

**"IN ANY PLACE I CAUSE MY NAME TO BE MENTIONED
I WILL COME TO YOU AND BLESS YOU" (EXOD. 20:21)**

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7 3 Miracles at Sinai

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This week's parsha addresses Revelation at Sinai. We identify 3 miracles and explain their vital values.



"Who is rich? He who is happy with his lot."

BEN ZOMA — PIRKEI AVOS 4:1

PARSHA

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

What's Wrong with Star Worship?

And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These the Lord your God allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven" (Deut. 4:19).

Moses warns the Jews not to succumb to star worship. But what is his precise rejection? Light is to benefit all mankind equally; light is inanimate and does not distinguish one nation from the next. "These the Lord your God allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven" means just that. All peoples' indistinguishable status and lack of uniqueness extinguishes the appeal to serve the luminaries as deities. For a primary belief of idolaters is "Through my actions, I am favored by that deity" (either via sacrifice or worship). Moses tells the Jews that the luminaries do not distinguish anyone. Moses wished to discount the imagined appeal of star worship.

Second, light is a utility and does nothing more than illuminate. It cannot help man succeed financially, for example. This is the meaning of "God allotted them" (Rashi)—He allotted them to provide light, and nothing more. Thus, worshipping them is foolish. Furthermore the luminaries' dominion of the sublunar world alone—"under heaven"—reveals their limitation—they are controlled—which is contrary to an "omnipotent" deity.

But primarily, as God created the luminaries and imposed this limitation, we do not pray to God's creations, but to God alone. ■

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Western Wall Prayers...for a Price?

Organizations advertise a service to pray at the Western Wall—sometimes through “entitled” people or rabbis—as if they can assure God will respond. Others advertise a promise to find mates for singles. But it is evil to make promises only God can assure. It is evil to withhold prayers unless being paid. It is evil to go against our principles outlined in our Selichos prayers below that God hears righteous people from anywhere:

He Who answered our father Abraham on Mount Moriah, He will answer us.

He Who answered Isaac, his son, when he was bound on the altar, He will answer us.

He Who answered Jacob in Beth El, He will answer us.

He Who answered Joseph in prison, He will answer us.

He Who answered our ancestors at the Reed Sea, He will answer us.

He Who answered Moses at Horeb, He will answer us.

He Who answered Aaron with the incense pan, He will answer us.

He Who answered Pinchas when he rose from among the congregation, He will answer us.

He Who answered Joshua at Gilgal, He will answer us.

He Who answered Samuel at Mizpah, He will answer us.

He Who answered David, and Solomon, his son, in Jerusalem, He will answer us.

He Who answered Elijah on Mount Carmel, He will answer us.

He Who answered Elisha in Jericho, He will answer us.

He Who answered Jonah in the belly of the whale, He will answer us.

He Who answered Hezekiah, King of Judah, in his illness, He will answer us.

He Who answered Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah in the midst of the fiery furnace, He will answer us.

He Who answered Daniel in the lions' den, He will answer us.

He Who answered Mordecai and Esther in Shushan, the capital, He will answer us.

He Who answered Ezra in captivity, He will answer us.

He Who answered all the righteous, the pious, the perfect and the upright, He will answer us.

The belief that praying at the Wall ensures a response is discounted easily by all those unanswered notes and prayers. Jews have sorely forgotten a fundamental Torah principle: God helps a person based on their merit, and not based on where they pray. Maimonides 13 Foundations of Judaism include “Reward and Punishment.” Torah bears this out. God helps all righteous people, and punishes the wicked. The Western Wall or any location does not make one more or less righteous. And those who seek payment for prayers and make empty promises violate Torah, and are deceptive crooks. ■

How Righteous People Think

Vaueschanan's first Rashi (Deut. 3:23) says that the righteous people wish to avoid God's kindness based on their merits, but they seek God's kindness as a “free gift.” Why do righteous people avoid receiving benefit due to their righteousness?

Righteous people perform righteousness because it is proper, and for no other reason. If their righteousness was compelled by an ulterior motive, they were in fact not truly righteous. By definition, true righteousness is performed because the person values doing good. He seeks nothing in return. It is distasteful to a righteous person seek to “collect” on his merits. This demeans his actions and he would never think this way. Similarly, when the righteous person studies Torah, he or she does not seek something in return, but his studies themselves are all he seeks, and are all he values. This is called learning “Lishma,” for the sake of learning alone, and for no other motive. So too, his righteousness is performed without other motives. Therefore, the righteous person does not ask God for reward for his merits, but seeks God's goodness as a free gift. In fact, he seeks God's free gift as this is how God acts: God is just like the righteous person, a God who does good because it is good: “I will show grace unto him to whom I will show grace” (Exod. 33:19). ■

Finding God

But if you search there for the Lord your God, you will find Him, if only you seek Him with all your heart and soul (Deut. 4:29).

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Rabbi Israel Chait taught that knowledge of God cannot be attained by a person who is dishonest. But are not knowledge and morality (honesty with others) 2 unrelated areas? The answer is that to find God means to pursue truth. And if a person has a part of his personality that deceives others, this conflicts with the pursuit for truth, which must be expressed in one's "entire" personality: "Seek Him with 'all' your heart and soul." ■

I wonder why prayer alone requires this attitude. Perhaps this is because there is a danger of feeling deserving when praying for our needs. We should not become the center of the focus. God must always retain our focus, even when we ask for our personal needs. Therefore, during prayer an attitude of awe is vital as opposed to any other activity. ■

Attitude in Prayer

Rabbi Israel Chait questioned Maimonides' formulation of the proper intent, or state of mind, required for prayer:

What is to be understood by concentration of the mind? The mind should be freed from all extraneous thoughts and the one who prays should realize that he is standing before the Divine Presence (Hilchos Tefila 4:16).

God's "shechina" or presence refers to a created light [as God does not occupy space, His "presence" refers to something other than Him, which indicates His providence]. The rabbis would always cover their heads everywhere, as they [knew that they] were always before God's presence.

Standing before the "Creator" is not a state of mind conducive for prayer; more is required. When Maimonides says the one must "realize that he is standing before the Divine Presence," it is not that presence itself that is required, but the honor of God [awe] that emerges from that realization. It is like wisdom of the universe that leads to an honor of God, "Kavod Hashem." Maimonides said that we are always in the place of God's presence. Standing before God's presence means that one stands before God's honor. The light on Mount Sinai reflected God's honor. Maimonides means that one must have the idea of God's honor, and without it, one's prayer is lacking.

It is very appropriate why in the blessings of the Shema the angels recite "Holy, holy, holy, the whole world is filled with God's glory." This is a necessary preamble for prayer. Anything that endows one with honor of heaven [is fitting], be it the universe or the temple.

This concludes Rabbi Chait's words. It seems that Rabbi Chait teaches that to acknowledge God's presence is insufficient. What is required is that one has Kavod Hashem, honor for God. Meaning, the intellectual comprehension of God's presence is insufficient: a person also requires an "attitude," an "awe" prior to commencing his prayers.

Moses Cared for Gentiles

Observe Torah faithfully, for that will be proof of your wisdom and discernment to other peoples, who on hearing of all these laws will say, "Surely, that great nation is a wise and discerning people." (Deut. 4:6).

One might read this to mean Moses wants the Jews to be revered. But Moses also said this:

Let not the Egyptians say, "It was with evil intent that He delivered them, only to kill them off in the mountains and annihilate them from the face of the earth." Turn from Your blazing anger, and renounce the plan to punish Your people" (Exod. 32:12).

The latter verse expresses Moses' concern that after the Jews' sin of idolatry (worshiping the Gold Calf) that God not annihilate the Jews, as this would give Egypt the wrong impression of God. Moses cared for all humanity...even those who enslaved his own people for 210 years. With the same care that gentiles revere God, Moses told the Jews (Deut. 4:6) that following the Torah will give gentiles a great impression of God, through a "wise and discerning people." Moses said that gentiles—"who on hearing of all these laws"—will be impressed. God is the source of the laws. The gentiles' are impressed by the Jews, but only due to the Jews having selected to follow "these laws." Gentiles would be equally impressed by any people who follow Torah. The Jew is conditional, and not inherent in the gentiles' respect of God.

Following Moses' concern for others, all Jews today should care to make an impressive example to gentiles. We represent God's Bible. We must adhere to it and be courteous, generous, patient, charitable, just, kind, honest, and respectful to all people. Bible (Torah) is intended for all people, and we must share its teachings in words, and in actions. ■

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Why Torah Requires Toil

If you go in My laws, and observe My commandments and perform them (Lev. 26:3)

Rashi comments:

One might think "follow My laws" refers to the fulfillment of the commandments. But since Torah states next "observe My commandments and perform them," it is obvious that these latter words refer to the fulfillment of the commands. How then must I explain "If you go in My laws"? It means that you should study the Torah laboriously.

Rashi refers to toiling in Torah study. Why is this degree of energy and thought required? One reason is because the Author's depth of thought requires it. Another reason references the Torah student's dedication and thirst for wisdom, which is expressed in laborious study. Meaning, Torah is studied properly only when one is awed by God and His wisdom, and applies all his strength to uncover marvels. For he has learned from his experience that Torah contains marvels at every turn. One digging for gold is not passive, his value of his anticipated treasures leave him without rest, and compel his earnest hunt. It is as King Solomon said, "If you seek it like silver and chase it as buried treasures, then you will understand fear of God, and you will find God's wisdom" (Proverbs 2:4,5). God's wisdom is immense, and its nature is that it unfolds endlessly over time. The immensity and brilliance of Torah require toil, as does the nature of Torah study. ■

ואקברה שם בדרך אפרת היא בית לזרם וירא
 ישראל את בני יוסף ויאמר מי אלה ויאמר יוסף
 אל אבני בני הם אשר נתן לי אלדים בזה ויאמר
 קדום נא אלי ואברכם ועלי ישראל כבוד מזקן
 לא י- לראות ויגש אתם אליו וישק לזרם
 וידבק להם ויאמר ישראל אל יוסף ראה פניך
 לא פללתי והנה הראה אתי אלדים גם את זרעך
 ויגש יוסף אתם מעם ברכיו וישדדו לאפיו
 ארצה ויקח יוסף את שניהם את אפרים בימיו
 משמאל ישראל ואת מנשה בשימאלו מימין
 ישראל ויגש אליו וישלח ישראל את ימיו וישת
 על ראש אפרים והוא הצעיר ואת שמאלו על
 ראש מנשה עכל את ידיו כי מנשה הנכור
 ויברך את יוסף ויאמר האלדים אשר הרגלנו
 אבתי לפניו אברהם ויצחק האלדים הרעידה
 אתי מעידי עד היום הזה המלאך הגאל אדני
 מכל רע יברך את הצערים ויקרא בהם שמי ושם
 אבתי אברהם ויצחק ויצדו לרב בקרב הארץ וירא
 יוסף כי ישית אביו יד ימיו על ראש אפרים
 וירע בעיניו ויתמר יד אביו להסיר אתה מעל
 ראש אפרים על ראש מנשה ויאמר יוסף אל
 אביו לא כן אבי כי זה צבכר שים ימינך על
 ראשו וימאן אביו ויאמר ידעתי בני ידעתי גם
 הוא יהיה לעם וגם הוא יגדל ואולם אדני הקטן
 גדל ממנו וזרעו יהיה מלא הגוים ויברכם ביום
 ההוא לאמר בך יברך ישראל לאמר ישמך אלרים
 כאפרים וכמנשה וישם את אפרים לפני מנשה
 ויאמר ישראל אל יוסף הנה אנכי מת והיה
 אלדים עמכם והשים אתכם אל ארץ אבותיכם
 ואני נתתי לך שכם אחד על אדניך אשר לקחתי
 מיד האמרי בדרבי ובקשתי
 ויקרא יעקב אל בניו ויאמר האספו ואגידה לכם
 את אשר יקרא אתכם באחרית הימים הקבשן
 ושמעו בני יעקב ושמעו אל ישראל אביסם
 ראובן בכרי אתה כחזי וראשית אוני יתר שלאת
 ויתר עד פחד כננים אל תותר כי עלית משכמי
 אביר אז דללתי יצוילי עכלה
 שמעון ולוי אדנים כלי זמס מברתיהם בסדים
 אל תבא נפשי בקהלם אל תחד כבדי כי באפם
 הרגו איש ומרעצם עקרו שור ארור אפם כי
 אז ועברתם כי קשתם אדולם ביעקב
 ואפיצם בישראל

PARSHA

3

MIRACLES at MT SINAI

WHY?

Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim

God's revelation of Himself and His Bible to 2.5 million Jews at Mount Sinai was the world's greatest event. This event renders Judaism the only religion based on mass witnesses, and thereby, the only proven religion.

This event contained a few unique elements: God created a voice emanating from fire, He gave 2 tablets of sapphire bearing miraculous text of the 10 Commandments, and He caused lightning, thunder, earthquakes and the sound of a shofar. Can we understand why God orchestrated Revelation in this precise form?

1. Why must revelation include fire? This question is strengthened as 8 times in Deuteronomy Moses reminds Israel that, "God's voice emanated from inside the fire."

2. Why are tablets needed? Why can't those 10 commands be written in Torah like all other 603 commands, and do away with the tablets? The need for these tablets is further seen, as after Moses breaks the tablets, God instructs him to hew a replacement set.

Exodus 32:15,16 reads as follows:

And Moses turned and descended the mountain and the two Tablets of Testimony were in his hand: tablets written on both sides, from this side and that side they were written. The tablets were God's work, and the writing was God's writing, embedded (charuss) on the tablets.

3. What is the plain meaning of the tablets' script written "from both sides"? What purpose does this serve? Moses broke the tablets, as Rabbi Israel Chait said, lest the Jews worship them as they worshipped the Gold Calf. The tablets were significantly superior to other stones. How so?

4. What is meant by "God's tablets" and "God's writing"? "Charuss" (Ibid. 32:16) can be understood as Maimonides states, naturally formed letters, not subsequent engraving upon the tablets:

"The tablets were God's work, and the writing was God's writing" (Exod. xxxii. 1:6), that is to say, they were the product of nature, not of art, for all natural things are called "the work of the Lord." The writing may also have been produced by His direct will, not by means of an instrument (Guide, book I, chap. lxvi).

Ibn Ezra offers no conclusive translation as he says Torah contains no other instance of "charuss." Therefore, charuss need not be translated as carved or incised, but merely as somehow "present" in the tablets. What is Maimonides' message that the writing was "natural"?

5. Earlier (Exod. 31:18) Torah says, "When He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the pact, stone tablets inscribed with the finger of God." Why does God divide the tablets' description into 2 Torah sections?

Appreciating the details and hints about Sinai's astonishing miracles, God's precise Torah formulations direct us to the answers.

Fire: The Source of Torah is not Biological

In front of 2.5 million Jews, God created a voice to emanate from the fiery mountain. Maimonides says the Jews heard no distinct words, only the "sound" of words, following the verse, "The Lord spoke to you out of the fire; you heard the sound of words but perceived no form—nothing but a voice" (Deut. 4:12).

Life exists in all substances and regions, in ice, under sand, and in

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water. But all biological life perishes in fire. A voice emanating from fire teaches that this intelligence is not earthbound. But as Maimonides says the Jews heard no distinct words, only the “sound” of words, validation was yet required that Torah’s content was divine. The voice emanating from fire taught that God is not physical. But how was God’s communication verified?

Astonishing Tablets

Torah’s divine source is validated through miraculously formed commands. “From both sides” does not mean “etched” writing, for the Jews could have believed that it was not God, but Moses who fabricated that writing, thereby stripping the tablets of their divine nature. And proof that this was possible was that as Moses “hewed” a second set of stones (Exod. 34:4), certainly he could “etch” letters on their surfaces.

Rather, “From both sides” means this: as sapphire is translucent, the internal sapphire grain is viewable from both sides, from all angles. God selected a translucent object for this purpose. As these 2 bricks of sapphire formed during creation (Avos 5:6), sentences also formed naturally inside the sapphire. This is a feat impossible for Moses to have fabricated; there is no manner in which Moses could have written “inside” the stones. Only the one Who formed sapphire, also authored Torah text within the sapphire. These stone tablets must have been an amazing sight. It is akin to cutting a tree open to find the rings inside are composed of Torah text. The creator of trees is Torah’s author.

This means that the sapphire—creation—is subordinated to Torah. That is, nature is harnessed to share Torah...the physical world is subservient to Torah. The message at Sinai was that Earth was designed for a goal: for man to find God through studying Torah and nature. This message of nature facilitating the greater goal of sharing Torah is also demonstrated in the voice God created emanating from fire: God harnessed fire and sound, and enabled Torah to emanate.

The Rabbis teach, “God viewed Torah and created Earth.” Meaning, Torah is Earth’s blueprint; Torah is prior and superior to Earth. Rashi on Avos 2:8 says that if the Jews don’t follow Torah, God will reverse creation back to voidness.

Additionally, the verse says they were “tablets of God.” This means that each individual tablet was naturally formed.



Naturally-formed complete tablets with no effects of human tampering complements the proof that the writing was not created by Moses, as the tablets were in their complete natural form.

All Creations are His

Shofar blasts cannot be produced naturally, but only by intelligent life. At first, Torah records that the shofar accompanied the thunder and lightning (Exod. 19:16). This demonstrated that the natural thunder and lightning was not separate from an intelligence (shofar). Torah then isolates the shofar, this time adding that it grew louder and louder (Ibid. 19:19) to stress that this was not a human production. When man blows a shofar, his breath weakens until he must stop and inhale once again. Thus, this shofar blare conveyed the presence of a divine intelligence.

God also “descended” on Mt. Sinai (Ibid. 19:20), and Deuteronomy 4:36 says that God spoke from the heavens to demonstrate His control is not limited to Earth alone. And the mountain shaking (Ibid. 19:18) displays God’s control over Earth as a whole. All in heaven and Earth are shown to be guided by God’s will.

2 Accounts of the Tablets

“When He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the pact, stone tablets...”

Here, the operative word is “finished.” Yes, God finished speaking to Moses, but He did not wish this lesson to be finished. This explains why only here God mentioned the tablets “stone” nature. God selected stone as a means to encapsulate His commands in an eternal substance. His

prophecy to Moses concluded, but His lessons for man live on eternally in stone.

But the second account of the tablets does not mention stone at all. Rather, it highlights the tablets’ miraculous nature. Why? As Moses descended Mt. Sinai to the idolatrous Jews, God highlights the tablets’ miracle, in contrast to the imagined deity of the Gold Calf. The tablets’ miraculous nature was now relevant to contrast the inanimate Gold Calf and teaches a lesson about what to deify: God alone.

Sinai’s lessons were now complete: Fire taught that God is not physical, not biological, not of this world, and that He is the source of Torah. The miraculous stones and their writing taught what are His commands, and that they were not Moses own inscriptions, but were miraculous writing which only God could have created inside the translucent stones for all to see. And lightning, thunder and shofar demonstrated God’s complete control of the world.

A theme emerges: fire with intelligence (voice), stones with intelligence (writing), and heavenly and earthly phenomena with intelligence (shofar). The lesson is that the physical world is subservient to God, whose will is that man pursue Torah over all else. When giving the Torah, God compromised the nature of fire, earth (sapphire tablets) and the heavens (thunder and lightning) to share His Torah. The Jews learned that all that is, exists only for man to study God through Torah.

God proved His supernatural existence amidst flames, Torah’s commands were validated as divine, and the tablets “testified” as such, earning their title “Tablets of Testimony.” And God demonstrated His dominion over heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth were put in service of God imbuing mankind of Torah’s vitality.

This past Shavuot celebrated 3333 years since God gifted mankind a system to direct our lives towards the most happiness and fulfillment, in pursuit of God via His wisdom shared in His Torah. God orchestrated Revelation on Mt. Sinai to serve as everlasting validation of His metaphysical existence, His Bible authorship, and His control over creation. Harnessing creation to display Torah through tablets and God’s communication through fire, teaches man that Earth is subservient to Torah. Our earthly lives were created for the purpose of Torah study. ■

Rabbi Reuven Mann

The Appropriate Orientation to Torah Observance

A major theme of the final testaments of Moshe contained in the Book of Devarim is that the prosperous longevity of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael is inextricably connected with their adherence to the commandments of the Torah. It is safe to say that the purpose of conquering the land was to establish a unique society which functions according to the exalted spiritual ideals contained in Hashem's Torah. It goes without saying that this requires dedication to observing both the letter and the "spirit" of the Mitzvot.

In this week's Parsha, Vaetchanan, Moshe makes a strong appeal for the Jews to recognize and accept the Divine origin of their Scriptures. This is the crucial foundation which will ensure their permanence in the land that was given to them by Hashem.

Moshe warns them not to make any alterations in the requirements of the commandments (Deut. 4:2). They are not to add to the Mitzvot nor take away from them but rather to follow them precisely as they were revealed. To bolster this point he says, "With your own eyes you have seen what Hashem did in the matter of Baal Peor (the idol which the Jews worshipped as a result of being seduced by the Midianite women), for every man who went after Baal Peor Hashem destroyed from your midst. But, you who cling to the Lord your G-d are all alive this day" (Deut. 4:3,4).

At first glance the juxtaposition of the sin of Baal Peor to that of adding to or subtracting from the Torah seems problematical. The former consisted of sexual promiscuity and worship of idols the most egregious transgression in Judaism. The prohibition of

"The benefits of Mitzvot come from observing them exactly as they are and not changing them. "Whoever adds, diminishes" (Rambam, Hil. Melachim 11:3). Any change reflects the imposition of man's subjective religious outlook on the works of the Creator."

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making alterations in the commandments does not seem to be as grievous as the sin of Baal Peor.

Perhaps the answer lies in a better understanding of the prohibition of “Lo Toseefu” (do not add). It is interesting to note that this includes the injunction against diminishing from the mitzva. Yet these two deviations do not seem to be alike.

It is easier to recognize the sinful character of diminishing as, for example, observing only three days of shiva instead of seven and similar lessening of Torah requirements. This person is seeking to free himself of the obligations imposed on him by Hashem or, at least, to reduce them.

However, it is more challenging to understand the sinfulness of the one who adds to the Mitzva as, for example, keeping eight days of Passover. He wants to serve Hashem even beyond what is required. Why is that regarded as such a terrible thing?

I believe that both adding to and subtracting from the Mitzvot fall into the same category of effectuating alterations in the Divine system of commandments. As the psalmist informs us, “The Torah of Hashem is perfect, restoring the soul.” If we regard the Torah as the work of Hashem we must stand in awe of it as the genuine scientist stands in awe of the vast cosmos which reflect the infinite wisdom of the Creator.

The notion of making changes in the guidelines of human conduct set forth by Hashem reeks of supreme hubris. One who does so implies that his personal sense of right and wrong is superior to the moral outlook imbedded in G-d’s commandments.

I believe that it is in that sense that we can understand the comparison to the sin of Baal Peor. One who worships idols negates the supreme might of the Creator and attributes to other beings divine powers. And the one who seeks to make changes in the Torah negates the absolute perfection of Hashem’s Revelation. Both sins partake of a disparagement of the true greatness of the genuine G-d.

It is because of this that Moshe reminds the people, in this Parsha, to remember what they witnessed on Mt. Sinai when an entire nation was gathered to hear the “voice” of Hashem from heaven amidst sights and sounds that could only be regarded as miraculous.

For the study of Torah and performance of its mitzvot to produce the greatest results it must be established on the foundation of certainty regarding its divine origin. One who recognizes that the Torah comes from Hashem has the confidence to ask the most challenging questions as to the reasons and benefits of the commandments. Judaism

encourages us to seek the highest level of understanding regarding Hashem’s Revelation.

And when the student encounters something that makes no sense to him or seems outdated or is contradicted by the prevailing societal outlook, he stands in awe, surrenders to the Almighty and makes no “modifications” for he regards the Torah as Eternal Truth.

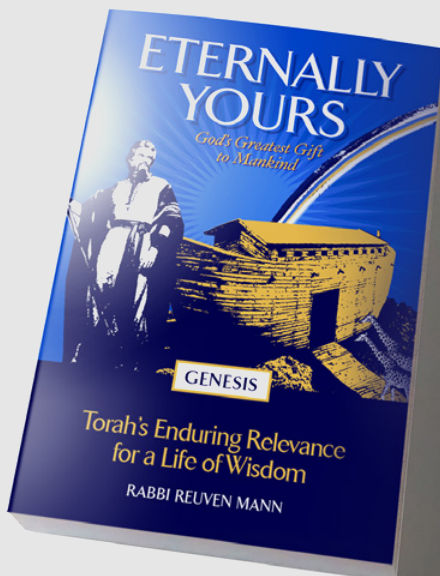
The benefits of Mitzvot come from observing them exactly as they are and not changing them. “Whoever adds diminishes” (Rambam, Hil. Melachim 11:3). Any change reflects the imposition of man’s subjective religious outlook on the works of the Creator. There is a great temptation, in this day and age, to uproot fundamental Torah principles in basic areas of (sexual) morality and to replace them with a “new” value system.

All genuine Torah observant Jews should resist any attempts to remake Judaism in the image of the contemporary moral “understanding” which is a replay of traditional hedonism. We should be inspired by the exhortations of Moshe to be faithful to the authentic and eternal teachings of Torah and be mindful that “You who cling unto the Lord your G-d are alive all of you this day.”

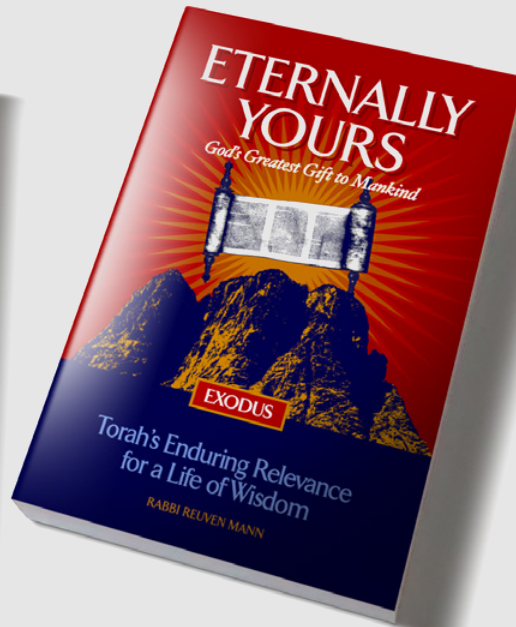
Shabbat Shalom ■

RABBI MANN ON AMAZON

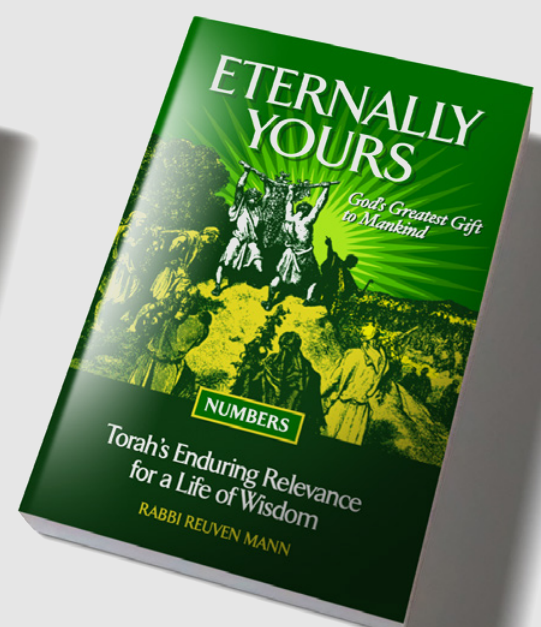
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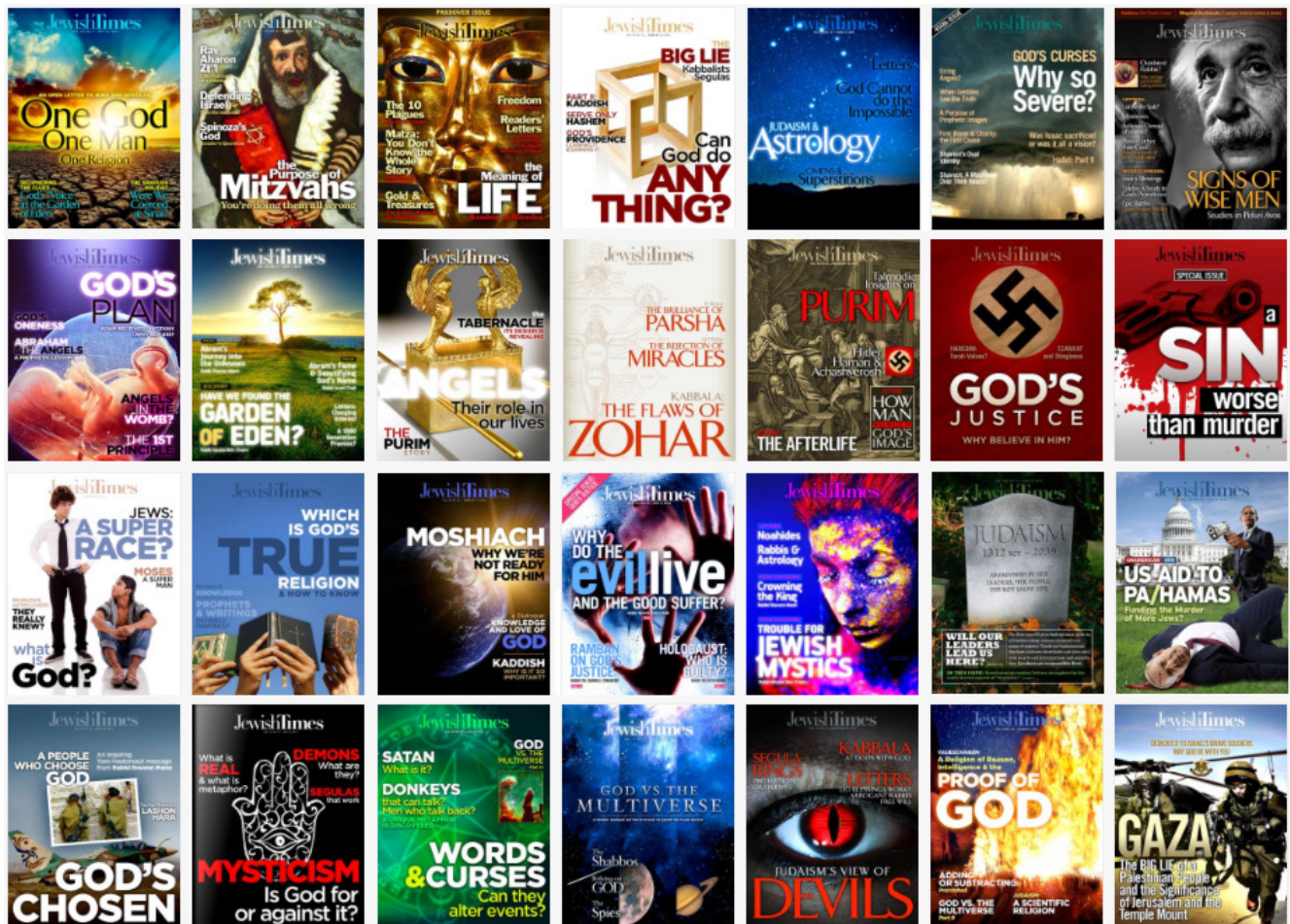
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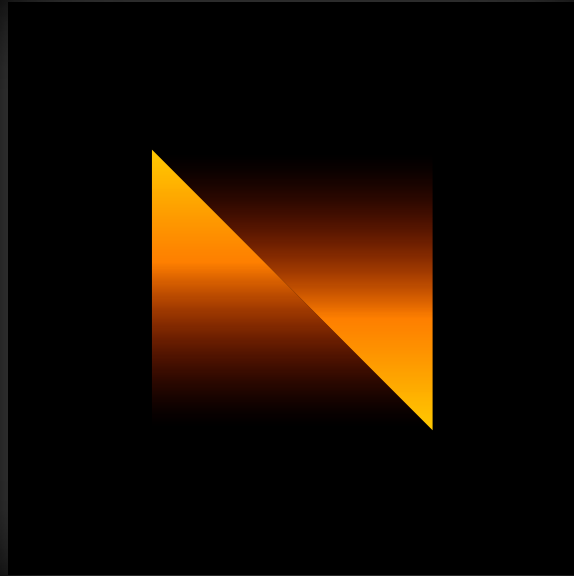
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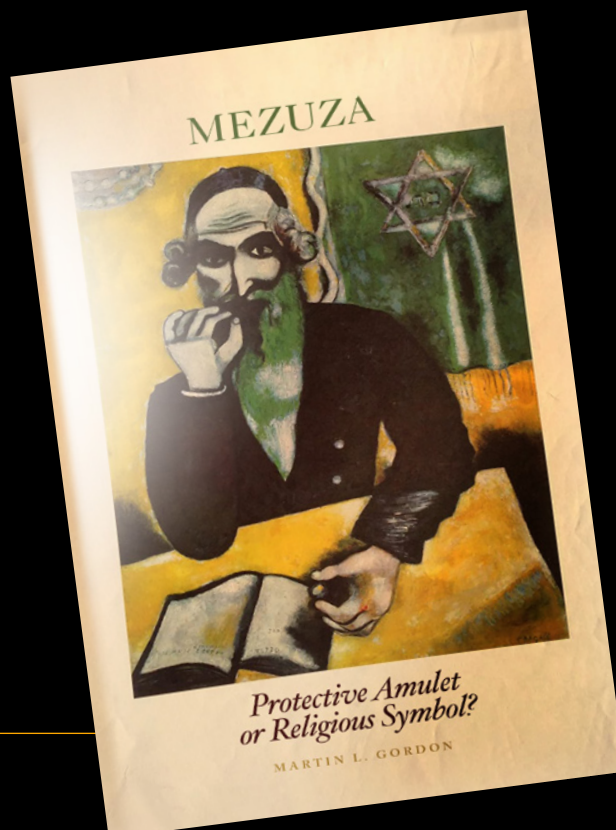
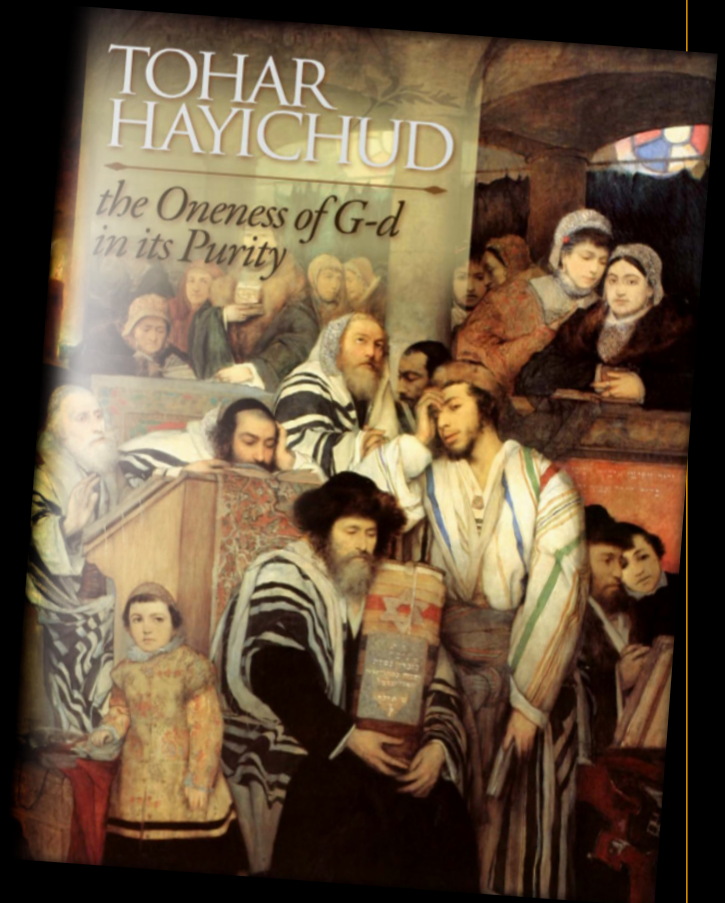


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OUR PURPOSE: WISDOM & MORALITY



God created man to
live by truths
concerning Him,
creation, others and
ourselves.

We must study God's instruction
about what He is, what is
idolatrous or fallacy, we must
study nature, psychology,
philosophy and morality. This
draws us closer to God and He to
us, and creates societal harmony
which fosters greater Torah for all.

MORE BELOW

Kindness: As equals, all humans must treat others as we wish to be treated. Charity, kindness and justice demand we rise above personal and selfish emotions and recognize that God made others as He made ourselves. Doing so creates harmony, and earns His kindness.

Racism: A Lie: Man descends from Adam. **Blackwhite twins** unveil the lie of racism. Bible denounces it: Moses' wife was black, our kings married Egyptians and Messiah descends from Moabites. "Better is the day of death than the day of birth" (Eccl. 7:1). Birth doesn't define us; how we live does.

Insecurity: Man's insecurities can be false, but reality is greater, as it is truth. Man seeks security about his future, accepting fallacies like astrology, amulets, omens, horoscopes and others. God prohibited such practices precisely because they are false. God is more powerful than false notions. Rely on Him alone.

Happiness: Many think wealth and success secure happiness. But Torah teaches happiness stems from study. When pursuing wisdom, one is most happy as Torah offers childlike amazement at every turn. Study offers the daily novelty necessary to retain interest and the depth that offers amazement.

Pleasing Others: Don't seek approval over truth. Torah says, "What can man do to me?" (Psalms 56:5). "Don't fear man" (Deut. 1:17). "Desist from man whose soul is in his nostrils, for what is he considered?" (Isaiah 2:22). Mortal attention is irrelevant. Following God earns all goodness.

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