



TJJ
2012

Jewish Commitment

PERFORMANCE OF MITVOT IF I WERE A RICH MAN

WHAT IS YOURS AND WHAT IS MINE

AVOS 5:10



ארבע מדות באדם האומר שלי שלי ושלך שלך זו מדה בינונית ו
יש אומרים זו מדת סדום שלי שלך שלי עם הארץ שלי של
ך ושלך שלך חסיד שלי שלי ושלך שלי רשע :

There are four types of people:

1. One who says, "What is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine" is a fool.
2. One who says "What is mine is mine, and what is yours is yours" -- this is a median characteristic; others say that this is the character of a Sodomite.
3. One who says, "What is mine is yours, and what is yours is yours" is a pious person.
4. And one who says "What is mine is mine, and what is yours is mine" is wicked.

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- ❖ WHAT IS WRONG WITH SAYING "WHAT IS MINE IS MINE, AND WHAT IS YOURS IS YOURS?"
 - ❖ HOW CAN SOMETHING BE EITHER THE MEDIAN OR THE CHARACTER OF A SODOMITE?
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CHARITY: PRO OR CON

**WHY SHOULD WE GIVE CHARITY? IF GOD RUNS THE WORLD
MAYBE HE WANTS THOSE PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE MONEY TO BE
POOR?**

BABA BATRA 10A

This question was actually put by Turnus Rufus to Rabbi Akiva: 'If your God loves the poor, why does He not support them?' He replied, 'So that we may be saved through them from the punishment of Gehinnom.' 'On the contrary,' said the other, 'it is this which condemns you to Gehinnom. I will illustrate by a parable. Suppose an earthly king was angry with his servant and put him in prison and ordered that he should be given no food or drink, and a man went and gave him food and drink. If the king heard, would he not be angry with him? And you are called "servants", as it is written, 'For unto me the children of Israel are servants. (Vayikra 25:55)' Rabbi Akiva answered him: 'I will illustrate by another parable. Suppose an earthly king was angry with his son, and put him in prison and ordered that no food or drink should be given to him, and someone went and gave him food and drink. If the king heard of it, would he not send him a present? And we are called "sons", as it is written, 'Sons are you to the Lord your God. (Devarim 14:1)'



RABBI HASKEL LOOKSTEIN

“It is not a normal response for people who are rejoicing over a wonderful event in their lives to do anything more than celebrate themselves and perhaps involve friends in the celebration. It is a lesson of rabbinic tradition that links charity with every celebration and that teaches us that no joy is ever complete unless and until it is shared with those who do not have joy. This Jewish trait is not a natural one for us; it is not inborn; it is rather an acquired characteristic. We have learned from the Torah that we must share our happiness. We cannot simply indulge ourselves in our joy. Every *simcha* must involve *tzedakah*.”

RABBI FISHEL SHACHTER

The Chofetz Chaim advises that the way to avoid feelings of resentment is to develop the understanding that the money is Hashem's, and the wealthy person has been blessed with the privilege of holding it in trust.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

TEHILIM 128:2

גִּיעַ כְּפִידָךְ כִּי תֹאכַל אֶשְׂרִיךְ וְטוֹב לְךָ:

“When you eat the labor of your hands, you are happy and it shall be well with you”

AVOS DEREBBE NASAN (13:4)

We learn that if someone gives someone all the great gifts in the world, but he does it with a bad countenance (an unpleasant disposition), the torah considers it as if he has given that person nothing at all. But if you give someone a smile, even if you do not give him anything (no gifts) the Torah considers it as if you gave him all the finest gifts in the world.

WHY ARE WE HAPPIER WHEN WE WORK FOR SOMETHING? WHAT DOES CHARITY HAS TO DO WITH WHAT WE EARNED?

WHY IS OUR ATTITUDE SO INTEGRAL WHEN GIVING CHARITY; THEY GOT THEIR MONEY, LET THEM BE HAPPY?

LIMITATIONS OF TZEDAKAH

JUST BECAUSE THERE IS A MINIMUM AMOUNT ONE MUST GIVE TO TZEDAKAH, DOES THIS MEAN ONE CAN WHATEVER HE WANTS?

KESUBOS 50A

One should not give more than a fifth of his income to Tzedakah, lest he come to need to take from people;

WHY WOULD THE SAGES MAKE A MAXIMUM AMOUNT?

IS THERE AN IDEAL WAY TO GIVE?

The Rambam poses the following question (Avos 3:15) If you have \$1,000 should you give it to 1 poor person or should you give \$1 to a thousand people?

WHO ARE WE GIVING CHARITY FOR?

TZITZIT

FRINGE BENEFITS



BAMIDBAR 15:37-41 -

וַיֹּאמֶר יְקֹנֵק אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:
דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְעָשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל כַּנְּפֵי בְּגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל צִיצִית הַכֶּנֶף פִּתְּיֵל תְּכֵלֶת:
וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹת יְקֹנֵק וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אִתֶּם זָנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם:
לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹתַי וְהִיִּיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם:

The Lord said to Moses as follows: Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. ***That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge.*** Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your God. I the Lord am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I, the Lord your God.

MENACHOS 43B:

“He who has Tefilin on his head and arm, Tzitzis on their garments and Mezuzos on their doorways, is sure not to sin, because he has many reminders to his responsibilities and these three things are the guardian angels who save him from sin.”

WHY ARE THESE THREE THINGS CHOSEN AS THE REMINDERS TO SAVE YOU FROM SIN?

CAN YOU THINK OF A PERSONAL REMINDER YOU USE OR CAN USE
TO STOP YOU FROM DOING SOMETHING THAT YOU WANT TO STOP
DOING:

OHR HACHAIM HAKADOSH (28:15)

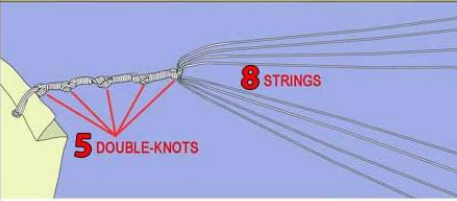
There are three separate requirements to attain blessing: learning Torah, avoiding transgression of the negative commandments, and observance of the positive commandments. Tefilin refers to our active performance of positive mitzvos, Tzitzis refers to the care needed to refrain from transgressing the negative mitzvos, and Mezuzah represents the study of Torah. Koheles (4:12) says: "a three-stranded cord will not quickly be broken." – This cord is made up of Tefilin, Tzitzis, and Mezuzah.

RABBI JONATHON SACKS

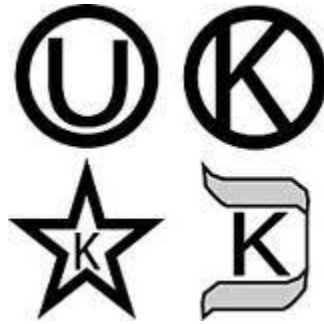
But there are other clothes we wear when we are alone that may convey more powerfully than anything else the kind of person we really are: the artist in his studio, the writer at his desk, the gardener tending the roses. They do not dress to create an impression. To the contrary, they dress as they do because of what they are - not because of what they wish to seem....there is also our inner life as people of faith. There are things we can say to God that we can say to no one else. He knows our thoughts, hopes and fears better than we know them. We speak to Him in the privacy of the soul, and He listens. That internal conversation - the opening of our hearts to Him, who brought us into existence with love - is not for public show. Like the fringed undergarment, it stays hidden. But it is no less real an aspect of Jewish spirituality.

KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH 9:1,21 -

Great is the commandment of (wearing the fringed garment) tzitzit; for it is written that dependent on it are all the commandments, as it is said: "that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord." The numerical value of (the letters of the word) tzitzit is six hundred, with the eight threads and the five knots, we get six hundred and thirteen. Therefore, every Jew must take care that he has (a small fringed garment) a tallit katan that he wears all day.... He who is scrupulous in the commandment of tzitzit, will be worthy of beholding the Divine Presence.

ת	י	צ	י	צ
400	10	90	10	90
Total: 600				
				
$600 + 5 + 8 = 613$				

KOSHER, HUH?



MAKING SENSE OF KOSHER/KASHRUS

RAMBAM HILCHOT MEILAH 8:8

It is correct for a person to investigate the laws of the Holy Torah and to know their purpose to the best of his abilities. If he does not find a reason or purpose in something ...he should not reject mitzvot because he does not know their reasons, and he should not attribute false ideas to God or think of them as mundane matters...the Mishpatim are Mitzvot whose rationales are apparent and their benefit in this world is obvious, such as the prohibitions of theft and murder. The Chukim are Mitzvot whose rationales are not known, the Sages said "I have enacted statutes, you are not permitted to wonder about them"

RABENU YONA (SHAAREI TESHUVA 1:6)

For if a servant says to his master, 'I will do all that you tell me except one thing,' he has shed the yoke of his master and does what is fitting in his own eyes.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Foreword to Horeb), "Even, therefore, if every Divine precept were a riddle to us and presented us with a thousand unsolved and insoluble problems, the obligatory character of the commandments would not in the slightest degree be impaired by this. Whatever command or prohibition of G-d it may be that prompts one to ask why one should do this and not do that, there is but one answer: Because it is the will of G-d..

CAN WE QUESTION LAWS THAT WE MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND (LIKE KOSHER) OR SHOULD WE SIMPLY ACCEPT THEM?

WHY KEEP KOSHER? WHAT DOES IT DO FOR US?

DO WE KEEP KOSHER FOR HEALTH REASONS?

ABARBANEL (VAYIKRA 11)

Attributing the laws of Kashrus to medical reasons, makes the Torah a mere medical text. This is not the case because there are many poisonous foods that are not forbidden by the Torah....Therefore, the mitzvos are not intended to heal bodies and provide material welfare but to heal the soul and cure its illnesses.



RABBI MOSHE BEN ASHER, PH.D.
(JEWISHPOSTOPINION.COM MARCH 24TH 2010)

The root meaning of kosher is “to prepare,” “to connect properly.” Almost nothing is more ordinary, yet more essential, than eating. By choosing to eat only kosher food, by limiting the source of our energy, we prepare and ritualize the aspiration of using that source of energy to connect to God. Every day we make a direct connection between our energy and its source, between the food we consume and using our energy to serve God. In effect, the purpose of keeping kosher is that together we prepare our physical bodies through a spiritual discipline. By keeping kosher we separate ourselves out from the other nations and into the purposes of the Jewish people.... In the words of Rabbi Samuel Dresner, “Kashrut is a systematic means of educating and refining the conscience. . . .” But the Midrash asks: “Of what concern is it to the Holy One . . . whether one ritually slaughters an animal and eats it, or he stabs the animal and eats it? Or, of what concern is it to God whether one eats of permitted animals or one eats of forbidden animals?” And the tradition answers: “Understand . . . that the mitzvot have been given only to refine and purify humankind. . . .” (Tanhuma Shemini 8) So the goal of kashrut is to teach us unceasing reverence for life by raising us up from the animal nature within us to our greatest capacity for free-willed moral spirituality— and thus through dietary ritual to fulfill us by bringing us closer to God’s Divine Providence for humankind with every mouthful of food we consume.

LIVE TO EAT OR EAT TO LIVE?

MISHLEI 13:25

צַדִּיק אֵכֵל לְשַׂבַּע נַפְשׁוֹ וּבָטֹן רְשָׁעִים תִּחְסָר :

The righteous man eats for the purpose of satiating his soul.

RAMBAN VAYIKRA 19:1-2

“You shall be holy”... this verse comes after the detailed account of prohibitions on physical acts that it forbade, and it commands in a general statement that we shall be removed from the excesses of permissible acts.

KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH 31: 1-2

Our sages stated [Brachos 63a]: "Which is a short passage on which the entire body of Torah is dependent?" "Know Him in all your ways" (Proverbs 3:6). This means that even in the paths you follow for the sake of your physical needs, you must know God and carry out these functions for His name's sake, blessed be He.

2. How does this apply regarding eating and drinking? It is unnecessary to say that one should not eat prohibited foods. Rather, even with regard to permitted foods, if one is hungry or thirsty and eats or drinks for the sake of his own pleasure, it is not commendable. On the contrary, one should eat and drink with the intention of deriving strength to serve the Creator.... There are meticulous individuals who, before eating, say: "I want to eat and drink to be healthy and strong in order to serve the Creator, blessed be His name."



DO WE EAT TO LIVE OR LIVE TO EAT?

IN WHAT WAY CAN YOU TRY AND ENSURE THAT YOUR EATING IS NOT TOTALLY PHYSICAL?

WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES DO WE DO THAT MIGHT SEEM TOTALLY MUNDANE OR PHYSICAL THAT CAN BE MADE SPIRITUAL? HOW?





GOD'S LOVE OF HIS PEOPLE

GIVING US MANY, MANY, MANY COMMANDMENTS

CHULLIN 109B

“God said to Moshe: Warn Israel not to eat bad things, and they shouldn't mislead you by saying that God forbade Israel to eat good things. God said that everything I have forbidden to you, I have permitted something else in its place... I forbid pork, and permit the tongue of the fish known as shibbuta which has a similar taste to pork... And why? To give a good reward to Israel for keeping my mitzvot.”

SIFRA KEDOSHIM 11: 22 ON LEVITICUS 20:26

“Rabbi Eleazar ben Azaria says: How do we know that a person should not say: ‘I am disgusted with pig meat, it is impossible for me to eat’ but rather he should say: ‘I can, but what can I do? My Father in Heaven has decreed upon me (that it's not permitted). The verse says: “And I have distinguished you from the other peoples to be mine,” that your separation from them should be for My Name's sake— he separates himself from sin and so accepts on himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

YERUSHALMI KIDDUSHIN 4:12

In the future, a man will have to give an accounting to the Divine Presence for everything that his eyes beheld and he did not wish to eat, though permitted and able to do so

AVOS 4:1

Who is strong? He who subdues his personal inclination, as it is said: ‘He who is slow to anger is better than the strong man, and a master of his passions is better than a conqueror of a city.

HOW DOES KEEPING KOSHER TEACH US SELF-CONTROL? WHY SPECIFICALLY BY EATING IS THE TORAH TRYING TO TEACH US THIS LESSON?

WHAT IS A HIGHER LEVEL: ONE WHO HAS NO DESIRE AT ALL TO DO EVIL OR ONE WHO DESIRES TO DO EVIL BUT IS ABLE TO CONTROL HIMSELF?

CAN YOU THINK OF OTHER REASONS FOR KEEPING KOSHER? COULD THERE BE SOCIAL REASONS?
