

Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

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in memory of Larry Roth, who was so dedicated to Torah MiTzion

Spiritual Communities - in Time and Space

Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

The Mishkan, the place where G-d would communicate with man, epitomizes the notion of "holiness in space." Shabbat, the seventh day which has been sanctified by G-d to commemorate the creation of the world, is the paradigm of "holiness in time." The Torah juxtaposes the laws of the Mishkan with the building of the Mishkan twice, in Shemot 31 and 35. From this adjacency, which hints at the connection between the Tabernacle in time and space, our Sages derive many laws of Shabbat, including the categories of work prohibited on Shabbat (position of Rabbi Chanina bar Chama on Shabbat 49b), the way in which those actions must be performed (the principle of *melechet machshevet*, as discussed in Chagigah 10a-b), and the rule that the construction of the Mishkan was not to be performed on Shabbat (Rashi, Shemot 35:2, citing Midrash).

However, the Talmud suggests other sources for the laws of Shabbat which capture other models. Rabbi Yaakov Medan points to a suggestive passage in the Tosefta. While discussing blessings that are said upon various sights, the Tosefta writes as follows:

Ben Zoma, when he saw a large body of people on the Temple Mount, said: "Blessed is He who created these people to serve me." How hard the first man, Adam, must have labored before he could eat a bit of bread! He had to plow and sow and weed and hoe and reap and thresh, winnow and sift, grind, sift again, knead, moisten and bake, and only after all this eat his bread; whereas I get up in the morning and find the bread all ready for me. What toil Adam had

until he could be clothed with the simplest raiment! He had to shear, bleach, beat the wool, dye it, spin it, weave it, wash it, and sew it together, and only after all this was he clothed; whereas I get up in the morning and find all my clothes prepared for me. (Tosefta, Berachot 6:2, and Talmud Bavli Berachot 58a translation from here: <http://bit.ly/2CWFyrm>)

Rabbi Medan notes that the acts listed are identical to the many of the *melachot*, categories of action prohibited on Shabbat. (Mishnah Shabbat 7:2) Based on this, Rabbi Medan contends that on Shabbat, the laws are meant to prohibit providing basic human needs. Thus, he argues that this model is distinct from that which derives the categories of prohibited work from the Mishkan (see above link).

However, perhaps this passage provides insight into both Shabbat and the Mishkan. Ben Zoma highlights that food and clothes are generally not created by individuals, but communities. When a single person is responsible for planting and processing the raw materials for everything he needs, he can get nothing done. It is collaboration that has allowed human beings to build societies and civilizations. It is for this reason that the technological advances of the industrial revolution, that sped up the production of food and goods through assembly lines and the like, allowed unprecedented population explosions, not to mention an increase in the quality and length of life. As goods could be created and transported faster, streamlining work such that each person was responsible for an exact

task that could be executed efficiently, humanity could grow.

Perhaps, the Torah wanted to stress that not only is community necessary to create our physical world, but it is equally needed for spiritual greatness. The Mishkan caused G-d to dwell among the Jewish people specifically because it was built by pooling the unique contributions, both monetary and human, of the entire nation. The Torah emphasizes how each person who had a skill would use it to sew and build the Mishkan; it thus became the unification of the hearts and souls of the Jews who had invested so much into it.

It is striking that Ben Zoma rules that the blessing "that all these people were created to serve me" was said specifically when seeing a multitude on the Temple Mount. It is there that we remember that no man or woman is an island, even when forging our connection to G-d. On Shabbat the message is the same - we rest from our collaborative efforts to develop society, so that together we can build our spiritual world.

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Our Beit Midrash is planning a Continuing Medical Education and Continuing Legal Education trip to Panama for February 2019. Hotel, kosher meals, shiurim, tours! If you are interested, please email Dr. Mickey Ostro michaelostro@hotmail.com for more details.

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הורשתם את הארץ וישבתם בה (במדבר לו)

Marking the State of Israel's 70th Year!

Israeli Landmarks: Har haZeitim (The Mount of Olives)

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

Ramban sent a letter to his son from Jerusalem, circa 1267. There he depicts the sad sight he saw there, "What can I say regarding the land? There are many forsaken places, and the desecration is great. The general rule is - the more sacred the place, the greater its devastation, and Jerusalem is the most desolate of all."

This was clearly seen at Har HaZeitim. This mountain, second in height only to Har HaTzofim (Mount Scopus), stands to the east of the Temple Mount. It played a key role in worship – on it were shops selling supplies needed for sacrifices, and the birds which lived on it were used for the various bird sacrifices. (Talmud Yerushalmi, Taanit 4:5) Most importantly, from a certain location on the mountain one could see directly through the Temple gates, up to the curtain of the Kodesh HaKodashim. It was on that spot that the *parah adumah* (red heifer) was burned, so that its ashes could be used to purify people

who became impure by coming in contact with a dead body (Mishnah, Middot 4:2). As it was of utmost importance that all those involved with the burning should be pure, a large space was cleaned beneath the site, to ensure that no one was buried there. This ensured that the kohen aboveground would not become impure from anything that might have been hidden in the depths of the ground.

When Titus besieged Jerusalem, he used the high mountain as a command post, building a fortress for the tenth legion. Thus, the place which was used to enable and enrich the worship in the Beit HaMikdash, became its source of destruction.

In the years after the destruction, a strange phenomenon occurred: the mountain which was the source of purification became one the most important cemeteries in Jerusalem.

The list of Rabbis buried there is amazing and spans the generations—Ramban, Bartenura, Rabbi Yehudah HeChasid, the Or Chaim HaKadosh, Rabbi Kook, and Rabbi Goren. Other significant figures are buried there as well, such as the writer Shai Agnon, the poet Uri Tz'vi Grinberg, and politicians including Menachem Begin and Zevulun Hammer.

Today, many tours of the mountain are promoted by the City of David Foundation. As we all hope for the realization of the prophecies about the mountain - that it will split into two, with water spouting from within (Zechariah 14) - we shall continue visiting the place that tradition tells us will be the first place for our ancestors to rise and join us in accepting the Mashiach.

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The Zionist Idea: Between Snow and Fire: Rabbi Maimon's War

Yaron Perez

Rabbi Yehudah Leib Fishman Maimon was born in Serbia in 1875. A child prodigy, he was a close student of Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein (author of *Aruch haShulchan*) and received ordination from him. As a youth he was attracted to the Zionist movement and was among the founders of the Mizrachi. At the age of 30 he was appointed Rabbi of Ungheni, Romania, and in 1913 he moved to Israel, where he led the Mizrachi.

In Rabbi Maimon's view, *chareidim* see Judaism as religion, and *chilonim* see Judaism as a nationality. The role of the Mizrachi is to find the appropriate balance to join religion and state. Thus, he told both sides, "The plan to separate religion and state is not your own; it is a non-Jewish plan of their own creation... A strategy of dividing religion from state will not save the state, sirs; I think it will destroy the state!" (*Relations Between Religious and Non-Religious in the First Year of the State*, pg. 128)

Rabbi Maimon was outspoken in refusing to automatically accept the positions of the institutional rabbinat. In 1920, a group of rabbis – including Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook – called for a boycott of the Zionist Congress elections due to women's voting privileges and the presence of female candidates. Rabbi Maimon participated in the halachic debate, but added that he didn't truly see this as a halachic issue. He wrote, "Regarding prohibited and permitted issues... we must consult rabbis. But regarding life in the market, they must ask us." (*Letters*, Vol. 2 pg. 268)

On the other hand, Rabbi Maimon fought against the influence of secularism on the development of the State of Israel. He was among the drafters of the "Status Quo" agreement preserving the religious character of the state-in-

formation, and after the founding of the state he worked to enshrine religious principles in law during his service as Minister of Religion and member of Knesset. He fought to establish the place of Jewish jurisprudence in family law, the legal status of rabbinical courts, and more.

Rabbi Maimon saw a significant role for rhetoric and symbolism, as well. He sought to include the Name of G-d in the Declaration of Independence; when the committee opted for "The Rock of Israel", Rabbi Maimon prefaced his signature with "with the help of G-d". When David Ben-Gurion completed reading the declaration aloud, Rabbi Maimon recited the Shehechyanu blessing. Rabbi Maimon also promoted inclusion of Hallel in the prayers of Yom ha'Atzmaut.

Rabbi Maimon was also active in the battle over the "Teheran Children", Jewish orphans from Poland who had fled to the USSR, and were permitted to come to Israel via Iran under a special 1942 agreement with Josef Stalin. The secular Zionists wanted the children taken into secular *kibbutzim*, while Agudat Yisrael sought to place them in religious institutions. Rabbi Maimon tried to steer a middle path between them.

Ultimately, Rabbi Maimon saw the path of Mizrachi as "standing between two paths – one of snow and one of fire – with war ahead and behind." (*Rabbi Maimon in his Generations*, pg. 165)

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Biography

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was born in Uzda, near Minsk, Belarus, on the 7th of Adar in the year 5655/1895. He was born into a rabbinic family, descendants of Rabbi Yom Tov Lipman Heller. Rabbi Feinstein studied in several yeshivot before becoming rabbi of Luban, where he served for sixteen years. During his time in Luban, Rabbi Feinstein wrote prolifically, sending responsa to communities far and wide and to the Torah giants of the day. He also led his community despite the crushing persecution of the Communist regime.

Rabbi Feinstein fled the Soviet regime in 1936, barely escaping a pogrom in which his home was destroyed. Along with his wife Sima and three children (another died of whooping cough), Rabbi Feinstein came to New York and became rosh yeshiva of Mesivta Tiferet Yerushalayim in Manhattan's Lower East Side. On American shores, Rabbi Feinstein's reputation as a scholar only grew.

Recognized across the broad spectrum of Orthodoxy as the generation's leading halachic authority, Rabbi Feinstein was consulted on every major issue of his day. Among his most widely circulated responsa and letters on popular issues were his positions on the role of Jews in a non-Jewish society, on the status of Reform and Conservative approaches to Judaism, and on the evolving roles of women in the Jewish community.

Communal organizations sought out Rabbi Feinstein's leadership. He served as president of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, and he chaired the Moetzes Gedolei haTorah of Agudath Israel of America for the last quarter-century of his life.

Rabbi Yosef Dov haLevi Soloveitchik and Rabbi Feinstein were first cousins once removed, and they spoke frequently. Rabbi Feinstein wrote a warm approbation for *Kvod haRav*, the sefer published in honour of Rav Soloveitchik's eightieth birthday.

Rabbi Feinstein passed away on Taanit Esther 5746/1986, but his halachic legacy lives on. His sons Rabbi Dovid Feinstein and Rabbi Reuven Feinstein, as well as his son-in-law Rabbi Dr. Moshe Tendler, are recognized halachic authorities. Second, his volumes of published responsa (*Igrot Moshe*), as well as his commentaries to Talmud (*Dibrot Moshe*) and Chumash (*Darash Moshe*) are studied around the world. To this day, resolution of major issues like determining the moment of death and engaging in artificial insemination hinges upon how his writings are parsed.

Torah and Translation

Peanuts on Pesach

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, *Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 3:63*

Translated by Adam Friedmann

Note: For practical guidance, please see your halachic authority.

הנה בדבר הפינאט שכתבתי שבהרבה מקומות אכלו אותם בפסח וכתר"ה תמה בטעם הדבר משום שמע שעושין ממנו באיזה מקום גם קמח, וגם שמע שנורעין בשדות כשאר קטניות. אבל ידע כתר"ה שאין זה ענין כלל, שכל הדברים העושין מהם קמח נאסרו ממנהג זה, דאין לך דבר העושין ממנו קמח כתפוחי אדמה, לא רק במדינה זו אלא גם ביוראפ במקומותינו וגם בדורות הקודמים, ומעולם לא חשו לאסור זה. וכן הטעם שמיני חטים מתערבין בהם שכתב הטור נמי אינו כלל שכל המינים שיש לחוש למיני חטים ושעורים שיתערבו נהגו לאסור... ולכן אין לנו בדבר אלא מה שמפורש שנהגו לאסור, וכן מה שידוע ומפורסם.

וגם יש ליתן טעם, דדין מה שנאסר במנהג הא אין זה דבר הנאסר בקבוץ חכמים, אלא שהנהיגו את העם להחמיר שלא לאכול מינים אלו שהיה מצוי לאוכלם מפני הטעמים דחשש מיני דגן שנתערבו שקשה לבדוק ומפני שעושין קמחים, אבל כיון שלא תיקנו בקבוץ חכמים לאכול דברים שיש חשש שיתערב בהן מיני דגן ודברים שעושין מהם קמח, אלא שהנהיגו שלא לאכול איזה מינים לא נאסרו אלא המינים שהנהיגו ולא שאר מינים שלא הנהיגו מפני שלא היו מצויין אז...

ולכן גם הפינאטס לא אסרו בהרבה מקומות עוד מכ"ש. ובמקום שליכא מנהג אין לאסור כי בדברים כאלו אין להחמיר כדאיתא בח"ו. ולא לו שיש להם מנהג ביחוד שלא לאכול פינאט אסור גם בפינאט אבל מספק אין לאסור. ולכן שייך שיתן הכשר שלא נתערב שם חמץ ויאכלו אלו שלא נהגו בזה איסור. וכן ראיתי שנותנים הכשר על פינאט אויל מהאי טעמא.

peanut is also prohibited, but in case of doubt one should not prohibit. Therefore, it would be relevant to certify that no chametz has been mixed in, and those who do not have a custom of prohibition will eat. I have seen that they also give certification to peanut oil for these same reasons.

Regarding the matter of the peanut, of which I have written that in many places people ate it on Pesach, and your honour was amazed because you heard that in some places they make flour out of them and you also heard that they grow in fields like other legumes (*kitniyot*). However, your honour should know that it is not [definitive of] this matter at all, that anything which they make into flour is prohibited by this custom. Nothing is made into flour as much as potatoes, not only in this country but also in Europe in the places I lived, and in previous generations, and no one ever thought to prohibit them. Also, the reasoning that grains may get mixed in, which is mentioned in the Tur, does not entail that regarding any product where there is a concern of mixing with wheat and barley, the custom is to prohibit... Therefore, the only things included in this are those regarding which they explicitly prohibited customarily, and also whatever is known and widely accepted (as prohibited).

We can also reason that whatever is prohibited by this custom does not have the designation of "prohibited through a gathering of scholars." Rather, they instructed people to be stringent and not eat these species which were part of popular diet, because of the concerns about grains which mix in and are hard to check for, and because these foods are made into flour. However, since they did not decree in a "gathering of scholars" to prohibit everything which has a concern of grains mixing in and which can be made into flour, rather they directed not to eat particular types of food, only those types for which they directed were prohibited, and not other types which they did not direct since they weren't found then...

Therefore, peanuts [in addition to other species Rabbi Feinstein enumerates here] also were never prohibited in many places, all the more so. And in a place where there is no custom one should not prohibit them because in these matters one should not be stringent, as is stated in *Chelkat Yaakov*. For those who have a specific custom not to eat peanuts, the

Weekly Highlights: Mar. 10 – Mar. 16 / 23 Adar – 29 Adar

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
שבת Mar. 9-10 Shabbaton : 70 Years of Jewish Leaders!				
After Hashkamah	Yaron Perez	Zalman Shazar: Nasi or President?	Clanton Park	
Derashah	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Moshe, Betzalel... Begin? Models of Leadership	Clanton Park	
5:00 PM	R' Jonathan Ziring	David and Shlomo: Ben-Gurion & Rav Goren?	Clanton Park	
Sseudah Shlishit	Adam Friedmann	The Altalena Affair and Jewish Leadership	Shaarei Tefillah	
After minchah	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara Avodah Zarah	BAYT	<i>Simcha Suite</i>
Sun. Mar. 11				
8:45 AM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	<i>Hebrew</i>
8:45 AM	R' Josh Gutenberg	Contemporary Halachah	BAYT	<i>Not this week</i>
10:00 AM to 11:20 AM	R' Yechezkel Gryzman R' Mordechai Torczyner	The Honey & the Thorn Who I Am; Who I Will Be	BAYT	<i>Midreshet Yom Rishon For women</i>
Mon. Mar. 12				
8:00 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Legal Ethics: Facing Self-Represented Litigants	Shaarei Shomayim	<i>CPD Accredited; Laypeople welcome</i>
Tue. Mar. 13				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Nechemiah, Chapter 8	Shaarei Shomayim	
7:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Yehoshua	129 Theodore Pl.	<i>Not this week</i>
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann R' Zev Spitz R' Mordechai Torczyner R' Jonathan Ziring	Haggadah Night! Ten-minute Seder-ready Torah Thoughts	BAYT	<i>Simcha Suite</i>
Wed. Mar. 14				
10:00 AM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Exodus and Hollywood 4: The Plagues	Beth Emeth	<i>torontotorah.com/ hollywood</i>
2:30 PM	R' Jonathan Ziring	Exploring Bamidbar	32 Timberlane Ave.	<i>For Women</i>
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann R' Chaim Strauchler R' Mordechai Torczyner R' Jonathan Ziring	Haggadah Night! Ten-minute Seder-ready Torah Thoughts	Shaarei Shomayim	
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	<i>Not this week</i>
Thu. Mar. 15				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim: Battling Binyamin	49 Michael Ct.	<i>For women</i>
Fri. Mar. 16				
10:30 AM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Melachot of Shabbat	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<i>Advanced</i>

For University Men, at Yeshivat Or Chaim

10:00 AM Sunday, Rabbi Aaron Greenberg, Gemara Beitzah

11:00 AM Sunday, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring, Contemporary Halachah: Judging Favourably on Social Media

8:30 AM Monday, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring, Nefesh haChaim

8:30 AM Friday, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, The Book of Yeshayah

For University Women, at Ulpanat Orot

9:30-11:30 AM Monday, Mrs. Elliezra Perez, From Rachel Imeinu to Racheli Frenkel, not this week

9:30-11:30 AM Tuesday, Mrs. Ora Ziring, Shabbat

9:30-11:30 AM Wednesday, Mrs. Ora Ziring, Contemporary Halachah

9:30-11:30 AM Thursday, Mrs. Elliezra Perez, Parshah in the Eyes of Chassidut, not this week