

## THE SAITSKIY FAMILY EDITION



THIS WEEK'S EDITION IS DEDICATED BY MR. MILTON PFEIFFER ON THE HONOR OF HIS SPECIAL OCCASION. WISHING MILTON GOOD HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY AD ME'AH V'ESRIM SHANA!

TO SUBSCRIBE, TO SEND FEEDBACK, OR TO SPONSOR, EMAIL US AT TORAHSWEETS@GMAIL.COM. WE ARE NOW LOOKING FOR SPONSORS FOR OUR PURIM ISSUE.

PLEASE DO NOT READ DURING DAVENING OR LEINING. ALSO, READING ADS IS FORBIDDEN ON SHABBOS.

PARSHAS MISHPATIM EDITION – VOLUME 15, ISSUE 6 – SHEVAT 24<sup>TH</sup>, 5785/FEBRUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2025

TORAH QUESTION OF THE WEEK BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN: MISHPATIM – THE TORAH PERSPECTIVE ON AVDUS (SLAVERY)

**Last week's question: Is slavery Torah-approved?**

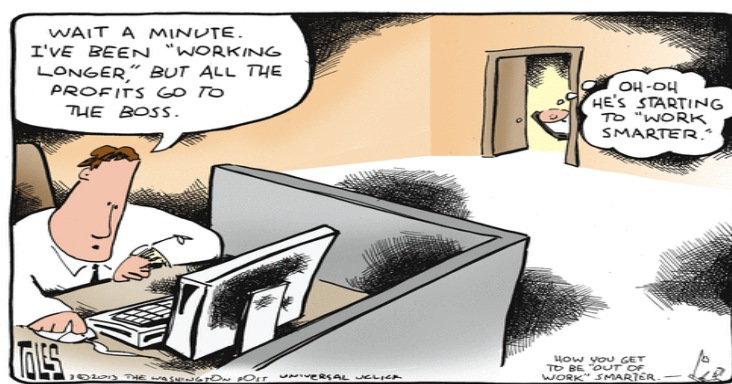
Answer: Before anything, we must remember that Hashem's laws don't require justification. Hashem's laws are perfect, so the laws about slaves and slavery must be, as well.

The **Rambam** (Hilchos Avadim, Chapter 1:1) writes: *"the term 'Eved Ivri' used by the Torah refers to a Jew whom the court sells by compulsion. When a person steals and does not have the resources to repay the principal, the court sells him. Alternatively, an eved can be one who sells himself willingly, he must be so poor to sell himself that he has literally nothing not even clothing. Furthermore, he is selling himself to live, not to save money, or even pay back a loan. The Rambam adds that one must have nothing – even no clothing – before one can sell themselves. This shows the Torah is against selling oneself as a slave under most circumstances.*

We also see (ibid. Chapter 1:4) that once he sells himself to a goy, however, although he sinned, it is a Mitzvah to redeem him, so that he does not assimilate among them, as the Torah (Vayikra 25:48) states: **"After he is sold, redemption should be granted him."** Think about this: the guy did this to himself, so now we must spend money to save him? The Torah says yes, we redeem him even though he messed up and didn't care enough about his spirituality.

We also learn (ibid. Chapter 1:5) that one cannot sell himself or be sold in public on an auction block, nor in an alley, as slaves are sold. Instead, he should be sold in a private and honorable manner. However, perhaps the most important part is the next halacha (ibid. 1:6): *"It is forbidden to make any Hebrew servant perform excruciating labor. What is excruciating labor? Labor that has no limit, or labor that is unnecessary and is asked of the servant with the intent to give him (busy) work so that he will not remain idle. One should tell him: 'Do this until this and this time,'...Even telling him to warm or cool a drink for him unnecessarily is forbidden, and is forcing him into hard labor, which is a sin (Vayikra 25:43).*

The Rambam is not saying one is physically abusing the slave, but gives him "endless" labor. The goal is to give the slave specific and time-bound tasks. Even more so, may not make him perform debasing tasks that are relegated only to servants, like having him carry his clothes to the bathhouse or remove his shoes. One must treat a fellow Jew like a regular, hired laborer. The Rambam wonders, why is this so? Because he is depressed because of his being sold, and we don't hit a person when he is down. In fact, when one has not been sold, he may be hired to work like an eved!



If one is reading this and thinking to himself, "Forget it – it's not worth the hassle. I am only doing this as a favor to this needy Jew." This is exactly what the Rambam says, *"The master should not eat bread made from fine flour while the servant eats bread from coarse flour. The master should not sleep on cushions while the servant sleeps on straw. It must be equal treatment, as the Gemara (Kiddushin 22a) states: 'Whoever purchases a Hebrew servant purchases a master for himself.'"*

What emerges from these laws is that the only one who was interested in buying a slave is one who wanted to work on himself to treat those naturally below them in dignified way. It's hard to treat anyone like we treat ourselves, let alone an underling. No simple person would be able to do that. It had to be one with exemplary character. Additionally, the slave would see what proper treatment means (it's more than not stealing!)

Now, let's turn our attention to an *Eved Cana'ani*. Even though such a slave is the property of his master, abuse is still unacceptable. In fact, the Rambam writes (ibid. Chapter 5:1): *"A person intentionally struck his slave and caused him to lose one of limbs that will not regenerate is granted his freedom."* What is the mindset of how to treat a non-Jewish slave?

The Rambam, although one may work his goyish slave hard, the attribute of Chassidus (piety) and the way of wisdom is for a person to be merciful and to pursue justice, not to make his slaves carry a heavy yoke, nor cause them distress. This was the practice of the Sages of the first generations who would give their slaves from every dish of which they themselves would partake. And they would provide food for their animals and slaves before partaking in their own meals. And so, it is written (Tehillim 123:2): *"As the eyes of slaves to their master's hand, and like the eyes of a maidservant to her mistress' hand, so are our eyes to Hashem."* So, the proper way to act is to treat them well and not embarrass such slaves.



**TORAH QUESTION OF THE WEEK BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN**  
**MISHPATIM - THE TORAH PERSPECTIVE ON SLAVERY**

Nor should one shout or vent anger upon them extensively. Instead, one should speak to them gently and listen to their claims. This is explicitly stated regarding the positive paths of Iyov for which he was praised (Iyov 31:13 and 31:15): *"Have I ever shunned justice for my slave and maidservant when they quarreled with me.... Did not He who made me in the belly make him? Was it not the One who prepared us in the womb?"* Hashem made both Jews and non-Jews, so one should go above and beyond and not work these slaves too hard. One shouldn't yell at them and take their complaints seriously.

The Rambam concludes with the following point. Cruelty and arrogance are found only among idol-worshipping gentiles. By contrast, the descendants of Avraham our patriarch, i.e., the Jews whom Hashem granted the goodness of the Torah and commanded to observe righteous statutes and judgments, are merciful to all. Similarly, regarding the attributes of the Holy One, which He commanded us to emulate, it is written Tehillim (145:9): *"His mercies are upon all of His works."* Whoever shows mercy to others will have mercy shown to him, as implied (Devarim 13:18): *"He will show you mercy, and be merciful upon you and multiply you."*

To summarize, we learned what a slave is supposed to look like. It's never a form of abuse or free reign to do whatever one wants with others. If we understand our foundation to be thinking in a merciful way, the entire discussion around slavery will be dramatically different.

***This week's question: What was the point of the details of the Mishkan? Isn't the main thing the connection in one's heart rather the Torah getting all exact about the structure?***

**EMAIL YOUR REPLY TO [DEPTHOFTORAH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:DEPTHOFTORAH@GMAIL.COM) TO BE ENTERED TO WIN 300 DOLLARS IN OUR UPCOMING RAFFLE! IF YOUR REPLY MATCHES RABBI KLEIN'S ANSWER, YOU WILL GET A DOUBLE ENTRY!**

**YESODE**  
**HASHOLOM**

**SHALOM BAYIS INSIGHTS FROM RASHI BY**  
**RABBI YITZ GREENFIELD**

**YISRO: TEN COMMANDMENTS - ULTIMATE MARRIAGE BLUEPRINT**

There is a beautiful **Rashi** at the end of this week's parsha on the Pasuk that informs us why Moshe is going up Har Sinai to be with Hashem. The Pasuk states (Shemos 24:12): *"Hashem said to Moshe, 'Ascend to Me, to the mountain, and be there, and I will give you the stone tablets and the Torah, and the commandment that I have written, to instruct them.'"* Rashi informs us all six hundred and thirteen commandments are included in the Ten Commandments. He goes on to tell us that **Rabbeinu Sa'adiah** specified them in the azharos he composed, which of the six hundred and thirteen commandments are connected to each of the Ten Commandments.

So, this means the Ten Commandments are all-inclusive. They contain everything, all the instructions we need to live an optimum life. I think this pivotal idea can be applied to our marriages. When we date someone, what makes us decide to marry them? If not for the Torah stating (Bereishis 2:24), *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife..."* the entire institution of marriage would make no sense. Yet, since we know our Neshama has been cut in half and each half is searching for the other (Yerushalmi, Kiddushin 3:12, Zohar [Parshas Lech Lecha 91b]) we recognize the other half of our Neshama's when we meet our spouse.

This gives us the desire to leave our homes of birth and establish new homes with our other half. So, if Hashem is sending us this just right person, that must mean that our spouse is all-inclusive. Our spouse has the exact talents and challenges for our optimum growth in this world. When we make that supreme effort to step out of our comfort zone for our spouse (See Torah Sweets, Parshas Vayechi *"Step Out of Your Comfort Zone"*), when we rise to the occasion and treat our spouse with respect even if they are displaying their challenging side, we are fulfilling our potential and we are becoming G-dly together with our spouse.

We can take this thought one step further and look at our children through this same lens. Each child we have is gifted to us from Hashem with the exact talents and challenges that will cause our Neshama to stretch and grow. When we act together as a team with our spouse in helping our children, in guiding and shaping them, we enhance our marriages by working together. Raising our children in an environment filled with Shalom Bayis can bring them closer to Hashem, as the Shechinah dwells in a home where peace and harmony prevail.

Let's give thought to how incredible the Aseres Hadibros are, that they include all the 613 Mitzvos and how incredible our spouses are - that they also are all-inclusive, designed perfectly just for us. If we can focus on this, it will propel us to successfully reach *sheleimus* with our spouses. Every day is a new and unique opportunity for connection with our spouse. The dividends are worth the effort. May Hashem fill our homes with the light of Shalom Bayis.


**MENDY REALTY**  
INC.

**Are you thinking of selling your**  
 ●residential ●commercial ●multi family property?



**Why Should You List Your Property With Us?**

- ✓ 15+ Years of Solid Experience
- ✓ Professional and Trustworthy
- ✓ Exceptional Customer Service
- ✓ Intense Marketing Promotion
- ✓ **We Will Not Give Up Until It's Rented/Sold**

**+1 (917) 731-1020**  
[jterebelo@mendyrealty.com](mailto:jterebelo@mendyrealty.com) | [www.mendyrealty.com](http://www.mendyrealty.com)

**WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR SPONSORS FOR OUR MEGA PURIM EDITION. PLEASE CALL/TEXT (718) 675-9370 IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THE ENTIRE MAGAZINE OR AN ARTICLE, SUCH AS THE SHALOM BAYIS INSIGHTS ABOVE. THANKS!**



**MISHPATIM – LIVING INTENTIONALLY**

For some people, this Parsha signifies the end of doing *Shnayim Mikrah V'Echad Targum* until somewhere in Bamidbar, because now there are these long Rashi comments that are a summary of the entire Bava Kamma, Bava Metzia, Bava Basra, and Sanhedrin. It's just too intense for some people who are looking for stories, who can pop in for a brief stint in Parshas Ki Sisa for the Eigel (Golden Calf). The conservative movement put out what they called the "family bible", where they took out all the laws and just kept the stories, so Parshas Mishpatim is not there. Yet, it's often in the minutiae of the Torah Judaism that we find the greatest insights and inspiration. As the Pasuk (Tehillim 147:20): "*Hashem did not (tell His Chukim and Mishpatim - laws and statutes) to any nation.*" Mishpatim are laws that people can figure out on their own, like no killing or stealing, but our Mishpatim are different. They have messages that are built into the laws, and the non-Jews are not privy to them without the Torah

Let's take an example. In Bava Kamma (2B), we learn that there are three Avos pertain to an ox: *keren* (the horn, i.e. goring), *shein* (eating), and *regel* (trampling with one's feet). Why are they three separate categories? Keren has to want to damage, and it doesn't have to be with the horn. If the animal bites you or kicks you that is considered keren and certain laws apply to it that are different than the other categories.

Shein means to want to get pleasure, and not only as far as eating. So, if the animal has an itch and it's rubbing against the wall and knocks it down, it's called shein. Regel is done through walking, nothing out of the ordinary. So, the animal is not responsible when it damages when walking down the street but walking onto private property and damaging it makes it responsible.

**Rabbi Moshe Shapiro**, ZT"L, these are the three main ways that one can do damage in this world. Either we really want to do damage, or we are doing damage because of pleasure, or we just go in our normal way. That's why there are three different categories of sins – negligent, accidental, and inadvertent. Say there are two pizza places. One is not kosher, is further away, more expensive, and has subpar quality. The other is kosher, closer, and delicious and one goes to the treif place – that is an act of rebellion against Hashem.

The more common scenario is that the non-kosher place is closer, cheaper, and delicious and one goes there. This is because of desire. The final category is not thinking – just walking down the street. That was the first sin in Gan Eden: the snake wanted to damage, Chava was tempted and fooled by her desire, and Adam just listened to his wife and had supper. Most people's damage in this world is probably by walking without thinking.

We must be aware about the Mitzvos we trample with our heel. We are in the era of *Ikvesa Demishicha* – on the heels of Mashiach's arrival. The heel is the furthest away from intent as one can get. The way we can solve this galus is by paying attention and focusing. Every single Mishpat is not just a good idea, but helps us understand how to be better people in this world.



NOW THAT'S A  
**GOOD MOVE.**

Twin Movers

PACKING SERVICE AVAILABLE

Licensed & Insured USDOT 291343  
Big or small. Local or cross-country.  
Commercial or residential. We get the job done.

**CALL FOR A FREE ESTIMATE!**  
**(845) 402.8946 (TWIN)**

TwinMovers  
*That's a good move!*

**SUGAR RUSH ON THE 613 MITZVOS BY R'ELI REIT**  
**MITZVAH # 151 – KOSHER GRASSHOPPERS**

We are to check grasshoppers for their kosher signs ("simanim"). As the Pasuk says (Vayikra 11:21), "*The ones that have knees above their legs*". This is according to the **Rambam**, but according to the **Ra'avad**, the Mitzvah is only to refrain from eating grasshoppers that don't have the proper signs. There are some Sefardim who still eat kosher grasshoppers. Ashkenazim do not have a *mesorah* (tradition) that grasshoppers are kosher, so they stay away from them.

*This is the final part in our six-part series looking at the Parshiyos of Shovavim.*

Last week we saw how the events of *Ma'amad Har Sinai* seared a new identity into the consciousness of Bnei Yisrael. Hashem communicated to them the fundamental principles of what a life of "*Mamleches Kohanim V'Goy Kadosh*" is comprised of. Now that they have an understanding of the bigger vision, it's time to learn the roadmap of how to get there.

Moshe is told by Hashem (Shemos 21:1), "*And these are the laws that you must set before them.*" Let's focus on a couple of points **Rashi** makes on this Pasuk. First, the fact that there is a Vav in "*V'Eileh*" indicates that the coming Parsha is a continuation from the previous one. Just as the Aseres HaDibros were given at Har Sinai, so too, were the detailed Mitzvos of this Parsha.

The second point is based on "*that you must put before them*". Hashem tells Moshe that he must arrange these Mitzvos in front of them like a set table. These Mitzvos are the details; the specific actions that must be adhered to attain the bigger vision. To make it happen there needs to be full on commitment - *Na'aseh V'Nishmah!* We have been describing a step-by-step process of how the Jewish people went from being enslaved to assuming a new identity with a roadmap to that vision. As we bring this idea and relate it to our lives, we see the steps that we need to take outlined very clearly:

1. We feel totally powerless about our situation or an aspect of our life.
2. Use mindfulness and breathwork as an opportunity to create a space to lean into those feelings rather than suppress them.
3. Look for Hashem's Hashgacha and our own moments of success in this area or at least in other areas where we have worked.
4. Change our mental language from critical to supportive and compassionate. Allow this new language to create a new identity.
5. Forge a new vision to move toward which we can identify with in the here and now, as well.
6. Map out the details of how to get there and commit to the process.

Let's conclude with something learned from **Rabbi Yom Tov Glaser** recently about commitment. The distinction between decision and commitment is what makes all the difference in being successful. When you have many options before you and wish to choose one, you use reason to figure out which one makes the most sense. When you de-cide your course of action, you are "killing off" (-cide) the others.

The problem is that down the line there may be new considerations that may cause you to reconsider. When you commit to your course of action, you are now removing all reason from the equation. The time for reason is over. Now you need to become "un-reasonable". Stay the course of what you have committed to, in the same way that we are committed to the Torah of *Na'aseh V'Nishmah*.

*MAY THE LEARNING IN THIS MAGAZINE BE A ZECHUS FOR THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF OUR FAMILY IN ERETZ YISRAEL. IT SHOULD ALSO BE A ZECHUS FOR A FULL REFUAH OF LEEBA MIRIAM GEULAH BAS LEAH.*



"I know the system works most efficiently at a consistent setting, but I'm just a human with inconsistent temperature needs."

Many times, we hear people complain, "It's impossible to keep the Torah and Mitzvos!" How do we explain to them that this is not true and that keeping the Torah and Mitzvos is very much in our grasp? We find in this week's Parsha, Mishpatim, that the Jewish people accepted the Torah by saying, "*Na'aseh V'Nishmah* - we will do and will understand." How is it possible to them to say this without even knowing the intricate details of the Torah?

Many answers are given, but one stands out. In His Infinite Wisdom, Hashem created human beings, and He would not command us to do something we are not able to do. As such, the next time someone tells us a certain Mitzvah is beyond execution, our reply should be, "If Hashem didn't think we could do it, He would not command it." There are some days when we say, "Today is not a good day for me for a specific Mitzvah." We may feel under the weather or just not in the mood.

What's interesting and powerful is that the words "*Na'aseh V'Nishmah*" are found in the 24th Chapter of Shemos, in the seventh Pasuk. When is a person supposed to do *Na'aseh V'Nishmah*? 24-7; all the time. There is a cute line based on a popular Jewish word, "nu." "Nu" (Nin and Vav) can be *Roshei Teivos* for *Na'aseh V'Nishmah*. So, the next time you are hesitating to do something from the Torah, just remember and NU!



***May children run on Shabbos when playing?***

We mentioned in the last shiur that one should not run on Shabbos as normally it is a weekday work-related activity, as when a person is under pressure. Children who run in their course of play may do so because playing is their recreation. On the contrary, not being able to run would cause distress, the opposite intent of this halacha. Therefore, it follows that an adult may run to see something pleasurable (a parade, an impressive view) because running in such a case is part of an enjoyable pastime.

***May one wear a watch outside when there is no eruv?***

We must first set the rules for carrying and then see whether one may wear a watch on Shabbos. An eruv transforms a public area to a private one and thus enables carrying as if in one's private domain. All the halachos mentioned from here on deal with public domains that do not have an eruv, or they have an eruv and one does not wish to rely on.

- It is prohibited to carry an item from a private domain to a public one and vice versa. A private domain includes an enclosed area such as an apartment, house, hospital, hotel, building lobby and stairway, shopping center, shul, beis midrash, etc.

A public domain includes all open public areas such as streets, parks, open squares, walkways, etc.

- It is prohibited to carry an item more than four amos in a public domain. One may not lift an item that is already in a public domain and carry it over a distance greater than four amos and set it down. Nor may one carry an item from a stationary position over the same distance and stand still.

- It is prohibited to carry...One may wear clothing and certain jewelry, even if one's purpose is to "transfer" a certain clothing item from one domain to another. If it is worn, it is not called carrying. Carrying includes: an item in a pocket, in one's hand, food in one's mouth (chewing gum, candies etc.)

- Carrying or wearing in an abnormal manner is prohibited mid'rabanen. Carrying an item between one's shirt and body is not conventional and is prohibited mid'rabanen. Carrying is also prohibited beneath one's hat as is an item in one's mouth.

A load on one's head or shoulder is prohibited mid'rabanen when not common in that country and prohibited mid'oraisso when commonly transported in that manner. One may not stuff a tissue beneath a watch strap or bangle.

***Which clothing may be worn outside on Shabbos?***

Clothing worn to protect the body or worn for the body's sake may be worn on Shabbos. Likewise, one may wear clothing when its sole purpose is to protect other clothing, provided that it is worn in a regular manner. Consequently, one may wear a raincoat above a woolen coat even if its purpose is to prevent the woolen coat from getting wet. Galoshes may be worn over shoes.

***What about a hat cover?***

Clothing worn to protect other clothing may only be worn in the conventional manner. It is prohibited to drape a handkerchief over a hat or shtreimel to prevent it from getting wet because a handkerchief is not normally worn. Likewise, one may not drape cloth over a scarf or between one's collar and neck to prevent the collar from absorbing sweat.

We find a machlokes. Some say that a hat cover is unlike a handkerchief placed on a hat as it is made to size and is intended solely for hats. This is provided that one would continue to wear the hat cover after the rain stops, as then it is considered clothing. If one would remove it when the rain stops, one may not wear it at all. Others say that since its purpose is only to prevent the hat from getting wet, it is prohibited. They explain that galoshes are different because without them, feet would get wet, not only the shoes. Accordingly, one must ask one's rav how to conduct oneself.

***What about wearing a plastic sheitel cover?***

The obvious advantage over a hat cover is that the sheitel cover prevents the head from getting wet, not only the sheitel. However, we will learn that there is a *gezeira* (rabbinical decree) that in certain cases, we are afraid that one will carry the item in one's pocket or hand once it is not needed. *We will discuss this next week, B'EH.*

**SPLENDID QUOTE OF THE WEEK**  
**BY RABBI MENACHEM LOMNER**

***"Break the ice with an enemy, try to help him out."***

There is a Mitzvah to unload an animal that is stuck. The Pasuk (Shemos 23:4) gives the example that it is your enemy's donkey. It is important to help even your enemy. The Gemara (Bava Metzia 32b) stresses that helping an enemy precedes other Mitzvos. This is because it is so important to break this hatred, and by helping him you will be open to winning against this Yeitzer Hara. Do we dare to break the ice to help someone we don't appreciate!?

***"If a man steals a bull or a lamb and slaughters it or sells it, he shall pay five cattle for the bull or four sheep for the lamb" (Shemos 21:37)***

One who steals a sheep and then sells or slaughters it must pay four times the value of the sheep. If one does the same with a bull, he must pay five times its value. **Rashi** explains that one pays less for a sheep because he carries it on his shoulders when stealing it, as opposed to the bull which he can lead away. His punishment is diminished because of the embarrassment that he suffered when he demeaned himself by carrying the sheep through the streets. Even though he is a thief, we are concerned about his shame. This gives us an insight into the depth of Hashem's judgment and the considerations involved in every punishment that the Torah prescribes. It is also a tremendous proof of the divinity of the Torah, since no human being could possibly come up with such a rationale.

Rashi cites a second explanation for the difference from the Gemara (Bava Kama 79b): *"R' Meir said: The importance of work is great. For stealing an ox, by which he prevents its owner from doing work, he pays five times. For stealing a sheep, by which he does not prevent its owner from doing work, he pays four times."* Stealing an ox that does vital work in the field, such as plowing and threshing, is worse because it decreases the owner's productivity. If someone has the ability to be productive and that is taken away from him, it is such a terrible sin. Aside from explaining the Torah law, this is also a powerful lesson for us in our daily lives. One who has talents and abilities and fails to use them is committing a grave sin. It's a terrible thing to waste the blessings that Hashem has given us.

The **Chizkuni** says another interesting idea to explain the discrepancy between the fines for stealing an ox and a sheep. An ox is a large animal – only a professional and experienced thief could successfully walk off with one. Stealing a small sheep does not require such skill. The person who steals an ox is punished more severely because his choice of theft indicates that he has more practice and has stolen many times before.

***"You shall be holy people to Me, and flesh torn in the field you shall not eat; you shall throw it to the dog" (ibid. 22:30)***

What is the connection between becoming holy people and the previous pesukim which describe the Mitzvah to dedicate firstborn sons as holy to Hashem? The **Seforno** explains that the special status of the oldest sons ensures that all the Jewish people will become holy. *"When you designate your firstborn sons to My service, they will teach their knowledge to the people."* When there is one designated person in each family whose sole focus is serving Hashem, it will help influence the entire family to strive for greater levels of holiness.

We find a similar reason given for the mitzvah to eat *ma'aser sheni*, a tenth of one's annual harvest, in Yerushalayim. To consume that amount of food, one family member would be designated to live in Yerushalayim year-round. That person would spend his time studying Torah and absorbing the holiness from being in proximity to the Bais HaMikdash and share his Torah knowledge with the rest of the family, thereby influencing them positively. The Mitzvah of *ma'aser sheni*, like the holiness of the firstborn, ensured that every family in Klal Yisrael had role models.

**CARPETS ON U**

2612 Avenue U carpetsonu.com 718.769.8083

KANE CARPET  
MOHAWK  
Shaw FLOORS  
STANTON



*Summary: We are currently discussing the concept of Hiddur Mitzvah (beautifying Mitzvos) within the context of Chassidus. Since Chassidus is going above and beyond in one's relationship with Hashem, honoring Hashem by doing His Will in the most optimal way is a perfect expression of said honor.*

*The Ramchal writes: "It is further written: "But cursed be the deceiver who has in his flock a male, yet he vows and sacrifices to Hashem a blemished one. For I am a great King [says the L-rd of Hosts] (Malachi 1:14)." (Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 19)*

Thus, using poor-quality materials to serve Hashem is not only wrong but is also cause for the service to be rejected, as in the case of Kayin and for the person to be cursed (if he has material of better quality).

The Ramchal continues, **"The Sages exhorted us in many places against the disrespect of Mitzvos. They said: 'whoever holds a Torah scroll which is uncovered, will be buried naked' (Shabbos 14a), because of the disrespect to the Mitzvah."** (ibid. Chapter 19)

For example, when a *chaya* (non-domestic animal) or bird is slaughtered, it is a Mitzvah to cover the blood with the earth, but it cannot be done with one's feet (Shabbos 22a). Acting in such a way – besides demonstrating a lack of respect – can breed an attitude of contempt for Mitzvos.

As far as the second idea, the Sages do not mean literally that he will be buried naked, but rather, that when he dies, he will discover that he is bereft of the mitzvah he was performing while touching the Torah scroll with bare hands. For example, if he was studying Torah from a scroll while touching the parchment, he will receive no reward for that Mitzvah (Gemara ibid. with Tosafos). Thus, we see from here a remarkable concept: performing a Mitzvah without the requisite respect strips that Mitzvah of its value.

The Ramchal adds: **"The order of offering the first fruits (Bikurim) are a guide for us to see what is Hiddur Mitzvah. We learned: 'an ox with horns overlaid with gold and with an olive crown upon its head walks before them...' (Bikurim 3:3). Also, 'the wealthy brought their first fruits in baskets of gold, while the poor used baskets of willow branches' (ibid. 3:8). And 'there are three elements in first fruits: the first fruits themselves, the additions to the first fruits, and the decorations of the first fruits...' (ibid. 3:10). Thus, we see just how much it is proper to add on to the body of the Mitzvah itself to beautify it. From here we learn to all the other Mitzvos of the Torah."** (ibid. Chapter 19)

The reason why Ramchal chose the Mitzvah of bikkurim as an example lies in the fact that it is so important that the Torah refers to Shavuos as the "festival of bikkurim" rather than being the day the Torah was given at Sinai. The significance of bikkurim lies in its being an expression of profound gratitude to Hashem for all He has given us, writes **Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski** (in *Lights Along the Way*). The offering of bikkurim is accompanied by a recitation of our history, humble origins, the enslavement in Egypt, the Divine deliverance, and finally our entrance into the Promised Land. The Torah puts a great emphasis on gratitude.

The first words on arising in the morning are *Modeh Ani*, and prayers are largely expressions of gratitude. Some people seem to have difficulty in expressing gratitude, perhaps because they do not wish to feel beholden to their benefactor. The Torah requires overcoming such reluctance and being thankful for favors received. Bikkurim is also an avowal of our realization that all we have comes from Hashem and is not the result of our own strengths. It follows that the person who has trust in Hashem and recognizes Him as the provider and is sincerely grateful for all that Hashem has given him, will be the one whose appreciation will result in his wishing to beautify his performance of Mitzvos, and express his devotion and gratitude toward Hashem by fulfilling the Mitzvos in the most attractive manner. *More next week, B'H.*

## SHORT STORY OF THE WEEK BY YONI SCHWARTZ

Many years ago, there was a worker in a wine store who saved money little by little, until after many years, he filled his entire pouch with gold coins. One Erev Shabbos, he hid this money pouch in the store's wine cellar. However, after Shabbos when he unlocked the old wooden door to the wine cellar and searched for his wallet, to his shock, it was gone! He knew the only other person with the key was the shop owner, so he went to the Gaon, **HaRav Shlomo Kluger**, ZT"L, and explained the situation. Rav Kluger called in the store owner and asked him if he had taken it.

The shopkeeper explained that he has no idea what he's talking about. Rav Kluger replied, "That's what I said. There's no way you could be suspected. Therefore, the only option left is to assume that a goy came in and took the wallet which means that I'll have to announce to the town all of your wine is *Yayin Nesech* and you'll have to pour out your whole inventory. When the storekeeper heard this, he immediately came clean and said that he indeed had stolen the wallet. Rav Kluger refused to believe him until he took an oath that he wasn't lying, ran to his house, and returned the wallet. The worker got his money, and everyone went home in peace.

*Comment: In this week's Parsha, Mishpatim, we learn about the laws of theft and restitution. The Torah makes clear that to build a just society, fair laws and law enforcement alone are insufficient. We must also master having fear of Hashem. The justice system can only prevent people from doing crimes in broad daylight. However, in the dark cellars of life, when nobody can see, the only thing that prevents sin is fear of Hashem.*

## JUST DIP IT

TRAVELING SERVICE

Are you getting married soon?  
Do you know anyone getting married?  
Do you have dishes you need to Toivel?  
WHY SHLEP IT?

I will pick up, toivel, and return everything to you.  
Fast, courteous, and prompt service.

Contact Jonathan Terebelo  
Call: 917.731.1020  
Email: JTerebelo@aol.com





PROJECT  
**INSPIRE.**  
A PROGRAM OF aish HaTorah  
USA | Canada

33%  
SOLD OUT!

# UNLOCK THE INSPIRED YOU.

Unlock  
access to all  
of **KLAL YISRAEL.**  
Unlock the  
true **YOU.**

MAR. 7-9  
PROJECT INSPIRE  
**CONVENTION**  
**2025** UNLOCKED

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!  
[PROJECTINSPIRE.COM/CONVENTION](https://PROJECTINSPIRE.COM/CONVENTION)

FEATURING:

**RABBI  
BEREL  
LAZAR**  
CHIEF RABBI  
OF RUSSIA



**HARAV  
URI DEUTSCH**



**RABBI  
CHANAN GORDON**



**RAV  
GAV FRIEDMAN**



**HARRY  
ROTHENBERG, ESQ**



**CHARLIE HARRY**



**RABBI  
YITZCHAK FELDHEIM**



**STEVE GAR**



**MRS. DINA SCHOONMAKER**

**MS. CHANI GOTLIEB**

**MRS. SHANNON NUSZEN**

AND MANY MANY MORE...



DAVENING  
AND RUACH  
WITH  
ELI  
MARCUS



MOTZEI SHABBOS  
LATE NIGHT  
KUMZITZ WITH  
BARUCH LEVINE

**OFF THE RECORD**

