

THE KTM DAF PARASHA

BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan was one of the foremost thinkers in media theory. In his 1964 book "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man", McLuhan coined the phrase "The medium is the message". This means that the way something is delivered changes how we experience and understand it, not just the words themselves. For example, a serious talk feels very different as a face-to-face conversation than as a quick text message, and reading news in a short social media post affects us differently than reading a full newspaper article.

In other words, the form in which an idea is delivered shapes us no less than the idea itself. This idea can be found prominently in a pasuk from our parasha (Shmot 23:19):

רִאשִׁית בְּכוֹרֵי אֲדָמָתְךָ תָּבִיא בֵּית ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לֹא-תִבְשֹׁל גְּדִי
בְּחֵלֶב אִמּוֹ:

The choice first fruits of your soil you shall bring to the house of Hashem your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

The *pasuk*, which is repeated on two other occasions in the Torah (Shmot 34:16; Devarim 14:21), is the source of the prohibition against cooking meat and milk together, as well as the prohibition to eat or benefit from meat and milk that had been cooked together.

This prohibition is known by Chazal as a "*chiddush*" - a novelty (Masechet Chullin 108a); this is because it is uniquely the sole case of two permissible foods becoming prohibited when mixed together. Not only is this a halachic anomaly, but the phrasing of this prohibition is highly unusual: Why mention a "kid" and "its mother's milk" specifically? What about other types of meat? What about other types of milk? Also, what is the connection to the first section of the *pasuk*, bringing the Bikkurim to the Beit Hamikdash?

From the mention of "kid" and "its mother's milk" specifically, Chazal extrapolate that the prohibition applies exclusively to kosher meat and animal's milk. This is codified in halacha (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh De'ah 87:2,3):

The biblical term "kid" should not be taken literally; it includes under this expression also an

ox, a lamb, and a goat; likewise, there is no difference between the mother's milk of the animal and other milk; the Scripture simply speaks of what happens most frequently. The prohibition of the mixture applies only to that of meat and milk from a pure animal...

Furthermore, Chazal (Masechet Chullin 103b) derive from the expression "its mother's milk" that only a kosher animal that produces milk is included in the prohibition; thus, the prohibition against cooking chicken and milk together is only Rabbinic. (It is interesting to note that amongst the Ethiopian Jewish community - Beta Yisrael - the prohibition of milk and meat never extended to chicken.)

What we have seen to this point is that Chazal has used the unusual formulation of the prohibition, as well as its repetition, to derive specific laws. But what still remains unanswered is why present these laws in such a concealed and convoluted manner? Why not simply say what it means? There must be a deeper message that is hinted to in the formulation of the prohibition.

An exploration of how the commentaries deal with this mitzvah offers a glimpse into the moral structure of the Torah: The ethics are embedded, not preached. The Torah does not give values in the form of slogans - it builds them into mitzvot, into concrete action. The moral truth is lived, not declared. Halacha is the vessel of morality. The moral teaching is concealed inside legal language. Halacha is not separate from ethics; it carries the ethics. As McLuhan said, "the medium is the message"!

Some commentaries (such as Rambam, Abarbanel and others) suggest that it was a pagan custom to consume goat and milk at their festivals. This would also explain the correlation to the mitzvah of Bikkurim which are brought to the Beit Hamikdash on our festivals.

Another group of commentaries see the mixture of these ingredients as problematic. Some (like Sefer Hachinuch) believe there is an element of metaphysical or spiritual harm that can befall a person who consumes meat and milk that have been cooked together. Others (such as Kli Yakkar, Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch) explain more rationally that the mixture of these ingredients represses the unique property of



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MISHPATIM - SHEKALIM
27 SHEVAT 5786
14 FEBRUARY 2026

CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:00 P.M.
HAVDALAH: 6:06 P.M.

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each; they compare this prohibition to other prohibited mixtures like *kila'yim*.

Another group of commentaries (Ramban, Ibn Ezra) see the act of cooking meat and milk together as poor character and corrupt morals: By extracting the mother's milk for consumption, we are expressing a degree of partnership with the animal. Whereas by eating an animal we are exercising dominion over the animal. It is cruel and cynical to act as both a partner and ruler of the animal simultaneously - and this tension finds its most extreme expression in cooking the animal in its mother's milk.

The Torah could have presented this prohibition as a moral teaching about cruelty, life and death, or pagan ritual. Instead, it embedded the message inside the precise *halachic* phrasing. The Torah teaches that ethical sensitivity is not built through abstract values alone, but through disciplined obedience to Divine law. The moral truth is hidden in the mitzvah itself.



ENCOUNTERING THE GIANTS: OHR HACHAIM

BY CHAGAI SHREM

Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, known as the "Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh" (1696–1743), was born in the city of Salé in

Morocco. He was one of the greatest Torah commentators of the later generations and one of the most prominent figures who combined pshat (simple meaning), drash (homiletic interpretation), and sod (mystical depth) in a clear and sharp style. His main work, Ohr HaChaim on the Torah, was received with tremendous enthusiasm throughout the Jewish world. He later immigrated to the Land of Israel, founded a yeshiva in Jerusalem, and passed away there at only 47 years old. His interpretations are characterized by deep faith, strong moral sensitivity, and a living, dynamic understanding of the relationship between God and the people of Israel.

Q: Can a person, through free will, harm another person against God's will?

A: Yes. God granted human beings complete free will, and a person can use it to harm someone else - even if, according to the Divine plan, that suffering was not meant to happen to that person. However, if someone is harmed due to another person's immoral choice when they did not deserve it, God will compensate them in the

World to Come or in other ways. In this world, human free will is so powerful that it can actually alter reality. (Bereishit 37:21)

Q: What is the nature of the relationship between the people of Israel and God?

A: The relationship between God and Israel is not dependent on actions. It is much deeper than that and cannot be canceled. Just as a son remains his father's son even if he goes astray, so too the souls of Israel are bound to the Creator in a direct and inseparable way.

Q: Will redemption come even if the people of Israel do not observe the commandments?

A: There are two paths to redemption, and they depend on the behavior of the people of Israel: The first, "Be'itah" – "in its time." There is a fixed time determined by God when redemption will arrive at its distant, pre-set moment. The Messiah will come in a natural, non-miraculous way, described as "a poor man riding on a donkey," meaning a material, earthly process rather than a supernatural one. Redemption will come regardless. However, this path will involve suffering, poverty, and hardship, meant to purify the people of Israel so they can be worthy of redemption.

The second is "Achishenah" – "with haste", a

direct Divine revelation. Redemption will be heavenly and miraculous, described as "clouds of heaven." The Messiah will arrive with immense spiritual power that subdues all nations without prolonged wars. This represents the highest honor for the people of Israel, because they themselves are the main cause of redemption, and the entire world recognizes God's sovereignty. In the path of "Achishenah," the merit of Torah and repentance replaces the need for suffering. Instead of a painful purification process, the people of Israel undergo a process of spiritual elevation.

Q: What is the central factor through which redemption will come?

A: There is a tradition in the Zohar that Moses himself will redeem Israel in the final redemption. This means that the soul of Moshe Rabbeinu, who led Israel out of Egypt, will reappear and lead the future redemption. Moses represents the Torah, and therefore the redemption he brings must be founded on Torah study.

"Achishenah" is always a real option. Ohr Hachaim calls upon every generation not to wait passively for a distant redemption, but to ignite themselves with passion for Torah and thereby force reality itself toward a fast, miraculous redemption.



FROM OUR BEIT MIDRASH: PARASHAT MISHPATIM AND MASECHET BRACHOT

BY R' MOSHE ROZENBAUM

Our parasha opens:

וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תָּשִׂים לִפְנֵיהֶם

And these are the rules that you shall set before them.

Rashi, noting the seemingly redundant "And," comments: "Just as the Ten Commandments were given at Sinai, so these too were given at Sinai." What message is Rashi conveying?

Rebbeztin Esther Jungreis z"l often warned that the most dangerous person is not the criminal who knows he is wrong, but the person who believes he gets to decide right and wrong on his own. That was her point about Mishpatim. These laws make sense - and that is exactly why the Torah insists they come from Sinai. Not because we cannot understand them, but because we cannot be trusted with them. What feels obvious is often what we are quickest to adjust.

If morality belonged to human judgment alone, it would shift with every generation. What was shameful yesterday would become acceptable today. Mishpatim says no. Even laws between people - things that feel self-evident - do not come from our common sense. They come from

somewhere higher.

Last week in our weekly learning at KTM, we encountered this idea from another angle. The Gemara (Berachot 6b) speaks about forces a person cannot see: mazikin (from the root nezek, harm). Some understand these as literal forces; others, such as the Rambam, read them as describing unseen sources of harm and confusion rather than physical beings.

The Gemara says that if a person could see everything acting upon him, he would not be able to function. Life would be unbearable. So Hashem protects us by hiding most of reality from us.

That matters. It means that confidence in our own judgment is often false confidence. We simply do not see enough to decide on our own what is harmless and what is destructive. What feels small can cause damage. Some of the most harmful things are those that feel normal and go unquestioned. Damage does not always feel dramatic. Sometimes it feels ordinary - and that is how it takes hold.

Later in the same sugya, the Gemara says that if a person intended to do a mitzvah and was prevented from carrying it out, it is considered

as if he did it. This does not diminish the importance of action. Rather, it reflects the Torah's recognition that human beings act with limited control and incomplete information, and are judged within that reality.

This brings us back to Mishpatim. The Torah does not assume that a person sees the full picture. We act, judge, and speak while missing most of what is actually happening. That is why even laws that seem obvious are anchored in Sinai, and why even unfulfilled intention carries weight. Mishpatim and Berachot are expressing the same truth in different language: human judgment is real, but it is limited. Torah is what holds the line when we do not see enough.

Is there something small in your life that just "is" - something so normal it goes unquestioned - but might deserve a second look?

R' Moshe, together with his wife Kochava and their children, is on shlichut here in Montreal. He is a videographer, tennis player and musician who studied at Aish Hatorah, Nahar Shalom Talmudical Kollel, and the Sha'ar Hamelech Moroccan Talmudical Kollel in Jerusalem. He currently works remotely as an IT Project Manager.

R' Moshe Rozenbaum's shiur on Masechet Brachot takes place Thursdays at 8:00pm at KTM



HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

Question: My daughter printed notes for a test and realized that God's name was accidentally written within the notes

in the context of a psychological term in Hebrew (not meant to be God's name). Do these sheets need Genizah?

Answer: The Haga'ot Maimoniot paskens that there is no kedusha in letters that spell God's name if they were not written with the intention of making them kadosh. Because these letters were not written with the intention to spell God's name, they do not need genizah.

Question: When a group of people are traveling together, is it better for one person to say Tefilat Haderech or for each person to say it?

Answer: This is dependent on whether Tefilat Haderech is considered a bracha (and therefore one can be yotzei through hearing somebody) or a tefillah (and therefore each individual has to say it). Because many Acharonim (Shut Mayim Chayim, Shevet Halevi) pasken that it is a tefillah, each person should say it themselves. It is

worthwhile to say it over the loudspeaker so that people will say it along. If a person has trouble saying the bracha or saying it may be a bracha le'vatalah, he should listen and say amen.

Question: Is it permissible to open a Gmail account for a child under the age of 13 if doing so would require lying about the child's age (Google does not allow accounts for those under 13)?

Answer: Rav Lichtenstein zt"l would explain based on the Rambam that there are two issues with lying: The first issue is that it negatively affects the person being lied to. In this case, Google seemingly knows that many people do this, and they have this rule simply to prevent lawsuits. Therefore there is no real negative effect on Google. Nevertheless, there is another problem with lying: the negative effect on the one speaking. Becoming accustomed to lying is problematic. Therefore, it would be best for the parents to open the account without the child knowing about how it was done. If the child is present, it would be best to explain to him that lying is forbidden, but this situation is different because the rules are only in order to prevent lawsuits.

Question: If a person realizes after beginning Shemoneh Esrei that his phone is not on silent, can he turn it on silent?

Answer: If your phone will likely ring, you can turn it on silent mode if it is preventing you from concentrating. Additionally, turning it on silent will also prevent disruption of others. One should turn it off between brachot and in a hidden manner.

Question: If one were to wear a flag wrapped around their neck like a cape, does the flag become considered a four-cornered garment that is obligated in tzitzit?

Answer: While the Shulchan Aruch is seemingly lenient in this case (SA OC 10:11), the Biur Halacha holds that a four-cornered piece of clothing wrapped on you does require tzitzit, and that one should make one rounded corner to solve the issue. Nevertheless, an Israeli flag would not require tzitzit according to all because it does not function as clothing whatsoever but rather as decor.

Translated from Hebrew and abbreviated by Yaakov Panitch.

KEEPING UP WITH KTM

- **NEW! Chabura for women with Kochava Rozenbaum:** Engage in deep learning and discussion about the Parasha and Chagim based on the classic chassidic work "Bnei Yissachar". Each Motzei Shabbat at 8:30pm. Contact ravari@ktmmtl.org for info.
- **Mishnah Challenge:** KTM, in conjunction with Hebrew Academy, has launched a new learning initiative for boys in grades 7 & 8. Each Thursday from 4:50-5:30pm learn mishnayot with the bachurim in order to make a siyum by the end of the year. For more info contact ravari@ktmmtl.org
- **Hebrew Academy Lunch & Learn:** Every Thursday, high school students are invited to learn with Rav Ari and the bachurim in the Lieberman Beit Midrash. Open for girls and boys alike.
- **Learning @ Herzliyah:** KTM continues weekly programming at Herzl! In addition to special learning programs in classes, there is Lunch & Learn and after-school learning every Wednesday. For more information contact ravari@ktmmtl.org
- **Learning @ Bialik:** KTM has launched a lunch & learn at Bialik high school, as well as learning in preparation for Purim and Pesach.
- **KTM on Campus:** Lunch & Learn at Dawson, with Chabad of Dawson and FCJA, has resumed. Join the team for food, learning and chill every Monday! Vanier and John Abbott coming soon - follow this space for details!
- **Night seder continues:** Join R' Moshe Rozenbaum's Hebrew Gemara shiur on Tuesday (8:00-9:00pm), or English Gemara shiur on Thursday (8:00pm-9:00pm). Rav Ari's "Life Insights from the Parasha" shiur is also on Thursday (8:00pm-9:00pm). To arrange a chavruta with one of our bachurim, please contact ravari@ktmmtl.org.
- **Kindly note that Maariv at Hebrew Academy has been moved to 9:30pm, except for Thursdays when it is still 9:00pm.** (KTM holds night Seder on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00pm)

PARNESS HAYOM :: SHEVAT

- 2 Shevat | The Drazin Family in memory of Gertrude Drazin z"l
 9 Shevat | Russell and Steven Samuels in memory of their grandfather, Aron Eichenbaum z"l
 11 Shevat | Drs. Rochel and Hyman Schipper in memory of her grandfather, David Jacob Rubinstein z"l
 14 Shevat | Susan Lieberman and family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of Susan's mother, Esther Eisenstein - Esther bat Shia Zelig z"l.
 28 Shevat | Joan Lieberman in memory of her father, Zalman Singer z"l

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THE PIT



Parashat Mishpatim teaches about a "pit in the public domain": If you create a hazard, even by accident, you are responsible for what happens because of it. Being careful isn't only about not hurting others yourself - it's about not leaving behind things that could hurt them. The Torah is teaching: You are responsible not just for what you do, but for what you leave behind. If you make a mess or leave something where people walk, you have to fix it - because someone else could get hurt, and that makes it your responsibility.