Either way, *Bnei Yisrael*’s quick fall to *zenut* was entirely their own responsibility. But how did they go from adultery to idolatry in the space of half a *pasuk*? *Rashi* projects that this was all part of *Moav*’s plan: the women would seduce the men until they were weak with lust and then pull out their *Ba’al Peor* figurines and instruct the men to bow to them.\(^4\) Perhaps *Rashi* gets this from the unique phrasing in the *pasuk*, בְּנוֹת אֶל לִזְנוֹת הָעָם וַיָּחֶל מוֹאָב directly followed by אֱלֶזֶר לְזִבְחֵי לָעָם וַתִּקְרֶאן לֻוְיחָן. The word לויח, began, hints to the fact that the act was interrupted by this *Ba’al Peor* worship, just as *Rashi* postulates. *Sforno* takes a slightly different approach, saying that the Jews only intended to intermarry, but that it is the nature of evil to follow evil.\(^5\) This idea is implied in

\(^{2}\) אברבנאל

\(^{3}\) ספורנו

\(^{4}\) רש"י

\(^{5}\) ספורנו הבן
the way the pasuk jumps from adultery to Peor. Abarbanel interprets וַיָּחֶל along the lines of חולין and חליל: the Jews desecrated themselves and Hashem with their זנות.⁶

At the end of the portion the pasuk tells us וַיֵּעָצַר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי, that the plague stopped. No plague has been mentioned until now, but Haemek Davar connects this to an earlier mention of Hashem’s anger. He argues that Hashem’s anger is represented in the form of a plague.⁷ This interpretation is shared by the Rashi, Rashbam⁸, and others. After Hashem sent the plague, He told Moshe how to cure it, telling him to gather the shoftim and to tell them to kill (by hanging or stoning) ‘them’ in public.⁹ Rashi and most others take ‘them’ to mean the sinners, since Moshe subsequently commanded the shoftim to kill those who sinned with Peor.¹⁰ Ibn Ezra explains that the shoftim were each in charge of one tribe, and that אֲנָשָׁיו אִישׁ הִרְגוּ, each man should kill his men, refers to the leaders of the shvatim killing members of their tribe. Rashi says that there were 78,000 Shoftim, (some versions say 88,000), and that they each killed two men, based on the plural usage in אִישׁ אֲנָשָׁיו. It is unclear whether the number two refers to two sinning Jews or to a couple consisting of a Jew and a Moavi woman, but the number of dead would be 78,000-176,000 Jewish men hanged, plus the 24,000 that died in the plague.
Ramban spots a problem with this approach in the next census. פְּקוּוּ וּשְׁלשִׁים מֵאוֹת שְׁבַע וָאָלֶּף מֵאוֹת שֵׁשֶׁת יִשְׂרָאֵל. Unless there was a baby boom seventeen or so years earlier, it is difficult to account for the 76,000-174,000 men who didn’t disappear. Ramban therefore says that the pasuk doesn’t mention the shoftim again because the order was never carried out; Pinchas’s deed redeemed Bnei Yisrael in Hashem’s eyes and He decided to delay punishment. This makes perfect sense based on the pasuk אֶת בְּקַנְאוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי מֵעַל חֲמָתִי אֶת הֵשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן אַהֲרֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן פִּינְחָס בְּקִנְאָתִי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי אֶת כִּלִּיתִי וְלֹא בְּתוֹכָם קִנְאָתִי. According to Ramban, Pinchas’s act prevented Hashem from destroying a significant portion of Bnei Yisrael. Rashi interprets this statement similarly, and probably takes יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי at its literal meaning: Hashem refrained from destroying the entire Bnei Yisrael, because of Pinchas.12

Abarbanel interprets the entire statement differently. He says that Hashem’s original command was exactly as it sounds: קַח אוֹתָם וְהוֹקַע הָעָם רָאשֵׁי כָּל אֶת, meaning they were to kill all the leaders that did not prevent the worship of Ba’al Peor. But Moshe wanted to give them a chance, so he instructed the nation’s leaders to kill the worshippers instead. In that way they might redeem themselves and end Hashem’s anger and avert the death sentence.13 Abarbanel agrees with Ramban and says that Pinchas’s act of killing Zimri was enough for the Jews to go back to worshipping Hashem, and the death toll stopped at 24,000.14 Nevertheless,
both Abarbanel and Ramban hold that the sinners didn’t get off scot-free; they were killed before they crossed the Yarden.\footnote{15}

According to Rashi, Hashem just declared all worshippers of the Ba’al Peor hanged or stoned.\footnote{16} So it’s a bit confusing as to why Zimri, leader of Shimon, subsequently cohabited with a Midyani woman before the entire nation and brought her to his brothers.\footnote{15} Can be understood in a few different ways. Rashbam seems to understand it literally and brings in a pasuk\footnote{17} warning against adultery.\footnote{18} Ibn Ezra says that Zimri brought her to his family.\footnote{19} But most intriguingly, Rashi says that the tribe of Shimon gathered around Zimri and said “We’ve been sentenced to death. Do something!”\footnote{20} R’ Mendel Kalmenson explains a possible interpretation of Rashi’s words. Zimri, seeing his brothers so deeply entrenched in this sin, wanted to find a way of showing Bnei Yisrael and Moshe how easy it was to sin this way in hopes of obtaining a lighter judgment. So he sinned with Cosbi in the most public way possible.\footnote{21}

With this we can understand Hashem’s commandment of killing the sinners הַشָּׁמֶשׁ נֶגֶד, in public. Sforno takes this as an extra hint to Bnei Yisrael’s sin: they did not intercede even while the sin

\footnote{15} הרמב”ג בדרכיון במדבר, ד, "שנינו מכראה או אמש הראית שלא להם השה, בר ישב על שם כל צאינו או שאר.

\footnote{16} רש"י יב, ה.

\footnote{17} ויקרא יא, ז.

\footnote{18} רש"ם יב, ז.

\footnote{19} איוב, מ;

\footnote{20}_REGISTER

was going on in plain sight. But it is possible that Bnei Yisrael didn’t know or care about the law. Zimri sinned with Cosbi in view of Moshe and Bnei Yisrael, right in front of the Ohel Moed, and all anyone could do was to weep at the disgrace. Why did they weep? Abarbanel says weeping means praying that they shouldn’t be killed. Rashi has a different idea. He says that Zimri dragged Cosbi to Moshe and said “Is she permitted or not? And if not, how could you marry the daughter of Yitro who is also a Midyanite?”, and Moshe couldn’t remember the halacha. (This would explain Moshe’s inaction as well as the weeping.) At that one moment, it appeared to all of Bnei Yisrael that Zimri was right.

That is when Pinchas stepped in, recalling the halacha of קנאים פוגעים בו, and stabbed the couple אֶל קֳבָתָהּ. Ibn Ezra says this refers to Zimri’s brother’s tent, referencing the earlier אֶחָיו אֶל. But Rashi says the term refers to the sexual organs, and that Pinchas did this so that everyone would know that he had killed them specifically for this sin. He adds that many miracles took place to allow this to happen.

The Gemara says that had Pinchas killed them at any other time, Zimri’s relatives would have been allowed to avenge him, and had Pinchas not succeeded, Zimri could have turned around and killed him, claiming self-defense. Pinchas’s deed sent a
definitive message to Bnei Yisrael that Zimri’s act was not acceptable, and perhaps it was Bnei Yisrael’s acceptance of that message that prevented Hashem from destroying them.

Pinchas did not have it easy after that. According to Rashi, Bnei Yisrael would later mock Pinchas, mentioning that his maternal grandfather Yitro had been an idolater himself. The Torah refers to Pinchas by his paternal lineage back to Aharon to counter those remarks, though one might note that to the reader’s eye, Pinchas’s deed is a credit to his grandfather’s wholehearted conversion. Pinchas was duly rewarded with בְּרִית שָׁלוֹם and בְּרִיתִי. Rashi clarifies that even though Pinchas was a grandson of Aharon, he was born before the kehuna was given out and only now received it. Rashi translates בְּרִיתִי as a general feeling of ‘gratitude’ and ‘thanks’ that Hashem expressed towards Pinchas.

Sforno says that “peace” refers to peace from the angel of death, and that he lived on perhaps even to become Eliyahu, which would make him somewhat “alive” even today. Ibn Ezra disagrees, saying that the peace was from Zimri’s brother who was out for Pinchas’s blood, that the Brit Kehuna led to Pinchas’s children being the best kohanim, and that the words אַחֲרָיו prove that he must have died. Abarbanel says that Pinchas was pasul for the kehuna after having made himself impure by killing Zimri, but Hashem gave it back to him in reward. Abarbanel also
takes שָׁלוֹם בְּרִיתִי to mean peace from Pinchas’s newfound enemies. While dismissing the idea that Pinchas lived on to become Eliyahu, Abarbanel suggests that Eliyahu was a descendant of Pinchas because of their shared trait of zealou sness.

Pinchas is the hero of this parsha and was lauded by Hashem for his deeds. But was Pinchas completely right? The Gemara says that the gedolim of Israel had a very difficult time trying to figure out what to do with him until his reward was delivered through Ruach Hakodesh.35 Nechama Leibowitz suggests a nuanced view of these events: Pinchas’s act in itself wasn’t necessarily a good idea. Wantonly killing people, even sinners, is a bad precedent to set, and Pinchas could have gotten into a lot of trouble for it. Moreover, an even worse anarchy might have ensued, transforming Jews into a lawless nation. After all, although Zimri and Cosbi were guilty of two of the big three sins which one should even die rather than violate, Pinchas acted against them with the third. But Pinchas’s intrinsic righteousness and good character ensured that his act was completely pure and devoid of anger, jealousy, or disgust. He acted as a complete channel of Hashem’s own will, apparent in the words: אֶת בְּקַנְאוֹ – קִנְאָתִי. Pinchas felt for Hashem’s “feelings” regardless of his own, and for that reason it was right.

35 פב סנהדרין:
Leah named her maidservant’s son Asher because Asher was born to her and showed unusual joy at his birth, even though this was Zilpah’s second child and Leah’s sixth.

We see that Asher was a fitting name for this Shevet when we look at the bracha Yaakov gave him: "Asher would inherit in Eretz Yisrael. The word Asher means happiness or fortune. Leah still showed unusual joy at his birth, even though this was Zilpah’s second child and Leah’s sixth.

This verse refers to the bounty that would come from the land Asher would inherit in Eretz Yisrael. Rashi and other commentaries remark that the reference to shemen, oil, meant that there would be so much oil that it would flow like a river. Radak, however, explains that the term simply means “the fat of the land” and that it means the people of Asher would provide food for the kings from their nachalah because everything that grows in their land will of the best quality.

The theme of abundance contained in this Bracha definitely fits with the name Asher, and continues in the blessing Moshe gave to the tribe of Asher: "Asher gives\u201d. можно понимать в одном из двух разных способов:

1. ספרי רבי משה שך
2. ביארשא لت"ג
3. ביארשא סומך
4. עי"ש
5. ד"ק בט"ש
6. דברי לנגד
1. It could refer to the sons of Asher; Ramban says it means that Asher's sons will be princes as it says in Divrei Hayamim. Additionally, Arvei Nachal points out that there was a tremendous increase in the population of Shevet Asher – one of the biggest increases – between the two censuses that Moshe took in the desert. They went from 41,500 in the first count to 53,000 in the second count. We see that Shevet Asher was blessed with a lot of children; potentially this is what the bracha was alluding to.

2. Another possibility is that it means Asher's descendants would be blessed among the sons. As noted above, Leah named Asher based on her happiness. Moshe declared that all the other sons would appreciate Asher and consider him to be fortunate. Rashi comments that they would appreciate him because of all the oil he would produce (hence the end of Moshe's blessing-רגלו בשמן וטבל). As explained above, Shevet Asher's land was known as the land of olive trees, as it says in the Gemara, oil flowed in that land like a fountain. Additionally, the symbol of Shevet Asher is an olive tree, and the gem of Shevet Asher on the Choshen Mishpat is tarshish (chrysolite) which is a stone the color of clear oil. Sifri writes that girls would anoint themselves with...
this oil, which made them beautiful. Here the parallels to Yaakov’s bracha are clear.

Moshe also gave the tribe a second blessing. רבי החשמל מעשה. Ramban explains that this expression is a metaphor; Asher’s portion was situated in the extreme north, on the border of Israel. Like iron and copper, they will be able to protect the land from enemies. 14

Alshich teaches that Moshe blessed Asher with the three basic things people need in life: blessing of sons—“Asher shall be blessed with sons,” 15 blessing for wealth—“Iron and copper are your bars,” 16 and blessing for life—“and as were your younger days so shall be your old age”. 17

Shevet Asher was given its portion of land at the northern border of the country, also bordering on the sea. They were praised by Devorah in her song for protecting their borders well in the war against the Canaanim. Devorah rebuked other Shevatim...
for their lack of participation, but praised Asher for the part they played.\(^{18}\)

**Significance of \(\text{שמן} \)**

As we have seen, olive oil is particularly associated with Shevet Asher, and figured prominently in both Yaakov’s and Moshe’s blessings to Asher.

When describing Eretz Yisrael to the nation that would shortly be crossing the Jordan, Moshe Rabbenu described it as \(\text{ארץ שעם והשתה וארץ זית שמן ותרש} \). When describing \(\text{ארץ ושעורה} \) to the nation that would shortly be crossing the Jordan, Moshe Rabbenu described it as \(\text{ארץ זית שמן ותרש} \). The Levush expounds on Rashi’s comment on \(\text{דברים ח} \) which explains why the verse says \(\text{שמן זית} \). The olive itself has no important use; it is the oil that makes it important.

It seems that, even more than the other species, olive oil is associated with Eretz Yisrael. Meshech Chochma explains why the word \(\text{ארץ} \) is repeated in the Pasuk that tells us about the seven species. He suggests that olives and dates (the two species that follow the second usage of the word), are different than the other five, in that they are not found in Egypt. His proof is from a pasuk in Bamidbar, describing a complaint of Bnei Yisrael about life in the desert. They compared their conditions there to what they had in Egypt, and mentioned \(\text{ורמון ותאנה זרע} \).

Furthermore, Rav S.R. Hirsch quotes a German nature researcher named Oken who wrote that Palestine was the original home of the olive tree\(^{21}\). The olive’s origin is Eretz Yisrael. Perhaps this is why the oil of this fruit is used for various holy purposes.
For example, one use for olive oil in Tanach is shemen lameor, lighting the menorah in the Mishkan. The Torah commands, וירח אלך שמן ויד כתית זך ויתקח. Many of the parshanim explain that the Kohanim needed to light the menorah with oil in order for a bright light to always burn in the Mishkan, illuminating the Shulchan.

Olive oil also has a distinct halachic status. The Shulchan Aruch writes that any fuel may be used to light the candles on Chanukah, but it is preferable, to light with olive oil because that was what they used in the Bet Hamikdash. Also, the whole purpose of the mitzvah is to publicize the miracle, and olive oil gives off the brightest light which enables us to do this in the best way possible.

The Midrash Shemot Rabba says that Bnei Yisrael can be compared to olive oil. All liquids combine with each other, but oil does not; it stays separate. When Bnei Yisrael follows in Hashem’s ways they too stand separate from all the other groups. By lighting the Menorah with olive oil, we commemorate the separateness of Bnei Yisrael that kept them immortal.

The Bracha that Shevet Asher received was truly exceptional, and goes beyond that particular Shevet. Indeed, it represents universal qualities that are significant for all of Am Yisrael.

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22 שמות כז
23 א:ח ה$_['ט
24 ראה ibid. Polter,
Let Us Make Man

What is it that makes man’s creation unique? In the order of creation a particular incident stands out. Man was created separately, as well as differently, from the rest of creation.

In אinker the verse begins by saying אויי נעשא אושא (“and Hashem said let us make man”). What does mean? How is it possible that Hashem would have said אושא אינא in the plural? Who is the “we”? Furthermore, the next two words say אינא בצלאם What is a בצלאם and why is the idea that man is created כדמותנו בצלמנו mentioned again in the next verse, but differently אינא בצלאם אינא בצלאם אינא בצלאם? What is all of this trying to teach us?

The first question, regarding why אינא אושא is stated in the plural, is discussed in depth amongst the ראשונים. Rashi says that when Hashem said אינא, He must have been referring to the מלאכים, because who else could it be referring to? What other heavenly beings were there? Through this we learn an important lesson of humility. Even though no one is greater than Hashem, He still consulted with the מלאכים. Rashbam seems to agree with Rashi and also says that אינא “refers to the מלאכים. To support his idea, Rashbam brings down three other places where Hashem consulted the others in order to create man; nevertheless the actual creation was done by Hashem independently. Chizkuni also points out that that אינא אינא אינא could be

As opposed to Rashi and Rashbam, Ibn Ezra doesn’t read אינא as a plural word. Rather, he translates אינא אושא as a passive verb, meaning “let man be made.” Chizkuni seems to connect the ideas of Rashi, Rashbam and Ibn Ezra. He says that אינא אינא אינא is plural, because Hashem consulted with others in order to create man; nevertheless the actual creation was done by Hashem independently. Chizkuni also points out that that אינא אינא אינא could be
singer because there are other places where Hashem says something singular in a plural form, like in ימי, where it says ימי.

In addition to that view, Radak, Ramban and Seforno each give their own interpretations about what אדםנעשה means. Radak begins by asserting that man was the final element of creation. He quotes his father and also an explanation taken from the בראשית רבה, by יונתן רב, about what “Us” could possibly mean. According to his father, Hashem was talking to the elements of the world to help Him (meaning that the elements created the body and the מלאכים contributed to the נפש). This would make sense because everything, including all the elements, was created before man. Radak’s father also agrees with the opinion of Rashi and Rashbam, that “Us” was referring to the מלאכים by stating that they contributed to the spirit of man.

The opinion mentioned in בראשית רבה says that רבנו משה asked Hashem, why He was giving the כופרים an opportunity to claim validity on other gods, by writing the כופרים in the plural (implying that there are other gods that Hashem needed to consult). According to the Midrash, Hashem answered by saying that the כופרים’ actions are their own responsibility.

Ramban gives an explanation that man was created separately from everything else, because man has a special higher nature than animals. Furthermore, Ramban says that only on the first day of creation did Hashem create ex nihilo, but from the second day onwards He organized the elements in place into the rest of the world. Therefore, “Us” is Hashem speaking to the land, since man was created from the elements of the earth. Additionally, Ramban adds that man was created just like animals until Hashem blew life into them. Seforno says “Us” refers to Hashem who gave His servants (מלאכים) the ability to influence His creations. However, he states that man’s body was created along with the animals. Only afterwards, when it came to the הנפש, did Hashem
say "let’s make man in Our image". This explains man’s "separate" creation.

We also need to analyze the words כדמותנו בצלמנו. Rashi defines both the words כדמותנו and בצלמנו as two different concepts. Rashi says that בצלמנו means “Our form”, which symbolizes a physical form of Hashem and the מלאכים, and כדמותנו, which symbolizes an intellectual form. Rashbam, although saying something similar to Rashi, seems to give a more specific definition. He says that בצלמנו means that man is in the image of המלאכים and כדמותנו refers to a man’s wisdom. Radak, on the other hand, talks about בצלמנו in terms of the differences and partnership between the body and the soul. Here it refers to the רוחני כלם, but in other places it can also be referred to as the גשמי כלם. He also says that the reason והשכל comes to add to בצלמנו in כפסוק ז is because we are “like” המלאכים in certain aspects (even though we’re also very different). We are similar, yet different from them because we also have free will and can thus choose whether or not to emulate their ways.

Similarly, Ramban appears to say something along the lines of Rashi and Rashbam. He says that כלם is just a physical description while כדמותנו refers to wisdom, talent and action. This is because Ramban believes that man is similar to the upper and the lower world. Man’s creative intellectual power is what allows him to rule over the animals. Chizkuni agrees that בצלמנו refers to man having the image of המלאכים in terms of ruling over the rest of the earthly creations, however it’s impossible that it could also be referring to the image of Hashem, because Hashem doesn’t have an image. Everything is created by Hashem therefore because man has Hashem’s image he is on a higher level. According to Sefero, כלם refers to an eternal and intellectual image, unlike animals who don’t have a כלם. Hashem created an opening in His Torah for Godly knowledge and understanding.

If so, then what is the use of כשם כדם in כפסוק ז coming to add to כשם כדם כמותנו? Rashi points out that everything except for man
was created with words, but man was created by hand. He gets this from the word בצלמו (as if man was hand molded). Radak says that צלמו refers to the separation between the body and the soul (which he gets from זכריה). Chizkuni gave two explanations for what בצלמו means. One of his thoughts is that it is a hint towards the creation of the מלאכים. He also says that it implies that man’s form is unique. Seforno then adds to that idea by saying, that our unique element is our intellect which separates us from the animals which is our Godly gift.

In conclusion, we have seen that man’s essence is unique among creation, and therefore it makes sense that his creation is described differently from that of all other creatures. A lesson that can be learned from the creation of man is that one shouldn’t take life for granted. Each human has a צלם-להים within them and should exemplify that in all that they do.
The Depth of the באר

When hit with a hammer, a rock will produce many sparks. So too, an apparently simple concept in Torah can beget many profound implications. Mentioned 11 times in the Torah, the be’er carries the seemingly simple connotation of water and wells; however further investigation reveals a deeper meaning behind the concept of be’er.

The mefarshim often see allusions to two important themes in wells. The first is מִגְוֹן וְסִמְחָה. The be’er often appears in a bleak situation, to signal a change for the better for those involved. This can be seen with the very first well mentioned in the Torah: "חָמֵר בָּאָרֹת בָּאָרֹת הַשְׁדִים וּמַעֲקִים..." רashi explains that the king of Sedom avoided being trapped in the mud in a well during the war of the four kings verses the five kings. Rashi says, סדום למלך ונשא מים ושם נישא משם וינא רץ מקרי באהבראום וCHANIM of צאות מה. Due to the fact that he survived in the באר, people then believed that Avraham was saved from the אש הקבש. סדום מלך experienced גוןי since he was in the well, and when the people turned to Hashem, סימכח resulted.

Another example of this theme occurred when Hagar ran away from Avraham’s and Sara’s home. While she was wandering in the desert an angel informed her that she would be merit to have Yishmael, and a great nation would be born from him. Hagar was in a desperate situation, but after her conversation with the

1 נרה של פַּסּוּה
2 בראשית י:ד
3 וְרֵם יֵשָׂה דָּוִד "כַּאֲדֹרְאָתָּו הָוַּי" בראשית טז:ז
4 וְרֵם יֵשָׂה דָּוִד "כַּאֲדֹרְאָתָּו הָוַּי" בראשית טז:ז.
angel things improved. Therefore she called the place because she saw the angel there.

Hagar was a situation of even greater despair later on when she was banished from her Avraham’s and Sara’s home with her son, Yishmael. They were lost in the desert and the child was on the verge of death. However, an angel saved him by providing water, once again from a well, because she saw the angel there.

Another example of concerns the dispute between Avimelech and Avraham and later on with Yitzchak regarding the wells. Avimelech claimed Avraham’s wells were his. Years later, Avimelech’s servants stuffed up Yitzchak’s wells. At both occurrences a treaty was made, and Avimelech and his servants realized the wells belonged to Avraham and Yitzchak, especially since the water rose for Avraham.

Another instance of is when Eliezer met Rivka at the well. The Torah says he was concerned if he would be able to find the right girl for Yitzchak. Hashem did Eliezer a great
chessed, and made sure he spotted the correct one. Eliezer reacted with great joy when he saw his request come to fruition.

Yet another example is when Yaakov wept upon seeing Rachel at the well and he saw with ruach hakodesh that he would not be buried with her. Ultimately, this meeting was a positive occurrence, since Yaakov was able to meet Rachel, who he would later marry.

Moshe also found his way to a well when he was forced to flee from Paroh. At first, the daughters of Yitro were persecuted at the well, but Moshe was able to help them. This led him to meet his future wife as well. Moshe learned from Yaakov, as Rashi states.

Lastly, Miriam's death caused Bnei Yisrael's well to dry up and they began to dehydrate. Hashem provided them with water, and they sang a song of praises of the well.

All of these examples show the well symbolizing the idea of לשמחה מיגון. A second theme is the "life sustaining" aspect of the well, and this theme is evident in all of the above examples as well.

The Depth of the 31

The Depth of the 31

The Depth of the 31
spouse there\textsuperscript{17}. Marriage is defined in Judaism as \textit{kidushin}, a holy relationship. Also, when Rivka came to meet Yitzchak for the first time, it says that Yitzchak was \textit{ואיבר} after it gave them water, because it saved their lives. The people were thanking God for the water, and in doing so they were adding the spiritual component to their drinking.

In the desert, the well provided \textit{Bnei Yisrael} with obvious physical sustenance, but in addition, \textit{Chazal} point out it had a spiritual component as well. \textit{Bnei Yisrael} had no water in the desert; they later sang a \textit{shira} about the \textit{באר} after it gave them water, because it saved their lives. The people were thanking God for the water, and in doing so they were adding the spiritual component to their drinking.

Another example of the "life sustaining" concept relates to the \textit{Beit Hamikdash}. The \textit{Beit Hamikdash} is known as a \textit{_source}, and the well there is known as \textit{מים}. The phrase \textit{מים} is used for both the well and the \textit{Beit Hamikdash}.

The \textit{Ramban} adds that the names that Yitzchak gave to his wells had great significance. The first well is called "Esek" which means conflict, and alludes to the first \textit{Beit Hamikdash}. The second well "Sitna" symbolizes the second \textit{Beit Hamikdash}, because the enemy did not want the building itself to exist. This is alluded to in \textit{Ezra} when it says "Rechovot" refers to the final \textit{Beit Hamikdash} which should be built without a fight and

\footnotesize It is interesting to note that in each of the instances where we find the well relating to marriage that there was an act of gemilut chasadim that took place.

\textsuperscript{17} It is interesting to note that in each of the instances where we find the well relating to marriage that there was an act of gemilut chasadim that took place.

\textsuperscript{18} location of source

\textsuperscript{19} location of source
The Depth of the באר

Hashem will expand our borders.

This concept of spiritual sustenance emanating from the באר is also mentioned in HaKataV V’Hakabalah. He says that Avraham named the wells as a zecher to Hashem because he wanted to teach everyone about Hashem, and to make clear that avodah zarah is false. Everyone goes to wells to get water which is life sustaining, and Avraham wanted to emphasize that the real source of sustenance is Hashem. Avimelech and his servants did not want this; they wanted to continue their avodah zarah, and therefore, Yitzchak renamed the wells with the same names Avraham had given them.

Rashi says that Avimelech’s shepherds claimed that they dug the wells and Avraham responded that he dug the wells. In order to resolve this they decided that whoever the water comes up to miraculously, would be recognized as the one who dug the wells. The water came up to Avraham which is not a natural occurrence; this further proves how everything is from Hashem and not avodah zarah. Since the water came up for both Avraham and Rivka Chazal say that the well will be blessed in Parshat Chukat, and indeed we see that they sang a tribute to the well. There is thus a relationship between the wells of Avraham and Rivka and the well in the desert.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot says, The באר is one of the ten things

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20 בר Parenthood נבנאה על-“זירקה עם באר עשק”
21 תרבות פעילה: - amer שוקה
22 מראים לאל-ראוי ™ merchאט
23 ה, יהודה ר א: ראה גם והאר שמות שבchers שמות של שמות
24 בר Parenthood ספר שון
However, there is a dispute within Chazal as to the definition of "הבאר פי". Rav Ovadiah MiBartinurah offers two explanations. The first states that "הבאר פי" refers to "של בארה מרים", and the second explanation says that it alludes to the well mentioned in Parshat Chukat where Bnei Yisrael sang the song.

Rambam defines the "הבאר פי" as מים שתוציא ההאר. Tiferet Yisrael seems similar to Rambam, and states that "הבאר פי" refers to עמה מתגלגל והיה מימו עת נתן בחרב משה שהכהו שמחזיו והיה גול על אבן בכל במדבר. According to Pirkei DiRabbi Eliezer the well mentioned in the Mishnah refers to the one discovered by Hagar and Yishmael. Radal comments on Pirkei DiRabbi Eliezer that "פי הבאר" could allude to the wells of Avraham and Yitzchak, or Moshe, or Hagar and Yishmael, or Yaakov and Rachel. The Zohar says that "פי הבאר" refers to the well where Moshe met Yitro's daughters or where Yaakov met Rachel. It would seem that the explanation that refers to Yaakov and Rachel makes the most sense since the pasuk in Vayeitzei uses the phrase when Yaakov and Rachel met. In any case, it is apparent that the explanation that "פי הבאר" must be special, since it was worthy to be created many years prior to its use.

In the Gemara, it is apparent that the well is extraordinary in other ways as well. וברא טור עתר בברא רא בברא רא בר residing place he said: ותרח פ решил שאמר מתי ותרח שיר אחר אמיתא מתי ותרח שיר אחר אמיתא:
Rav Natan and Rav Chanina are showing us that a well is more than a container of water. It symbolizes the spiritual lifeline of the Jews. It is possible to combine the two statements of Rav Natan and of Rav Chanina together, and say that one will gain the utmost from his Torah study if he has peace.

It is apparent from our tradition thatבאר cannot be understood merely in its mundane sense as a source of water. The drashot on this word are typical of Chazal’s methodology of interpreting the Torah. Since we are delving into the dvar Hashem, Chazal want to explicate as many messages as possible. The themes developed in this paper help the Jew face the world and use every interaction to enhance his devotion to Hashem.

The well reminds us that we can be in a state of despair but ultimately the positive will overwhelm the negative. Furthermore, the well reminds us to be vigilant to nourish both the physical and spiritual components of one’s being.
There is a custom to recite Tehillim 27, לְדוֹדָוּ הַאִיֵּר, Rosh Chodesh Elul until Shmini Atzeret (or through Shmini Atzeret in chutz la'aretz)\(^1\), a time period that is set aside for repentance. We also have a tradition to sound the shofar from Rosh Chodesh Elul through the entire month to serve as a reminder for us to do teshuva. This tradition originates from the time when Moshe went up on Har Sinai on Rosh Chodesh Elul, to receive the luchot for the second time. Moshe's ascent meant that Hashem had forgiven Bnei Yisrael's sin of the Golden Calf. When Moshe went up, a shofar was sounded throughout the camp as a reminder to the people to maintain their spirit of teshuva. The minhag of saying לְדוֹדָוּ הַאִיֵּר is based on a Midrash which explains that Hashem is my light refers to Rosh Hashanah, and 'my salvation' to Yom Kippur, and that 'He will hide me in His shelter' is an allusion to Sukkot.\(^2\)

Rabbi Shlomo Yaffe offers an insight regarding the significance of reciting specifically Tehillim 27 during this particular time. Rabbi Yaffe views Tehillim 27 as the anthem of the High Holiday season. He explains that "an anthem is a piece of music that expresses the essence of the entity it celebrates, a common theme which unites all of the diverse people and variegated activities of life in that place." The month of Elul is a time for "introspection and self-evaluation." Rosh Hashanah is the time for us to examine our connection to Hashem on a personal level and as a collective community. During Aseret Yemei Teshuvah and

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1: מסנה ברורין, תקפא

2: The Complete Artscroll Siddur, pg. 170

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Yom Kippur, we recall our past actions, and through this introspection we can connect to Hashem on a deeper level. With this new, deeper connection to Hashem, we begin the holiday of Sukkot, “where every aspect of our lives is embraced and suffused with the presence of God’s love for us and our reciprocal love of God,” which gives us great happiness that reaches its peak on Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah.  

We recite this perek of Tehillim twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. The first two words, ובאֵי, encompass the main idea of the experiences we are supposed to have throughout this time period. The function of light is to reveal. The anthem לדוד ובאֵי expresses the feeling we should have during this time period that Hashem is “uniquely accessible” to us.  

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch explains in his commentary on Tehillim that the implication of the fact that this perek begins with the word לדוד, as opposed to לדוד מזמור or מזמור לדוד, is that David “simply expresses the thoughts and attitudes which filled (his) spirit and guided him in his life on earth.” Tehillim 27 expresses the “specific concepts that sustained David throughout all the vicissitudes of his life.”  

In this mizmor, David HaMelech speaks of the struggles that he faced throughout his life, and how those struggles helped him reinforce his bitachon in, and relationship with Hashem. David’s first major struggle was against his father-in-law Shaul. Hashem originally chose Shaul to be king over Israel, but Shaul failed to listen to the word of Hashem, so He rejected him and chose David to be his replacement.  

Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer explains the difference between Shaul and David. He says, “The outstanding quality which God seeks in a Jewish leader is unshakable faith. In desperate
moments of crisis and fear, David’s faith only grew stronger. Shaoul however, panicked and weakened under pressure. He brings an example from the book of Shmuel II, when the Philistines suddenly attacked the Jews in the valley of Rephaim soon after David began ruling as king. The first thing David did was ask Hashem what he should do. Hashem told him to fight against the Philistines because He would deliver them into the Jews’ hands. The Philistines attacked and David struck them down. Then they attacked again, and David once more asked Hashem what to do. This time, Hashem told David:

בְּכָאִים מִמּוּל לָהֶם וּבָאתָ אַחֲרֵיהֶם אֶל הָסֵב תַעֲלֶה לֹא צְעָדָה קוֹל אֶת כְּשָׁמְעֲךָ וִיהִי בְיָצָא אַז כִּי תֶחֱרָץ אָז הַבְּכָאִים הרָאשֵׁי פְלִשְׁתִּים בְּמַחֲנֵה לְהַכּוֹת לְפָנֶיךָ.

David listened to Hashem’s command and was victorious in the battle. Rashi explains that the rustling noise at the tops of the trees that David was supposed to listen for signified that Hashem was sending His angels to come fight for Bnei Yisrael. Rabbi Feuer adds, quoting a Midrash, that the Philistine army grew closer and closer to the Jewish army until they were four cubits away from each other. The soldiers cried out to David, asking how much longer they needed to wait before attacking. David’s answer was, “We must continue to wait until God signals...Better to die innocent and blameless than to live in guilt and sin! Let us lift up our eyes to God and await His salvation.” As soon as Bnei Yisrael looked up, the treetops started rustling, telling them to begin attacking, and again David and his forces defeated the Philistines. The third pasuk of Tehillim 27 can be referring to this battle:

כִּחָמָה עִלָּי מֵאֲנִי בְּזֹאת מִלְחָמָה עָלַי תָּקוּם.

Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Tehillim Treasury, pg. 58 ר"ח ור"ז שומואל ב:ה-ו ככ}

ילקוט שמעון קוק

תורليس מגל
We can contrast David’s unshakable bitachon in Hashem to how Shaul reacted when he was being attacked by the Philistines. Shortly after Shaul was anointed as king, Shmuel told him:

Shmuel was referring to the upcoming war against the Philistines. Shaul waited until the seventh day as instructed, but when Shmuel still did not arrive, his soldiers started to disband from him. When Shaul saw this happening, he panicked and ordered the people to bring the two offerings. Just as he finished offering the burnt offering, Shmuel arrived. Shmuel asked Shaul what he was doing, and Shaul responded by saying that the Philistines were approaching and he had not yet offered a sacrifice to Hashem. Shmuel then admonished Shaul and said:

Shaul, unlike David, was unable to stand strong with full bitachon in Hashem in the face of danger. Shaul’s lack of unshakable faith was ultimately the cause of his downfall. Shaul began pursuing David with the intention of killing him even before David officially replaced him as king. Time after time Shaul attempted to kill David, but he failed each time. David succeeded because he had Hashem on his side, as opposed to Shaul who continuously fought against the word of Hashem. When Shmuel told Shaul he was wrong for not listening to Hashem when he kept Agag alive and didn’t kill all of Amalek’s animals, Shaul refused to admit that he had done anything wrong instead of immediately doing teshuva.
The second pasuk of Tehillim 27 summarizes Shaul’s and David’s struggle against each other. The perek continues to reference many of David’s struggles throughout his life. The last pasuk emphasizes David’s main point, the lesson that he learned from all his hardships: קוה ה אל ה והКО לובך וישמשך לך אלוהים. 12 Rabbi Feuer adds, based on the Malbim, “that hoping eagerly for God’s assistance is different than hoping for the aid of man. Heartache, disappointment, and despondency are the lot of one who must ask for the favors of man…Not so with God. Placing one’s confidence in His beneficence is an…experience which brings encouragement and renewed strength of character and spirit.” 13 This quote accurately describes the essence of Shaul’s downfall and David’s success. Shaul caved under the pressure of man. He felt the need to please the people around him because he feared being left alone, even though doing so meant going against the word of Hashem. David, however, eagerly placed his full trust in Hashem. Even when his enemies were a mere four cubits away from him, he did not fear because he knew that Hashem was with him.

The time during which we recite מהדאות אורי should be a time for us to strive to reach the level of bitachon that David Hamelech had in Hashem. David Hamelech repeats והКО ה again at the end of the last pasuk; these are the closing words of the entire perek. The fact that these words are repeated, and that David chose to end with these words, emphasizes the point that we must never forget that when we are in a time of need, the One we need to turn to is Hashem. We must remember that if we put all of our trust in Hashem, He will be our light and our guide.
Responsibility: Catalyst for Unity

There is a well-known Jewish refrain, על ישראל וראים זה 버ד. What does it mean for one person to be responsible for another? In a number of narratives in Tanach, we can manifestations of responsibility on both an individual and on a national scale. By examining the lessons of a few of these stories, we can gain insight into the meaning of this significant concept.

A prime example in Tanach of an individual who took responsibility as a leader for others is Yehuda, the son of Yaakov. His leadership became apparent when Yoseph was in the pit and Yehuda stood up to his brothers and suggested selling him instead of killing him.² In spite of this, the Midrash says that Yehuda was punished for not going far enough. This was because Hashem expected him “to carry Yoseph on his shoulders and lead him back to his father.”³

Yet despite this, or perhaps because of it, Yehuda went on to heroically accept personal accountability at two critical moments. The first was following the incident with Tamar. Soon after, Yehuda heard that she was pregnant and, assuming it was from an illicit relationship, he demanded that she be publicly burned. When she approached Yehuda and placed the items he had given her as a deposit before him, he realized his mistake and declared

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¹ ליט שבועות
² בראשית ל:ב
³ בראשית רבה מהנה

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Rebecca van Bemmelen
Yehuda recognized that she was right and he responded by admitting his mistake and taking responsibility for his actions.

It is interesting to note that the word used for the objects deposited with the “anonymous prostitute” is ערמון 5 which shares the same root as the Hebrew word for responsibility, ערבות. The two are clearly linked, as the collateral was what caused Yehuda to take responsibility.

Assuming accountability for his own actions was the first step. Later on, he developed this characteristic further and began to exemplify the concept of ערבים – taking responsibility for others. When the bothers got into trouble with Yoseph in Egypt and he forced them to bring their younger brother Binyamin to him, they returned to their father Yaakov, terrified to tell him the news. Yehuda spoke up, saying, אתי הנער שלחה... תבקשנו מידיilen ani averenu Midi hakshem.

What enabled Yehuda to take this extreme level of responsibility? R’ Meir Zlotowitz 7 suggests that since Yehuda had lost two of his own sons, Er and Onan, 8 he was able to personally relate to Yaakov’s grief and fear of losing both sons born to Rachel. Later on, when Binyamin was accused of stealing the royal goblet, Yehuda fulfilled his promise to Yaakov by assuming personal responsibility for Binyamin’s safety.

The Midrash Tanchuma says that when the goblet was found in Binyamin’s sack, the brother’s turned their faces except for Yehuda. He courageously stood up to Yosef and gave an
eloquent speech requesting Binyamin’s release. In return for Yehuda’s brave act of responsibility and his display of leadership, Yaakov blessed him befittingly with the promise a promise that Yehuda would be the father of the line of David HaMelech, and ultimately of the Mashiach.

Tanach also provides us with examples of רעב on a national or international scale. At Matan Torah the Jewish people gathered together “as one man with one heart” with a singular purpose: to receive the Divine law. Commenting on the pasuk, the Midrash Shochar Tov says that at the mountain they not only accepted Torah for themselves, but they also accepted upon themselves the responsibility to pass on the Torah to their children. Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks sees this as a “life affirming mission”, as “the courage to take the risk of responsibility, becoming co-authors with God of the world that ought to be.”

Global unity of a very different type can be seen at the creation of Migdal Bavel. The generation at that time was united in their purpose to wage war against God. What brought them together was their shared (illegitimate) goal, and as soon as God changed their languages their unity shattered

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Jonathan Sacks, To Heal a Fractured World: the Ethics of Responsibility, p.273
and their mission fell apart. While these people demonstrated unity, it did not translate into mutual responsibility.

There are striking contrasts in the pshat discussing these two cases of national unity. Regarding Dor Haflaga, humanity had sunk so low that Hashem needed to “descend” to see them, as it says והורד ה השם את העיר לאירא.16 This is in contrast to Matan Torah, in which the meeting between man and God is described with the exact opposite terminology; ושים שלל א ואלאים, which describes man ascending to the highest possible level.

Another difference is the terms used to describe the two nations. The Babylonians of dor haflaga are referred to as “bnei ha’Adam” which has a negative connotation connecting man to his lowly origin from “adama”, earth. In contrast, at Matan Torah the people are referred to as “Bnei Yisrael”, connecting the nation back to their holy ancestor Yaakov.

Based on these biblical examples, the importance of responsibility on both the individual and national scale is clear.

God speaks to a Jewish leader saying, היית לא נתמנית שלל עד הцיבור על נתפס, הцיבור על ערב נעשית הנתמניתועזוקזוז. ראה 17 His message to the individual is to start caring on a global level, to have “a love for all people and a love for all nations, expressing itself in a desire for their spiritual and material advancement”18, as portrayed by Yehuda’s descendant David HaMelech and his future descendant Mashiach ben David.

Robert Kennedy said, “Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each

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16 מדרש שוחר שלוחה,ח תהלים:ג
18 ראו
other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest of walls of oppression and resistance.” Responsibility starts on the level of the individual and hopefully reaches the national scale where it is manifested as unity. May we follow this example and begin by becoming responsible for our own actions, take on responsibility for others, and thereby ultimately create a unified world.

\[19\] 'A Tiny Ripple of Hope’ speech given on June 7, 1966
ומעשה

מחשבה ומעשים

מחשבת ומעשים
A Halachik Concept

When thinking of kol yisrael areivim zeh l'zeh, one’s mind might jump to a popular Jewish song or to a person pulling over on the side of a highway to help his fellow Jew. In common discourse, the idea of areivut rarely leaves the realm of hashkafa. However, this concept is much more deeply woven into Torah than is immediately evident. There are many specific ramifications of the concept of areivut in halacha as well.

The source for areivut in Torah shebichtav can be found at the end of the covenant made at Har Grizim and Har Eival. There, Moshe gave a final address in which he warned Bnei Yisrael about avoda zara and its consequences. Moshe told the nation הַנִּסְתָּרֹת לַה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ לָנוּ וְהַנִּגְלֹת עַד עוֹלָם אֶת מִצְוָתֵי הַתּוֹרָה דִּבְרֵי 1 This meant that Hashem would punish the people who sin in private but it would be the nation’s responsibility to punish the public sinners in the way the Torah commands. Rashi comments that the pasuk is teaching that it is our job to punish the people who worship avoda zara, to remove the evil amongst us, and if we don’t do this the nation will be punished along with the sinner. 2

From this pasuk, we learn the concept of areivut, that not only do we have to keep Hashem’s commandments, but we are also responsible to ensure that everyone else is fulfilling Hashem’s word. Rashi and Chizkuni comment on the eleven dots that appear in the Torah on top of the words וּלְבָנֵינוּ לָנוּ, These dots correspond

1 רבי יוסי בנו סנהדרין
2 רashi שם
to the 11 letters of the prior words לַהָ' אֱלֹהֵינוּ and limit this responsibility to only take effect once Bnei Yisrael cross the Jordan and the brit of Har Grizim and Har Eival goes into effect. Until then, it will be up to God, יְהוָה, to judge the sinners.

Rav S.R. Hirsch explains that when Bnei Yisrael would enter Eretz Yisrael they would begin to control their physical and civil life. This control comes with the responsibility of maintaining civil morality. Civil morality has two aspects that are elaborated on in Torah shebichtav and Torah shebaal peh. There are several instances in Tanach when Bnei Yisrael sought justice and needed to punish sinners: this is called areivut b'avairot. Also, Chazal learn from the above pasuk the concept of areivut b'mitzvot – the responsibility of every person to make sure his fellow Jew is observing the mitzvot.

**Areivut in Tanach**

In sefer Yehoshua, we read that Achan took from the forbidden spoils of Yericho. The pasuk says וַיִּקַּח בַּחֵרֶם מַעַל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי עַכָּן ... אַף וַיִּחַר הַחֵרֶם הַמִּן יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּבְנֵי. Metzudat David comments on the fact that the pasuk says Bnei Yisrael sinned even though only Achan took from the spoils. However, since Bnei Yisrael failed to fulfill their responsibility in making sure that no one took from the spoils, they are also considered to have sinned. The Rashi mentioned above uses this story to prove that the chiuv of areivut, which the nation accepted at Har Grizim and Har Eival, only applies once Bnei Yisrael enter Eretz Yisrael. Malbim says that Bnei Yisrael are like one body, so when one person sins the entire body gets sick, and it affects the nation. He also says that there are two types of punishment. The sinner receives a specific consequence for his actions, and the nation suffers because Hashem removes His hashgacha from the nation. Here the pasuk

3 יְהוָה לְךָ‏.
A Halachik Concept

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi said in Avot that Hashem has removed His hashgacha as a punishment for not preventing Achan from taking the spoils.

Another example comes from the book of Shoftim. Bnei Yisrael responded to the horrific sin of pilegesh b’giva by saying אַף הוַיִּחַר יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּבְנֵי showing that Hashem has removed His hashgacha as a punishment for not preventing Achan from taking the spoils. Metzudat David notes that this is an example of Bnei Yisrael understanding their obligation of areivut and seeing the need to immediately respond to a public sin. Later on the pasuk says והם פנו ליהוה בצון יילות וַיִּתְיַצְּבוּ – לוהים. Malbin notes that Bnei Yisrael are called an לוהים here because the entire nation was standing up for the integrity of Hashem’s name, and maintaining a high level of civil morality throughout the land.

Ralbag comments that Bnei Yisrael were fulfilling the brit that they made at Har Grizim and Har Eival to destroy the evil from amongst the nation in the manner that the Torah commands.

Areivut in Torah Sh’Baal Peh:

The Gemara discusses how many britot Hashem made with Bnei Yisrael to keep the Torah and mitzvot, including the one made on Har Grizim and Har Eival. It explains, צוה אשר הברית דברי אלה וגו ומשה את וגו הזאת הברית דברי ואת ושמרתם ותיב מנו ממצא וגו מצוה מצוה כל על בריתות ח. The Gemara then brings two opinions. Rabbi Shimeon says לך אין ושלשת אלף ששים וחמש מאות בריתות ושמנה ארבעים עליה נכרתו שלשה לא מתורה שכתובה ומדיע ומצוה מצוה וחמשים אלפים וחמשים (603,550 is the number of people in Bnei Yisrael 4).

4 שמות יט:4
5 שופטים כב:5
6 שופטים יט:6
7 מעלבו:)=>
8 רלבו:)=>
9 מעלבו:=>
Yisrael). Rashi explains that he means each of the 603,550 people took on the responsibility, areivut, of every other person’s 48 britot, in addition to his own 48. Rebbe seems to make the same statement as Rabbi Shimeon but Rav explains that Rebbe meant בינייה איכא דערבא וערבא ערבא משרשיא; Rashi then explains what Rebbe was adding to Rabbi Shimon’s statement. Rebbe understood that not only did each person have areivut for everyone else’s britot, but he also took on the chiuv of areivut for everyone else. This is the start of kol Yisrael areivim zeh l’zeh; in addition to keeping their own covenant they also had to make sure everyone else was keeping his own.

Areivut in Halacha:

In addition to its meanings in the realms of Tanach and hashkafah, the concept of areivut also has serious halachic ramifications. Someone who has a chiuv in a mitzvah, even if he already performed it, can fulfill that mitzvah on behalf of others (colloquially referred to by the term “be motzi them”). The Gemara says, even someone who already fulfilled his chiuv can still be motzi someone else. Rashi explains that this is because זה ערבים ישראל כל לזה. Areivut creates a maaseh mitzvah for someone who technically fulfilled his chiuv. However, the Gemara clarifies that this only applies to birchat hamitzvah and not to birchat hanehenin.

This principle can be demonstrated with the mitzvah of mikrah megilla. It says in the Shulchan Aruch that even if someone already completed his obligation in mikrah megilla, he can still make the brachot and read the megilla again in order for other
people to fulfill their obligation. The Mishna Berurah quotes poskim who say that if the person who has not yet fulfilled his obligation is able to make the brachot, it is preferable for him to say them himself, but we are usually lenient and follow the Magen Avraham who says that the person who is reading the megilla again can also say the brachot again.

Another example is the mitzvah of kiddush. The Shulchan Aruch states that women have a chiuv d’oraita in kiddush (even though it is a mitzvat asei shehazman grama) and therefore can be motzi other people, including men, in the mitzvah. The Mishna Berurah comments there that a woman can be motzi others even if she herself was already yotzei in kiddush; the Aruch HaShulchan agrees with the Mishna Berura, but the Shaar Hatzion quotes the Pri Megaddim who doubts if the chiuv of areivut applies to women; according to him, if a woman was already yotzei, she can’t be motzi others.

The Dagul Mirvava asks the following question: There is an opinion of the Magen Avraham that one fulfills his chiuv d’oraita of kiddush through tefillat arvit on Friday night. According to this, he asks, how can a woman who did not daven maariv be yotzei in kiddush with a man who already davened maariv and therefore only has a chiuv d’rabbanan? Rabbi Akiva Eigar says that the...
man who *davens maariv* can still be *motzi* the woman in *kiddush* because of the *din* of *areivut*. But *Dagul Mirvava* says based on the *Rosh* that women are not actually included in the *din* of *areivut*, so maybe there really is a problem with a man being *motzi* a woman.

Rabbi Akiva Eigar strongly disagrees with the *Dagul Mirvava*. He holds that, even if the *din* of *areivut* does not apply to women, a man could still be *motzi* a woman. He proves this from a *Gemara* in *Brachot* which tells the story about Yanai Hamelech and his queen who wanted *Shimon ben Shetach* to recite *birkat hamazon* for them. *Shimon ben Shetach* did not eat enough to have a *chiuv d’oraita* in *birkat hamazon*, yet the reason he could say the *bracha* for them is because of *areivut*. But if *areivut* does not apply to women, then how could *Shimon ben Shetach* be *motzi* the queen, if she might have a *chiuv d’oraita* in *birkat hamazon*? We can conclude from this that at the very least men must be able to use *areivut* to be *motzi* women in a *mitzvah*. Therefore there should be no problem with *kiddush*.

Furthermore, Rabbi Akiva Eigar thinks there is no difference between men and women regarding *areivut*; we do not find anywhere that the rule *מוציא יצא דאם* does not apply to women. He says that really the *Rosh* is just clarifying that only someone who is *chayav* in a *mitzvah* can be *motzi* someone else with a *chiuv* in that *mitzvah*. However, someone who only has a *chiuv d’rabbanan* cannot be *motzi* someone with a *chiuv d’oraita*. Therefore if women have a *chiuv d’oraita* in *birkat hamazon*, they can be *motzi* men in the *mitzvah* even if they already fulfilled the *mitzvah*. However, if women only have a *chiuv d’rabbanan* this would not fall into the

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19 *ר"ע קייפא אנור וש*  
20 *ראיאא דיברחי פרס ל סימן גי"ג*  
21 ברחות מים.
category of areivut as they have a lesser chiuv than men. The Rosh is not specifically stating that areivut does not apply to women, rather he is explaining a general rule of areivut: since women might only have a chiuv d’rabbanan in birkat hamazon they cannot be motzi a man who has a chiuv d’oraita because areivut does not apply in this case. This rule would apply in any case when two people do not have an equal level of chiuv. Also, the Rosh specifically says that a woman could still be motzi anyone who has a chiuv d’rabbanan.

Conversely, the Pri Megadim still says he is not sure if women have the chiuv of areivut, and Dagul Meravavah holds that women do not have a chiuv of areivut. Their basis for this is their understanding of the Rosh that women are not included in areivut. Rabbi A. Eisenberger in his footnotes on the Pri Megadim’s “Petichah Kollelet” tries to explain the logic behind this. The Gemarah in Kiddushin says that women also have a chiuv of kibbud av v’eim, and we know this from the words ואבי אמו תיראו אישו. The word תיראו is plural and therefore includes both men and women. But, the Gemara asks, why does it specifically say אישו? It explains that a married woman’s first and foremost obligation is to her household, and therefore it is not always in her control to honor her parents. From this, it’s possible the Rosh reasons that since women’s time and availability is not always in their control, women cannot be part of areivut. There is another explanation in the Gemara that even though a blind person may be exempt from mitzvot he still has a chiuv d’rabbanan because, as the Rosh...

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22 פורה מטוס פחותו שלולת, חולק שני, ט"ז
23 פורושי לה נזכרה על)findViewByIdה שלולת של הפרי מחומז, ט"ז שפ-שיא
24 קדושין כלל
25 קדושין כלל
explains, he is from the same min, type, as people who have a real chiuv. However, women are a different min than men, and therefore areivut may not apply to them.

The Pri Megadim quotes the Sama D’chai\(^{26}\) who also asks the question of whether the chiuv of areivut includes women and converts, and additionally if it applies to mitzvot d’rabbanan. The Sama D’chai quotes Zera Avraham who says that there is no chiuv of areivut for mitzvot d’rabbanan. To prove this, he brings the halacha that a person cannot make a vow which nullifies a previous vow. At Har Sinai we promised to keep the mitzvot, so swearing to violate a mitzvah would be violating a previous vow. This promise at Har Sinai did not include mitvod d’rabbanan so it seems that one could swear against a mitzvah d’rabbanan. However, there was a separate brit, recorded in Parshat Nitzavim\(^{27}\) that specifically states, פספתי נשים ואוקד建築 עומד... לאו נשים מברית ל-ג-לא וה-ל-לא, showing that their promise to keep the mitzvot also applies to all future people, converts, and mitzvot (meaning mitzvot d’rabbanan). But in this second promise they only swore regarding the fulfillment of the mitzvot themselves, but not about their chiuv of areivut. Zera Avraham proves that areivut does not apply to anything which was added in Nitzavim by quoting the Tosfot\(^{28}\) who say that converts are not included in the rule of areivut. We can infer from this that areivut does not apply to anything else that the nation accepted in Parashat Nitzavim, like mitzvot d’rabbanan. This logic could also apply to women, who are specifically mentioned in Nitzavim. This is another explanation for why women might not be included in areivut. After quoting Zera Avraham, the Sama D’chai disagrees with him. He says that even though

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\(^{26}\) סמא ד’chai א”ח ג-ד

\(^{27}\) פרשיט תהלים:א

\(^{28}\) תוסף קדושין:מ
converts may not have a chiuv of areivut, this concept cannot be applied to mitzvot d’rabbanan. When Bnei Yisrael took a vow to accept all mitzvot d’rabbanan in the future they also included the concept of areivut.

Why does Tosfot say that converts are not obligated in areivut? Tosfot and Rashi29 say that since the Gemara in Sota30 mentions the number of people in Bnei Yisrael who took on the brit, and this number does not include the erev rav, it must be that converts are not included in the chiuv of areivut. Yet, in another place, Tosfot disagree with this idea. They say that converts really are included in areivut, and the number mentioned in Sota is not so exact or important. They did not know the number of the erev rav, and that is why the number does not include them. 31 (However the Mechilta says that the number of erev rav was twice as many as when they left Egypt.) The Maharit says that converts do have an obligation of areivut, and he disagrees with the concept that the erev rav were not included in the brit. He instead explains like Tosfot in Masechet Niddah that the Gemara in Sota is not meant to be taken literally, and the exact number does not matter.

The Shulchan Aruch32 says that some say converts cannot be the shliach tzibbur, but that this is incorrect. A convert is allowed to be the shliach tzibbur. Based on this, the Pri Meggadim corrects his earlier statement and

29 ר”ש יג נדה יב
30 סנהדרין י:ל
31 תוספות ד”ה יב
32 שב”י א”ח נמצית
saves that if a convert can be the shliach tzibbur, he must have a chiuv of areivut.

In summary, there is a lot of discussion on the inclusion of women, converts, and mitzvot d’rabbanan in the chiuv of areivut. However, it seems that most of the poskim do consider women to have a chiuv. The Pri Megadim leaves the machloket unresolved but the Dagul Merawavah holds that women are excluded from the chiuv and views this as the opinion of the Rosh. However, many of the other poskim disagree with this analysis. There is also a machloket between the Sama D’chai and Zera Avraham over whether mitzvot d’rabbanan are included in areivut. Based on one Tosfot which held that converts are excluded from areivut, Zera Avraham says that mitzvot d’rabbanan are also excluded. But the Sama D’chai disagrees with Zera Avraham’s logic and says that mitzvot d’rabbanan are included. There is also a discussion over a convert’s chiuv in areivut. Zera Avraham, possibly the Sama D’chai, one of the Baalei Tosfot, and Rashi all agree that converts do not have a chiuv. On the other hand, a different one of the Baalei Tosfot, the Maharit, the Pri Megadim (after he changes his opinion), and seemingly the Shulchan Aruch explain that converts do have a chiuv. All this halachic discussion teaches that areivut is not a simple idea but a complex part of the halachic system and is found in halachot that we encounter every day.
Rashi famously comments on this pasuk that Hashem created man from two opposing forces: the body, which is from the earth, and the soul, which is from shamayim. Because of this, man has to constantly reconcile both parts of his being, gashmiut (the part belonging to the physical world) and ruchniut (his spiritual component). However, this is still open to much interpretation; does it mean that man should be striving to push one of the two out of the picture, or should he be working towards finding the balance between the two?

In general, many Torah sources seem to look down upon gashmiut, so does this mean we should suppress it as much as we can? On the other hand, we were created in a physical world, so should we instead embrace the physical and try to find a way to raise it to a higher level? This issue is the subject of much debate among the mefarshim.

One main source where physicality is addressed by the Torah is the concept of nezirut. As part of the laws of the nazir, the Torah says: "וושע המקנס את הנשואת ואחרי הלילה כפר עליה מאשר עלווה על הנפש והורש את הנפש והורש את הנפש [...] הנפש על חטא המושל והורש את הנפש והורש את הנפש." The nazir has to bring a korban chatat, presumably for having sinned. What does this mean? What sin has the nazir committed?
Rashi comments on this by quoting R’ Elazar Hakapar, a Tanna, who explains that his sin was that he pained himself by abstaining from wine. In other words, his sin was not that he ended the nezirut, rather that he started the nezirut in the first place. It sounds as if this Gemara is saying one should not refrain from anything physical. Similarly, Rambam explains nezirut as something to be opposed to, unless it is done for the proper reasons. Meaning, if one uses nezirut as a “penalty” on oneself for not doing something, then he is a rasha. But if one uses nezirut as a tool to help fix a behavioral problem, then it is praiseworthy.

In contrast, Ramban explains nezirut as an ideal, something to strive for. Regarding the question of why the nazir brings a chatat, Ramban extrapolates al derech ha’pshat that he brings a chatat for ending the state of nezirut, which is a holy state of being. So the chatat, in a way, is criticizing the former nazir as if to say, “you have diminished yourself to a ‘commoner’; you should have remained a nazir forever.”

Ramban expounds on this idea in Parshat Kedoshim, where he says that one should refrain from assur things, and it is also good to shy away from mutar things. For example, although it is not assur to be tamei, one should still shy away from it. Ramban feels that because there are so many problems of desire and lust in this world, it is good to place oneself in another world; disconnecting from physicality is a way to get to kedusha.
Along the same lines, there is a *Mishnah* in *Pirkei Avot* that states, "The way of Torah is to eat bread with salt, drink water in small amount, sleep on the ground, live a life of deprivation- but toil in Torah..." This *Mishnah* seems to disagree with the opinion of R’ Elazar Hakapar, and imply that one should deprive himself of all physicality except for the absolute basics. Is this in fact a contradiction?

Of the many *mefarshim* that comment on this *Mishnah*, the general view is that this life of deprivation is all for Talmud Torah. *Rashi* and the *Meiri* take the stand that the *Mishnah* is not advocating asceticism. A life dependent on delicacies can lead to neglect of Talmud Torah, but one does not have to give his wealth away and live a life of poverty; one has to be healthy and strong in order to fulfill his potential. But at the same time, it is all a balance and one has to be prepared to sacrifice personal comfort for Torah.

On the other hand, the Rambam, Midrash Shmuel, Chida, Mesilat Yesharim, and many others do emphasize the idea of sacrificing for Torah. They say that Talmud Torah should not be subservient to the fulfillment of any physical needs; one should live a life of physical deprivation. One should not devote his attention to anything but Torah because there Torah cannot coexist with wealth and honor. If one becomes dependent on comforts, this will be at the expense of time that would have been...
devoted to Talmud Torah. Therefore, one’s love for Torah should be so deep that he is oblivious to material hardship. Mesilat Yesharim says that we are not here in this world for relaxation, but for labor. We are supposed to be like soldiers on the front lines who eat in haste, sleep at irregular intervals, and are always prepared for battle. Despite the circumstances, physicality is disregarded when it comes to Torah.

Furthermore, Ramchal writes in Derech Hashem that man is composed of two opposing forces: the body and soul. Nevertheless, he is born completely physical and all material is inherently dark. Similarly, Rav Shimshon Pincus writes in Nefesh Chaya that physicality is relatively bad because nothing in this world can compare to real pleasure in the next world. Therefore, Ramchal says that man must make every effort for his soul to overcome the physical and elevate himself. But man is constantly involved in the physical; it is impossible to live without eating, drinking, etc. Yet despite the challenge of continuously being occupied with the physical, man is able to elevate the physical when he transforms mundane activities into acts of spiritual perfection.

Despite the many opinions that shun physicality, it is still a fundamental part of several mitzvot, such as Shabbat and Yom Tov. As part of Shabbat, we have the mitzvah of Oneg Shabbat.

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10 The Pirkei Avos Treasury, Artscroll, R’ Moshe Lieber
11 The Pirkei Avos Treasury, Artscroll, R’ Moshe Lieber
12 Rav Pincus, Nefesh Chaya, 15-17
13 Rav Pincus, Nefesh Chaya, 15-17
14 Rav Pincus, Nefesh Chaya, 15-17
Ramban comments on the words \( קוקס \), that Oneg Shabbat should be specifically with \( נקאה \). This means with physical items, such as food and clothing, and through these we transform the \( chol \) to \( kodesh \).

Not only that, but we learn the \textit{mitzvah} of Oneg Shabbat from a \textit{pasuk}, which says \( נקאה \). Radak comments on this \textit{pasuk}, that the \textit{mitzvah} of Oneg Shabbat is so that we will come to glorify Hashem. Shabbat is different from the other days of the week because it is the day designated to remember that Hashem created the world. Therefore by eating tasty foods, we are praising and thanking Hashem for everything that He created; we glorify Hashem on Shabbat through eating!

Similarly, on Yom Tov we have a \textit{mitzvah} of simcha. But what does that mean? Rebbe Eliezer in the \textit{Gemara} says that Simchat Yom Tov means eating, drinking, sleeping, etc. However, Rebbe Yochanan says that it is \( יראת \) or \( יכתי \). Either the simcha is intended for us or for Hashem; it must be either \( יכתי \) or \( יכתי \). But Rav Yehoshua, whose opinion is accepted by the \textit{halacha}, explains that it should be half for Hashem and half for us. In short, this means that the day is all about a balance between physicality, which is for us, and spirituality, which is for Hashem.

Practically, Rambam explains how to apply this: for Simchat Yom Tov, children should get nuts (or perhaps candies nowadays), women should get new clothing or jewelry, and men should eat meat or drink wine, as it says, \( יכתי יכתי ואין בברש ואין בשמה \).
At the same time, one should be careful not to drink too much, lest he get drunk or not share with the needy; when one eats and drinks, he also has to feed the poor, since there is not real *simcha* unless one shares with others. In addition, one should not only eat and drink throughout the entire day; one should do some spiritual activities, such as *davening*, or reading from the *Torah*. In summary, the *Rambam* comes to a similar conclusion: one should have food (physicality) to enhance *Yom Tov*, but balance it out by injecting spiritual content into the experience.20

Along the same lines, Rabbi S.R. Hirsch believes that there needs to be a balance between the two aspects. He explains that the meaning of the *shoresh* ב is to set apart. The *nazir* undertakes to dedicate his entire self exclusively to God. He draws a circle around himself in which only God is to be present. But this is not isolation like living on a hilltop in the middle of nowhere; it is the isolation of one's mind in the midst of ordinary life.21 In other words, one should strive and work hard to connect with *Hashem*, but still live in the world.

Perhaps this approach is the easiest to connect to in today's world. It instructs us to get a job, build a family and a home, and even indulge in some pleasures, but at the same time to be a growing Jew, constantly working towards a relationship with *Hashem*.

At the end of the day, this is a legitimate argument with two valid sides. But it is important to point out that whichever opinion one lives by, everyone agrees that one should not relate to physicality as a goal of itself. At least according to some it can be a means to a goal, but never a goal itself.

19 *קט פסחים גמרא*.
20 *רמב"מ הלכות ייו תש קכ*.
21 *רש"ד וורס מהדיר ג*.
Learning vs. Earning

The Mishnah in Masechet Avot makes two apparently contradictory statements. On the one hand, it says ‘תאכל במלח פת תשתה במשורה וומים על תישן הארץ תחיה צער וחי עמל אתה בתורה.’ However, the Mishnah also says ‘המלאכה אתהאהב וארץ דרך עם תורה תלמוד יפה,’ which the meforshim explain as teaching us to learn Torah while having an occupation. So is a person supposed to spend all his time learning Torah while living in poverty, or is he supposed to devote his time to earning a decent living?

The Gemara mentions a machloket between R’ Yishmael and R’ Shimon bar Yochai that echoes the dilemma in the mishnah. R’ Yishmael says that one should earn a parnasa. He explains that although it says in Yechezkel, ‘משה ויסכת תורה ספר עיון וليلו ولا יומם בו הגית,’ Devarim specifically states ‘יניקך ואספת תירושך ויצרך תירושך’ to prove that the former pasuk should not be taken literally. R’ Shimon bar Yochai questions this opinion, saying ‘זריעה בשעת זרה ו籽רה בשעת חורש אדם אפשר בשעת ודש קצירה בשעת עליה הקצרה.’ He argues that when Bnei Yisrael keep the Torah, others will work for them, as it says in Yechezkel, ‘זרעים ויבים וית עליהם.’ However, when Bnei...
Yisrael do not keep the Torah, they will be forced to do their own work and the work of others, as it says in Devarim. Which of these two views are we to follow?

Rambam has a clear opinion on this matter: one is to work as hard as necessary to support oneself, and do anything in his power not to be dependent on charity. He says that it is forbidden to accept money for learning Torah, and points out that historically, the greatest of Chachmei Yisrael were woodchoppers and water-drawers. In addition, we know that Rashi owned a vineyard, and Rambam himself was a renowned doctor.

These great Rabbis had occupations and still found time to learn an enormous amount of Torah. However, one might counter that this is not practical for the average Jew, and therefore it is important to know a man’s basic obligation in Talmud Torah. On the one hand, the Gemara explains that the minimum requirement that a man has to learn to fulfill his obligation is פָּרָק עֶבֶרִית אֶחָד וּפָרָק שֶׁ龃ָרִית אֶחָד, referring to saying Shema in the morning and at night. But the Mishnah states שָׁמַע שְׁמֵא וּלְבָבוֹת אִישׁ נַפְלֵים ולָמוּר, implying that the obligation of learning Torah is unlimited. The Shulchan Aruch quotes this obligation and explains that one must set aside time to learn even if he wishes to make a lot of

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8. וִרְבִּיהָ חֲלֵם
9. הַלַּעֲמוֹת מְשָׁתַח עַל יְהִי
10. הַלַּעֲמוֹת לָוָסְמָד נְכָא
11. הַלַּעֲמוֹת לָוָסְמָד אָסָא
12. סְמִחַת צָעֶק
13. סְמִחַת אָהֶם
Learning vs. Earning

money. According to the Beur Halacha, man’s simple obligation is to set aside time every day to learn. How are men who learn all day supposed to afford their physical needs? One way is to learn in a koll el that relies on the charity of others to support its members. Rambam is vehemently against this lifestyle and even goes so far as to say that he would accept charity only for the sake of Torah. However, in his commentary on Pirkei Avot, Rambam admits that most talmidei chachamim disagree with him. R’ Moshe Feinstein, a later posek, states that koll el is certainly allowed. He says in the name of the Maharsh al that the koll el system prevents Torah from being lost because it's impossible for someone to be a talmid chacham and have a job, and Rav Moshe adamantly encourages people to do whatever is necessary to learn Torah, and not to be overly concerned for the position of the Rambam. However, the Rama seems to say the opposite. He says that if one wants to be machmir, he should support himself and learn Torah, as the Rambam holds. While justifying accepting money to learn Torah in cases of necessity, the Rama views those who live a koll el life as relying on a leniency, since the halacha is that one should not take money for talmud Torah.

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14 קנו ориг: "אברהם קנו: "15 רלא ориг: "אברהם רלא: "16 In Eretz Yisrael, Kolles are also supported by tax money. 17 הלכות תלמוד תורה ג"כ 18 באבות ה' 19 יוהRK העב: נקאים 20 יוהRK העב: בקיא: "
Since *kollels* can be controversial, many *Torah* scholars choose instead to enter into something known as a *Yissachar-Zevulun* partnership. The source for this goes all the way back to the *shevatim*. According to *Chazal*, *Yissachar* was a scholar who would spend all of his time learning *Torah*, and *Zevulun*, the businessman, would support him. According to the *Tur*, this fulfilled *Zevulun*’s obligation to learn *Torah*, and *Zevulun* received a share of *Yissachar*’s reward in *olam habah*. The *Rama* explains that two people may draw up a contract that allows a working man to support someone who is learning, and it is considered as if the working man did the learning as well. The *Gemara* tells a story about two brothers, *Hillel HaNasi* and *Shavna*, who discussed entering into such an agreement. This system has been used for thousands of years, and nowadays many *yeshivot* have written *halachically* binding contracts for those who want to create a *Yissachar-Zevulun* partnership.

The *Gemara* says that when one faces ultimate judgment, one of the questions he will be asked is *ַלתַּורהַ עֲעֵתָםּ קָבעַּת?* Rambam and the *Shulchan Aruch* explain:  

כל איש מישראל, חיב מחלומד תורה: בן על בן צעירה, בן שלם גנסו בן צעירה, בן בוחר בן שדה, בן זבולון שנותו חמה, באפל על המורה על התلمודים. האפל על אשתו בנו – חיב כלום ולי כלום וידור בינוパイירל.

Every man in *Yisrael* is required to learn *Torah*: whether he is rich or poor, healthy or afflicted, young

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21. שם
22. רמב"ם דנה ר"א.
23. פ mở ב א.
24. ש"ת ל א.
25. רבנמי כל ת"ל ח"ה ה"ו ח"א, ר"ש י"ד ר"א.
or old and weak. Even a poor person who has to beg for money at the gates and a man with a wife and children have to set time for *talmud Torah* during the day and at night.

Once we realize that *Torah* is the priority, we can achieve a healthy balance between *talmud Torah* and earning a *parnasa*.
ציצית

Why is it that if a person fulfills the מצווה of ציצית it is as if they have fulfilled all of the מצוות in the תורה? What is so unique about the ציצית in particular?

The Rav Medrash brings a השם of a person on a boat who falls into the sea. The captain throws him a rope and says "hold on and you will live, if not you will surely drown!" So too, 'hy tells יה癞 that as long as they keep the מצוות they will live. The ציצית are the "rope" that connects a person to '.

The Torah continues: הר"ש says that the גמטריה of ציצית plus the eight strings and five knots is תר"ה. When a person looks at his ציצית, he not only remembers his connection to ' but also all of the מצוות. Perhaps this is the unique characteristic of ציצית and this is why 'hy say that if you fulfill the מצוות of ציצית, it is as if you are fulfilling the entire תורה.

According to הר"ש, the word ציצית comes from the root ציץ meaning 'to gaze' as it says in the שירים לעופר או לצבי דודי כה גאולה בלאה אלוהים עמו, ומסותצו. The הגר ביאור"א explains that a man’s sins cause a separation between him and ' as it says 단 וסמט אפיון מתחה שלם מותר של שחוק, but our sins are in the way. The move is a way to break down the wall between us and '.

1 תבנית שנשה
2 תבנית שנשה
3 שיר השירים ט
The הגר explains that there are two forms of תשובה: תשובה שבתתת and תשובה שבתתת where only ה גו knows what is in a person’s heart. ה גו is “gazing through the cracks” to see what a person’s true intentions are, even when one’s actions are hidden.

This idea can be related to what happened in מצרים. When ישראל בני did תשובה שבתתת the פרך lavoro stopped. Yet it was not until they did תשובה שבתתת publicly that ה גו took them out of מצרים. When ישראל בני publicly did תשובה שבתתת publicly saved them. This is the difference between התלחות המנין and התלחות המנין. The ציצית can therefore also remind one of התלחות מצרים as it says in theirsch ציצית "I am casting you out of מצרים..."

There is another question in the פרשה of ציצית. The פסוק says "Why do the ציצית have to have a תכלת פetatil?" Rav Avigdor Nevenzahl asks a fundamental question: "How can we say that the כבוד כסא has a color? It is not a physical object!"

In order to understand the words of חז”ל, one has to understand that these three things are not in the same realm. Every physical object in this world has a_upper תכלת, a root in the upper

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4 טו במדבר
5 יז סוטה מסכת בבלי
6 מוסר חידוש
7 מוסר חידוש
The sea and the sky are in the tangible realm while the נחלן אבר is in the spiritual realm. The נחלן אבר is the נחלן שומר שלום in this world. Therefore, נחלן must be put in the נחלן באבר so that one’s thoughts will be channeled to the נחלן אבר, נחלן אבר.

This idea may be used to explain the vast amount of נחלן used in the משכן as well as in the כהונה בגדים. The משכן was the house of the נזר and the נזר was a person who was very close to ה and who had the ability to bring forgiveness for all of ישראל in Yom Kippur. Then the נחלן helped channel the thoughts of the נזר to the נחלן אבר throughout the daily עבודה.

לט says: 7 After them you are straying so that your eyes and heart will not stray after their turning and do not.

The נחלן prevents a person’s eyes and heart from straying from the תורה, and connects a person back to ה. It makes sense that the נחלן helps a person’s heart not to stray because a person’s desires are always in his heart. But how can a person’s eyes stray? Eyes don’t have desires!

8 שיר says that the word נזר comes from the same root as נזר. He continues to say: The heart and the eyes are spies for the body; the eye sees, the heart desires and then the person does an העבר. The eyes are really the root of the תאוה. When the eyes see something, the heart wants it.

Furthermore, people sometimes have selective sight. We choose what we want to see and what we want to ignore. 9 ואויאים את ידם – The eyes thought that they knew what was best for ישראל and decided that they wanted to see את ידם because they didn’t trust what ה said about the land. They also had selective sight and only saw what they wanted to see, all the
bad things in the land, in order to convince יִשְׂרָאֵל that they should not go there. יהושע and כלכל were the only ones who saw the positive attributes of the land and tried to convince יִשְׂרָאֵל that they were true.

This can explain why פרשת ציצית appears in the תורה after חֲרֵמֻלך. The מְרַגְּלִים didn’t have a strong connection with יהוה, they did not trust that יהוה was doing what was best for יִשְׂרָאֵל by bringing them into ארץ. They wanted to spy out the land that יהוה said was a good land, but they only recognized what they wanted to see. Because of this, יהוה gave מַצוֹת הבנִי יהוה, something that they could always look at to remember their connection to יהוה and the מצוות.

In addition to this, the ציצית have תכלת in order to remind הבנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל to look up to the כַּפַּרְיָה and remember that יהוה is the source of everything in the world. The מצוות of ציצית was a תיקון for one of the mistakes that מְרַגְּלִים made, and also has an important message for all of יִשְׂרָאֵל. They represent one’s ability to do תשובה and to return to יהוה, just like the الكبير ועון atoned for the sins of the nation on יום כיפור.
Science and Torah

One of the challenges of living in the modern world is how to reconcile scientific findings with what we learn in the Torah. Particularly, concepts such as evolution, the age of the universe and the existence of dinosaurs all seem (at first glance) to contradict the narrative of Creation found in Sefer Bereishit. It is therefore no wonder that some sects of Judaism oppose exposing students to the sciences, and that many Jewish schools are hesitant to teach evolution in their biology classes. However, a deeper look at Bereishit can help us see how most of today’s scientific realities are in harmony with the Torah and may even have been known to talmidei chachamim many generations ago.

The first question that needs to be addressed is about the age of the universe. Our calendar tells us that the world has existed for only 5,773 years. However, according to various scientific discoveries, the world seems to have existed for billions of years. How do we reconcile such a glaring contradiction?

First we have to see if this is really a contradiction at all. The year 5773 comes from counting the years between the creation of Adam and the present. It does not take into account the first five days of the Creation narrative. It might not seem to make a big difference that only five days are missing in this count, but when we take a look at how Ramban sees the creation of the world, we can understand how much recent scientific discoveries agree with our traditions.

Ramban describes the world as being created ex nihilo – “yeish m’ayin.” He also describes the creation process as begin-
ning with something called “heyuli,” a substance that expanded to create time and space and everything contained in the universe. Dr. Gerald Schroeder suggests that Ramban’s “heyuli” is what modern science calls energy. Energy is the only unquantifiable substance that can create mass “yetish m’ayin”. This energy turned into the universe as we know it today.

Ramban’s explanation is strikingly similar to the Big Bang Theory, except of course that he describes the entire process as being controlled by God. Additionally, Dr. Schroeder explains that when we combine Ramban’s view with the basic principles of Einstein’s theory of relativity, we can see that there really is no contradiction, both Torah and science see the world as billions of years old.

To further explain this point one must have a basic understanding of Einstein’s theory. According to Einstein, the movement of time changes from one place in the universe to another. For example, time moves more slowly on the moon than on Earth. If this is true, then according to Ramban’s explanation that the creation of the world was an expansion that slowly formed, then when the universe was still in the state of heyuli, a “day” could be what we call billions of years. As the world gradually expanded, time slowed down, and the second day became half of day one. This process continued throughout the six days of creation, gradually becoming the twenty four hour day of which we know.

Tehillim says בלילה ואשמורה יעבר כי אתמול כי יום בעיניך שנים אלף כי. Clearly, the concept of a “day” means something very different for us than it does for Hashem. This is because the Torah’s perspective of time is a lot slower than ours, since we are looking at time

Teacher at Aish HaTorah and author of Genesis and the Big Bang

ההילין צד
from different points in the universe, namely, before and after it expanded. Einstein’s theory and Ramban’s peirush on Bereishit weave together perfectly, to show how science and Torah really do agree with each other.

Furthermore, says that the letter vav in shows that there was a seder zman prior to this. With this explanation even if you were to say that each day of creation was a 24 hour period (which is the opinion of Rashi and Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim), there was time before those days which we do not include in our calendar. This idea finds further support in the Gemara which says that the Torah was created 974 generations before the creation of the world. This could very well explain the billions of years that seem to be missing in the pshat of Sefer Bereishit.

Another important factor to take into account is how the age of the world is counted. says that Hashem created worlds and destroyed them. According to Rav Pinchas, this is derived from the words implying that this one was good and the others were not. It is possible to say that dinosaurs were part of the worlds that were destroyed.

Additionally, this explanation fits in with the pshat of Bereishit. First of all, the sun and moon were not created until day four. Therefore, it would be impossible for there to be a 24 hour system before then. Also, it says implying that this one was good and the others were not. Each erev cannot be night and each boker cannot be morning because that didn’t exist yet. Dr. Schroder explains that erev means disorder and chaos, while boker signifies order. This change is not simply from sunrise to sunset and it does not happen spontaneously. It is the
laws of nature that guide the *erev* into a state of *boker*. This gradual progression from chaos to order sounds like evolution. Is it? Is the Torah implying that evolution is true?

Before evaluating a Torah approach to evolution, we must attempt to differentiate between different theories of evolution. It goes without saying that we cannot accept any theory that rejects the idea of a soul and denies the need for *Torah* and religion. Furthermore, there are different theories within evolutionary science, including some who believe that new species developed randomly and not gradually. This idea can be aligned with the fact that the Torah describes each creation on a new day, completely disconnected from the day before.

*Rav Kook* writes that just like *Bnei Yisrael* evolved spiritually from 49 levels of *tumah* to 49 levels of *tehara*, so too, Hashem used evolution in the physical process of creation.7 Additionally, *Seforno*, when discussing the creation of man says that *Adam* came after a long process which had begun with an animal that gradually evolved until this creature was given a divine soul and became *b’zilem elokim*.

Therefore, I believe it is necessary for all God-fearing Jews to learn science. However, we must emphasize two points. First of all, scientific assumptions are subject to change, while Torah remains constant. Second of all, certain things believed by scientists in the past have turned out to be completely false, but necessary to understand in order to learn the development of present day science.

If we study science with these two ideas in mind, then science can lead to a better understanding of *Hashem* and how He functions in this world. Science is slowly becoming more in line with *Torah* and one can only know and appreciate that if he learns the ways of the world.
Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world. It is our job to study science and realize how that statement is becoming a reality to scientists and how the prophecy of Yeshayahu is coming true: The gradual alignment of science and Torah may be a clear sign of Mashiach's imminent arrival!
The Torah of Diets; 
Physical and Spiritual Fulfillment

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter’s doctor relates that of all his patients, Rav Yisrael was the most careful to follow his instructions. How is this possible? One would think that someone as busy as Rav Salanter would not have the extra time necessary to care properly for his health. When asked, though, Rav Yisrael answered that he followed his doctor’s instructions to the letter, simply because the Torah commands us to guard our health. The Torah says \( רַק \) \( הִשָּׁמֶר \) \( לְךָ \) \( וּשְׁמֹר \) \( נַפְשְׁךָ \) \( מְאֹד \); Chazal interpret this as meaning “watch out for yourself (meaning your body) and for your soul”.

Why does the Torah care so much about our health, and how do we go about following this commandment?\(^2\)

Imagine the typical morning: waking up, getting dressed, going to shul and eating breakfast. The average person finds these early morning tasks tiring even when he is perfectly healthy. Now think back to the last time you had a virus or the flu. Just getting out of bed to daven at home may have been a challenge. What about someone grossly overweight who has trouble getting around? Building a sukkah or even just walking to shul on Shabbat could be a daunting task. Based on this, it’s obvious that Hashem wants us to keep ourselves healthy so that we can serve Him properly.

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\(^1\) Many of the ideas quoted below were found in “The Life-Transforming Diet” \(^2\) by David J. Zulberg
Many have studied the connection between our eating habits and our spiritual state. In Rambam’s introduction to the Mishnah, he says that Rav Yehuda Hanassi began the Mishnah with Seder Zeraim because it discusses the halachot of agriculture and produce. The food we grow sustains us and allows us to serve Hashem. In fact, several Jewish sources have noted that eating a light lunch will give a person more energy during the day, thus enabling him to concentrate more on his Torah learning. Furthermore, classical sources considered health and wellness as a factor in Hilchot Shabbat. A prime example is the ruling told to David Zulberg that the law for eating bread at all three meals on Shabbat only applies to healthy people. Dieters who normally eat bread once a day or people who are overweight are permitted to eat fruit for both the third meal and for melava malka. If such a person was required to eat the bread at all three meals, he may come to dislike Shabbat instead of observing it with joy.

As shown from the two examples above, the halacha views eating as having many connections to a Jew’s spiritual health. The Rambam notes that positive behavioral characteristics are formed through the repetition of many positive acts. Chovot Halevavot adds that just as ethics and wisdom are used to strengthen one’s spiritual muscle, one must strengthen his physical muscles, and his body in general, with nutritional foods and drinks. A person can sometimes indulge in physical things to keep his body functioning as long as these indulgences are not constant. If one neglects either the body or the soul, both will be weakened. In fact,
there are Jews who actually do this. When a boy becomes bar mitzvah in New Square, New York, he chooses a food that he likes and abstains from it to teach himself this lesson exactly.

The Rambam places so much importance on the relationship between food and personal characteristics that when he wrote Hilchot Deiot he placed health and eating advice in the same section as character traits and emotions. In his sefer "Moreh Nevuchim", Rambam discusses achilah gassa, gross overeating, which really cannot even be considered eating. Overindulging in unhealthy food leads to evil characteristics because the body gets used to these things and then wants other unnecessary things. Supporting this idea, Rav Avraham ben Harambam believed that all of man’s behaviors are connected, both spiritual and physical. Therefore, if a person overindulges, he may be led to sin as well.

Man’s biblical name Adam consists of two parts: adama (meaning the earth which he was fashioned from, his physical side) and adameh li elyon (similar to Hashem, his spiritual side). When one overeats, he gives into the physical aspect of man while ultimately man’s goal is to overindulge in spirituality. Accordingly, the Torah places importance on guarding our physical bodies and keeping ourselves healthy in order to complete the spiritual tasks at hand. While it is commonly said that “the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” a more apt expression may be “the way to Hashem is through shmirat haguf.”
Rabbi Eliezer Lerner

Greater Than Grasshoppers

When the meraglim returned from their mission to scout out Eretz Yisrael, they described their impressions of seeing the remaining giants in the land. “We were like grasshoppers in our eyes and so we were in their eyes.” The Kotzker Rebbe comments that the root of their sin lies in this sentence. It is one thing to express their own feelings, how they felt. But it is of no concern how others felt about them. The opinion of others does not determine our worth.

One might, however, suggest that it is in the first part of their statement where the fault lies. The Torah tells us that these scouts were leaders, distinguished men, princes of their tribes, sent on a holy mission by Moshe Rabbanu. Although they were shorter in physical stature than the giants, they certainly were not spiritual midgets. [The story is told about the Emperor Napoleon who was quite short. Someone once came to him and boasted that even he was greater than Napoleon. The Emperor replied: Not greater, just taller.] It is because the meraglim viewed themselves as inferior grasshoppers that others took an equal view of them.

During your year in MMY, you have hopefully developed a set of priorities and principles of a Bat Torah. Unfortunately, not everyone in chutz l’aretz shares these values and at times you might feel very much in the minority. Nevertheless, being small in number should not translate into a sense of inferiority.

In the very first halacha in the Shulchan Aruch, the Rama writes that a person should never feel embarrassed about his (or her) Avodat Hashem even when others mock their behavior. Without preaching to anyone, you should feel confident about the way you choose to dress, your kavanna during davening, how you spend your leisure time and your desire to fill your life with a bit more ruchnigut.

Even though others may be taller, you have the ability to achieve greatness.
Shaul, the first king of Israel, was ousted from his position by Hashem and informed by the prophet Shmuel that the kingdom would be given to one who was better than he. That second king, of course, was David. But in contrast to Shaul, David was promised that his dynasty would last forever.

It is necessary to question why this is. Shaul was told very clearly that his kingdom could not continue because of the fact that he sinned, and defied the word of God (first by failing to wait for Shmuel as he had been instructed before offering the sacrifice prior to the battle against the Plishtim, and then by failing to completely fulfill the mitzvah of destroying Amalek). The lesson seems to be clear – a king of Israel is obligated to follow the Torah and lead the nation to mitzvah observance; one who violates the Torah is not qualified to be that leader.

However, this understanding immediately leads to a question. After all, David was certainly not free of sin! And although
there is some debate about the exact nature of David's sins, it appears that he was guilty of offenses that were at least as serious (and probably much more serious) than those for which Shaul lost his kingdom. If so, we must ask why Shaul was rejected but David merited to found the eternal dynasty of Am Yisrael. What was the difference between the two?

I suggest that in order to understand this, we must look beyond the individual sins that each of the two kings was guilty of. We must study the Tanach text thoroughly and carefully, in order to gain a proper understanding of what the text communicates about these two men, their personalities, opinions, strengths and weaknesses, and - perhaps most importantly - about the policies and priorities that each instituted in his royal administration.

Let us begin with Shaul. A superficial reading of the book of Shmuel Aleph might lead one to believe that Shaul was a terrible failure as a king. But a more careful reading shows that this understanding is clearly false! In fact, the opposite is true: Shaul was an incredibly successful king in every way. He ruled for a fairly short period of time (the exact length of his reign is unclear\(^5\), but certainly cannot have lasted more than a few decades\(^6\). David
was anointed king shortly after Shaul's sin with Amalek, and at that time David was at least old enough to be tending his father's sheep. Yet when Shaul died, David was no more than thirty years old. Nevertheless, if we compare the situation in the country prior to Shaul's reign with the situation at the time of his death, we can see that he accomplished a tremendous amount in every way: politically, militarily and spiritually.

Politically speaking, Shaul took over a loosely associated collection of tribes. The book of Shoftim makes this very clear — when faced with assaults from enemies, the people were defended by local rulers representing at most a regional coalition of several tribes. There was no standing army representing the entire nation, and there was also no central government. Indeed, there were even incidents of civil war between the tribes. Shmuel Hanavi had taken the first steps towards building a national administration, but he was not a king and in any case, the nation ruled out any succession of Shmuel by his sons, since they were corrupt.

Immediately after becoming king, though, Shaul assembled a national army numbering 330,000 troops and began to build the apparatus of government. By the time Shaul died and David became the king, there was an established country for David to take over. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that Shaul was the founder of Malchut Yisrael.
Militarily as well, Shaul’s accomplishments were extraordinary. He became king in the wake of the terrible defeat against the Plishtim at Even HaEzer, which resulted in the destruction of the Mishkan in Shilo, the capture of the Aron and the death of Eli HaCohen. When Shaul was anointed, the nation was under the complete military occupation of the Plishtim, who had ruling officers stationed in the heart of the country, and even prohibited Bnei Yisrael from forging metal tools, so that they could not make weapons to use in a rebellion. Shaul managed to defeat the Plishtim and drive them out of the country. Although the Plishtim tried several times to reconquer the land, they were unable to do so.

Perhaps most importantly, in addition to being a great political and military leader, Shaul fulfilled the primary mission of a Melech Yisrael – he enforced the Torah’s laws and led the people towards greater observance of the mitzvot. This can be seen towards the end of Shaul’s life, when in desperation he turned to the Eshet Baalat Ov in order to communicate with Shmuel, who was no longer alive. Although this was a violation of the Torah’s laws, it is clear from that incident that in general, Shaul enforced these laws and changed the previous status quo, during which the people had openly engaged in these idolatrous practices.
addition, the *Talmud* praises *Shaul* for his great modesty.\(^\text{17}\) It is therefore clear that, by every measure, *Shaul* was an excellent king. So why did he lose the kingdom?\(^\text{18}\)

Perhaps the difference between *Shaul* and *David* can be found not in their actions and particular mistakes, but in their attitude: their approach to the *melucha* and its purpose.

It has often been pointed out that when *Shaul* was confronted by *Shmuel* regarding his sins, he provided excuses for his actions, in contrast to *David* who, when confronted by the prophet *Natan*, immediately responded by saying, “I have sinned.”\(^\text{19}\) Perhaps this is reflective of something larger – although *Shaul* was initially reluctant to become king, once placed in the position, *Shaul* seemed to feel it was his responsibility to protect the *melucha* at just about any cost. Assumedly, this was not merely a matter of his ego and personal quest for power; as noted above *Shaul* was a devoted leader of *Am Yisrael* who engaged in crucial battles to protect the nation’s physical and spiritual safety. In his mind, these considerations came before all else. And therefore, although he was able to acknowledge his sins, he seems to have been unable to accept the need to step aside.

We are told that after *David* was anointed, *Shaul* was afflicted by a רעה רעה, which can be understood as some sort of spiritual/psychological condition that caused depression or anxiety. His advisors suggested that music might help stabilize his condition, and the one musician whose music was able to accom-

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\(^{17}\) יג מגלות ב.

\(^{18}\) יג שם ינואל טו-טו.

\(^{19}\) יב שמואל ב ביב.

\(^{20}\) טו שמואל א כ-כד.

\(^{21}\) טו שם שארך.
plish this was none other than David himself. Later on, after it became clear to Shaul that in fact David was the one who would succeed him as king, Shaul began to relentlessly pursue David, and attempted on two separate occasions to kill him as he was playing the harp to assist Shaul.

Shaul undoubtedly pursued David because he saw him as a *mored b’malchut* – a potential rebel who represented a threat to national security. And yet, the symbolism is striking: it was clearly no coincidence that of all people in the kingdom, it was specifically David who was able to assist Shaul. David’s harp contained a powerful message to Shaul – perhaps it seemed that David was the source of his troubles, that if he could only rid himself of David he would be able to complete his mission on behalf of Am Yisrael. But the reality was quite different – the source of Shaul’s troubles were the imperfections within himself, and David – far from being the source of the problem, was actually the solution.

Shaul continued this policy throughout the rest of his life. Even after promising on several occasions to desist from pursuing David, he continually reneged on those commitments and continued to chase him. At times Shaul even resorted to highly extreme measures in his quest to defeat David. Perhaps the strongest example of this is the tragic massacre of the Kohanim of Nov (and destruction of the Mishkan that was there), simply because Shaul

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22 שם טו, י-כג
23 שם ח, י-יא, י-יא, יט, ח-י
24 מדר ו, בקען ו, משכיב שם שלום הוא מקהל את יהוה זכה במשה את בניו שלום, ואת היה י-confirm钮 של משך לשלך את המילה י zend המילה ולמי. ב-מלתי את יהוה אשתה של דוד, ולא היה האשים יהוה אתÛ למשפחתו של דוד, כל הורים האשים אתÛ למשפחתו של דוד, כל פל şi הור ויהו
25 יוסי ו, לזרו מاذכרואים של שאול, וד מכר.
had been deceived by Doeg HaEdomi and led to believe that they had knowingly aided David.25

Had Shaul been an evil king, perhaps we could understand his decision to murder a city full of Kohanim and destroy the Mishkan in order to advance his own agenda. But we have already established that Shaul was anything but an evil king. Therefore, the only reasonable explanation for his decision to take such extreme measures against Nov must be that he genuinely believed (or convinced himself) that the security of the nation was at stake. He must have believed that the Kohanim of Nov, who he viewed as his own enemies, were by extension also the enemies of Hashem. Only such a theory could have enabled Shaul to take such actions. The terrible irony, though, is that in his zeal to defend Am Yisrael and the glory of Hashem, he wound up destroying the Mishkan of Hashem.

This flawed sense of priorities, in which Shaul acted in what he believed was defense of the nation and fulfillment of God's will but wound up violating God's will in the process, was not limited to his interactions with David. Towards the end of the book of Shmuel, we learn that Shaul and members of his household had unjustly persecuted the Givonim, to the point that Hashem endorsed the harsh demand of the Givonim to execute seven of Shaul's descendants26. Although Shaul's descendants were punished harshly for this action, the text acknowledges that Shaul did this ויהודה ישראל לבני בקנאתו. Again, he believed, or allowed himself to believe, that he was acting on behalf of the people and Hashem, but he violated Hashem's will in the process.

It is on this issue that we see the greatest contrast with David. He also worked tirelessly on behalf of the nation and of

25 שמעון ב קא:ה: "אל שאול זא בן דודים על א kardeş המות את בני עם".
Hashem and also suffered setbacks as a result of his own errors – but unlike Shaul, he not only accepted personal responsibility for those errors, but also made sure to always differentiate between the needs of the nation and his own personal interests.

Perhaps the clearest example of this contrast can be seen in an incident that took place during the rebellion of Avshalom. Avshalom was on his way to Yerushalayim to attack the city, and David decided to flee rather than to confront him there. As he left the city, the Kohanim and Leviim decided to bring the Aron into exile with David. From their perspective, this made a lot of sense – David was the one who had brought the Aron to Yerushalayim; if he was leaving the city, then the Aron should go with him. But David saw the situation differently:

אומר המלך ליצירה השב את ארון הא-ליים העי. אם אמרתי זה בפשע,رزאני את ארוה נוה. אם הפי אומר לא חפשתי מזון יעשה לי השב

העיר IMapper

השון חנן.

(nb)

One of David’s main goals as king was to build a House of God in Yerushalayim. He worked tirelessly towards the goal, and spared no effort that he thought could advance this objective. A first step in this process was his decision to bring the Aron to Yerushalayim. He saw this as a necessary prerequisite to building the Bet HaMikdash, and sharply criticized Shaul for having neglected the Aron during the entire period of his reign. Once informed by Natan that he would not be allowed to actually build the Bet HaMikdash, he took upon himself to do all the preparatory work, so that the next king would be able to complete
the task as soon as possible. The decision to send the Aron back to Yerushalayim was thus a very clear statement – indeed, the Aron and Yerushalayim symbolized David's life mission more than perhaps anything else. David's priorities were clear – the mission comes first, and his own personal well-being a distant second. These are the qualities necessary for Malchut Yisrael, and how different they are from Shaul's actions at Nov!

In truth, the difference in philosophy between Bet Shaul and Bet David could have been apparent even earlier, when David brought the Aron to Yerushalayim:

31 This exchange represented a fundamental difference in ideology. For Michal (who is quite significantly referred to here as the daughter of Shaul, and not as the wife of David) the dignity and glory of the king must come first, for the sake of the kingdom. But for David, the glory of the king was only meaningful if the king represents the glory of God. Perhaps for this reason, the incident results in a tragic ending.
couldn't have a son, because the future kings of Bet David could not come from her.

Shaul accomplished many great things in his life, and for these the Jewish People must be grateful. But the eternal malchut could not come from Shaul, and Bet Shaul needed to give way to Bet David.

עַל עָלֶם וְעָלֶהוּ לַעֲשֵׂה עָלֶה וְלַמְשָׁפֵט לַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה לַמְשָׁפֵט וְלַעֲשֵׂה L


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Ashkenazim eating in the home of Sefardim on Pesach

Over the past century, we have been privileged to witness Kibutz Galuyot, an ingathering of the exiles, before our very eyes. Especially in Israel, Jews whose families came from Poland or Russia will be neighbors and friends with Jews from Morocco or Syria. Olim from the United States, the UK, and Australia, for example, will share meals together with Israelis or other Jews from around the world.

But on Pesach, this Jewish melting pot is confronted by a major challenge: What happens when an Ashkenazi family is invited for a Yom Tov meal to the home of their Sefardic neighbors? After all, Ashkenazi Jews generally retain the centuries old custom of abstaining from kitniyot, while many of their Sefardic brethren never had any such custom.\(^1\) Must the Ashkenazim refuse the invitation? Even if the Sefardim accommodate their

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\(^1\) In truth, there are Sefardim who also do not eat kitniyot on Pesach, including many North African Sefardim (Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, and Egyptian); this was also the practice of many Turkish communities (Teshuvot Lev Chayim 2:33). Although Iraqi communities usually ate kitniyot on Pesach, many families in Baghdad did not eat rice and most did not eat chickpeas (Teshuvot Rav Pe’alim 3:30). Similarly, the Chida reports that the Sefardim in Yerushalayim in his day did not eat rice. See Rabbi Yirmiyahu Kaganoff’s article at http://www.yediva.co/midrash/shiur.asp?cat=328&ch=7457&g, who notes this point.
guests and ensure that they do not consume any kitniyot, aren’t the pots and utensils used to cook the food problematic since they may have been used in the past to cook kitniyot? After all, we know that halachically, pots absorb the taste of foods cooked in them and can later transfer that taste to other food items.²

Rabbinic authorities are usually sensitive to such questions, and have taken a number of different approaches to address this problem, of which we will outline three general categories.

I. The strictest approach:
Use separate utensils to cook the non-kitniyot food

_Teshuvot Maharam Schick_ (241) discusses a case where someone who was ill needed to consume kitniyot on Pesach, so he advised the family to designate special “kitniyot only” utensils to be used for cooking the kitniyot. The same would presumably apply for families where the children require kitniyot, or where they wish to heat up baby formula which contains kitniyot. Although this halachic stance is not necessarily a strict requirement, nevertheless the Maharam Schick feels that this is the prevalent and appropriate custom.

One may argue that he would suggest the same solution for a Sefardi family hosting Ashkenazim: use separate utensils for cooking non-kitniyot food for the Ashkenazim, that were not previously used for cooking kitniyot.

This approach is accepted by _Teshuvot Rav Pe’alim_ (3:30), also known as the _Ben Ish Chai_, and in our times by poskim including Rav Ephraim Greenblatt, who recommends that an Ashkenazi who eats at the home of a Sefardi on Pesach should make sure that his hosts use separate utensils for food that he will be eating.³

²עָבְרָה זַרְוָה תֵּן.

³ראֶז.
II. The middle approach:
Use utensils that are Eino Ben Yomo for kitniyot

The Kaf HaChayim (OC 453:27) suggests that although it is inappropriate to use utensils that have been used for cooking kitniyot within the last 24 hours, known as Ben Yomo, and perhaps these utensils would require kashering before being used for Ashkenazim, it is permitted to use keilim that are Eino Ben Yomo, meaning they have not been used for cooking kitniyot within 24 hours. Generally, utensils which are Eino Ben Yomo are assumed to not transfer taste (even when hot) to other foods. Although as mentioned some poskim are more stringent than this, it would seem that this approach is clearly that of “ikar hadin,” the strict halacha, and one is not required to be stricter than this, since the concept of Eino Ben Yomo is a standard principle within the laws of kashrut. This approach is accepted by other poskim as well, such as Rav Hershel Schachter, Rav Elyashiv zt’l, Rav Elyakim Levanon, and Rav Rafael Evers from Amsterdam.

However, these poskim would not allow using keilim that are Ben Yomo, due to the taste transfer involved. According to this approach, it would be permitted for the Sefardi family to simply

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See for example Avodah Zarah 67b and Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 103:5), among other locations, where this rule is mentioned.

In a shiur given at Yeshiva University

As cited in his Hagadah shel Pesach (p.12), and as referred to at


See http://www.kipa.co.il/ask/show/239724%D7%90%D7%9B%D7%99%D7%9C%D7%94-%D7%90%D7%97%D7%A8%D7%AA

משהו rek veha-כרז (قسام רכז)
be careful to use utensils that weren’t used within 24 hours to cook kitniyot. However, this solution requires some foresight and planning to ensure that nothing goes wrong and they don’t get confused as to which pots they use.

III. The lenient approach:

**Can use even Ben Yomo utensils to cook non-kitniyot food**

Rav Ovadia Yosef (Teshuvot Yecheveh Daat 5:32) goes even one step further. In his opinion, a Sefardi may even cook non-kitniyot food for an Ashkenazi in pots that have absorbed kitniyot taste in the last 24 hours. Although normally such an action would transfer taste to the food, in this case Rav Ovadia argues that it is permitted due to the following argument: According to the Rama (Orach Chaim 453), if one mixes kitniyot and non-kitniyot together, the mixture is permitted as long as the kitniyot are Batel B’rov, meaning that they constitute less than 50% of the mixture. Although normally a forbidden mixture, such as milk and meat, or non-kosher and kosher, is only Batel B’shishim (nullified in a proportion of 1/60) he says that since kitniyot is only a custom, we can be more lenient. He compares this case to Challah separated for the mitzvah of Hafshhat Challah in chutz laaretz, which if mixed together with regular dough is batel b’rov (Bechorot 27a) and a few other specific cases of forbidden foods where according to many acharonim it seems that even lechatchilah, ideally, we are not machmir to forbid using the utensils afterwards since the absorbed taste is certainly less than 50% of the food presently being cooked in the pot. This approach is also accepted by Teshuvot Zera Emet (3:48) and R.Binyamin Zilber (Teshuvot Az Nidberu 8:20:4).

Although the poskim in the three categories above delineate different guidelines with varying levels of stringency to address our question, it is clear that halachic solutions may be found to
these types of dilemmas, and if we so desire, we can certainly find ways to unite with our brothers even on Pesach. We should all merit on this holiday of freedom to unite with all other segments of the Jewish people while at the same time retain our own sacred customs and hand them down to our children.