



### A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI MOSHE FUCHS

## Better Than You'd Think



With righteousness shall you judge your fellow. (19:15)

[This means that] one litigant shouldn't [be required to] stand while the other sits; one [shouldn't be allowed] to speak as much as he needs to, while [the judge] tells the other to be brief. Another explanation: ... Judge your fellow [Jew] to be sinless. (Talmud, Shavu'os 30a)

THE SECOND MEANING APPLIES TO EVERY JEW. It is the source for the famous Mishnah (Avos 1:6), "Judge everyone favorably," which obligates us to give the benefit of the doubt.

Let's ponder this verse for a moment. Why does it say "b'tzedek—with righteousness," rather than "b'chesed—with kindness?" Isn't it a kindness to judge a friend favorably, especially when it seems he's guilty and undeserving of our favorable judgement?

Rabbi Avrohom Pam ז"ל answers this question, based on a law regarding eulogies.

*Shulchan Aruch* (Y.D. 344:1) writes that it is forbidden to lie while eulogizing a dead person, but one may slightly embellish his good attributes.

The *Taz* asks: Isn't this also lying?

*Birkei Yosef* answers that to slightly embellish words of eulogy is not lying, because it's very possible that people, even those very close to him, are unaware of the extent of the deceased's achievements. Therefore, slightly embellishing on his good character is not a deviation of the truth—it probably reflects the actual facts.

This concept applies even more to the living. No one can know the true greatness of the people around him. We also can't fully understand why people do what they do. Therefore, judging favorably is more than a *chesed*, a kindness. It's *tzedek*—which the person actually deserves.

Even if it is extremely hard to justify a person's misdeeds, one must take into account the person's upbringing and any difficult challenges which might make it hard for him to overcome his evil inclination. Contemplating the inherent greatness and holiness in every Jewish soul will make it much easier for us to achieve the fundamental obligation to judge everyone favorably.

### A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

*Kisuy hadam* ("covering the blood") is the mitzvah to cover the blood of a bird or a *chaya* (which we'll define below) after *shechita* (slaughtering) with "earth" (*affar* in Hebrew)—soil or any substance that plants can grow in, such as sawdust, as well as ash and finely ground gold. The blood must be covered both from below and above, as we'll explain.

The Gemara says that *kisuy hadam* is both the privilege and responsibility of the *shochet*. More recent authorities disagree over whether he may willingly pass up the chance to perform the mitzvah. Our custom is to permit someone other than the *shochet* to perform *kisuy hadam*, and frequently a *shochet* will honor someone with the mitzvah. However,

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### THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On 5 Iyar, 5629 (1869), Yosef Rivlin, later known as the *Shtetl-macher* (town-maker) of Jerusalem, began constructing Nachalat Shiv'a, the first modern-day settlement outside the Old City walls. This was the beginning of what is known as the modern *Yishuv*.

Before Rivlin could build, he had to seek the annulment of an Ottoman decree of 1844 that banned construction outside the walls. In 1862, Rivlin succeeded.

In order to demonstrate that his settlement was viable, Rivlin inhabited the first house completed; he also hired an Arab guard to protect himself and constructed a security wall. (He insisted that his wife remain in the Old City for safety.)

Rivlin went on to establish twelve more neighborhoods, including Mazkeret Moshe, Me'ah Shearim, Mishkenot Yisrael, Ohel Moshe, Shaarei Zedek, and Yemin Moshe. One of his many descendants is great-great-grandson Rabbi Dov Aharon Wise.

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## A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

(CONTINUED)

one should not rush to do *kisuy* without authorization and a cue from the *shochet*.

As mentioned, both birds and *chayos* require *kisuy*. What are *chayos*?

The Torah divides kosher mammals into two categories:

- *B'heimos*, frequently translated as domesticated animals—cattle, sheep, and goats. These do not require *kisuy hadam*.
- *Chayos*, wild and non-domesticated animals, such as deer and fallow deer. These do require *kisuy*.

If we're uncertain how to categorize an animal, we treat it with the stringencies of both a *chaya* and a *b'heima*—that is, we perform *kisuy*, but without a *bracha*. The American bison ("buffalo") is an example of such an animal.

Before shechting the animal, the *shochet* scatters "soil," usually sawdust, on the ground nearby, and designates it for *kisuy hadam*. After the *shechita*, he allows some blood—preferably *dam hanefesh*, which, according to some opinions, comes out a few seconds after *shechita*—to collect on the sawdust.

The *shochet* must check his knife for imperfections, to be sure the *shechita* was done properly, and one should make sure that the area is free of foul odors and manure.

Then the person performing the mitzvah gathers a small amount of sawdust or soil in his hand, recites the blessing ("Baruch... *asher kid'shanu b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu al kisui dam b'affar*—Blessed are You... who sanctified us with His mitzvos and commanded us regarding covering blood with soil.") and sprinkles the soil on the blood. One is not required to cover all of the blood.

If more animals will be slaughtered in the same place, one should also designate the soil as the base-earth for the next blood to be covered. (In a pinch, one can rely on the fact that the *shochet* originally prepared this dirt as the base for the blood of more animals.)

The *minhag* is not to say the "*Shehechyanu*" blessing the first time one does this mitzvah. 

## At the Kollel

EVERY DAY

EVERY WEEK

### Sunday *Free brunch!*

 **Boys' Learning Program** for fourth, fifth, & sixth graders—**Mishnayos**

Rabbi Moshe Fuchs and Izy Newmark..... 9–10 AM

*Parents who are interested can e-mail Rabbi Fuchs—[splashwen@gmail.com](mailto:splashwen@gmail.com)*

 **Beginner's Gemara** (Maseches Sukkah)

Rabbi Ezra Stettin..... 9:10–10 AM

 **Beginner's Halacha & More** (skills-building)

Rabbi Moshe D. Zeffren.. 9:30–10:30 AM

 **Shivti** (Self-contained learning, geared toward practical halacha)

Rabbi Avrohom Weinrib..... 10 AM–NOON

 *Homemade refreshments served*

### Monday

  **Torah Treasures for Seniors at the Mayerson JCC**  
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 10:30–11:15 AM

### Tuesday

  **Partners in Torah at the Mayerson JCC**  
Rabbi Michael Soroka..... 8 PM

### Wednesday

  **Downtown Lunch-n-Learn at Strauss & Troy**  
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 12–1 PM

### Thursday

   **Yehoshua/Shabbos** in the former Back Office  
Rabbi Michael Soroka and Moshe Dovid Zeffren..... 9:10–10 PM.

**KEY:**  Beginners  Intermediate  Advanced  for men and women

**Chavrusos are available** for private and group learning—  
speak to Rabbi Chaim Heinemann! weekdays noon–1 PM • Sun.–Thurs. 8–9:45 PM

DAVENING TIMES CAN BE FOUND AT [CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/](http://CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/)

## GREAT ACTS OF SIMPLE PEOPLE

RABBI ARYEH RODIN, A YOUNG PULPIT RABBI IN Dallas, was once visited by a secular-looking man, who introduced himself as "Rick." Rick asked to make a donation to the shul, then wrote out a check for \$3,000.

The surprised rabbi inquired as to why Rick was giving such a substantial amount to a shul to which he had no connection.

Rick shared that he had recently traveled to Israel for the first time. One morning he had visited the *Kosel haMa'aravi* (the Western Wall). Not knowing any of the traditional prayers, he had studied the man standing next to him at the wall—a Yerushalmi, totally absorbed in prayer. Rick wished that he had some way to connect with his Creator, just as this man next to him could.

Upon leaving the wall, he committed to do something noble. After returning to Dallas and sharing this story with a Jewish friend, Rick asked, "Where in Dallas would that Jew be comfortable praying?"

"Rabbi Rodin's synagogue."

Following this exchange, Rick became a close friend of Rabbi Rodin, and he continued to grow in his Judaism.

Rabbi Rodin would later share a thought: Imagine when this Yerushalmi Jew ascends to Heaven and is shown the reward he'll receive for a Jew's return to Yiddishkeit and support of a Jewish community the Yerushalmi might never have heard of!

How careful we must be with our actions! We never know who is watching. 

## A RIDDLE FOR YOU

Four people were named through a prophecy given before they were born. Who are they?

*The answer will appear next week.*

LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE:

Q Hashem spoke to five people in Tanach in question form. Who are they?

- A 1) Adam (B'reishis 3:11)  
2) Kayin (B'reishis 4:9)  
3) Bil'am (Bamidbar 22:10)  
4) Chizkiyahu (Yeshaya 39:3)  
5) Yechezkel (Yechezkel 37:3) 