

A Taste of Torah A Two Ended Rope

By Rabbi Levi Lebovits

A sign of true greatness within a person is the ability to work with two opposite character traits. Not that he is extreme to one extent, but that he harnesses the “two ends of the rope” and has the ability to use both traits in their proper time and place.

We find that the psalmist, King David, refers to Hashem as the one who sits on high, i.e., is busy with the lofty secrets which are above even the heavens, but yet lowers himself into our world (Psalms ?) . Likewise, in our parsha we find a similar idea by the King of Israel. The idea of “kingdom” is that there is someone ABOVE the nation as the posuk says, “Place UPON yourselves a King” (Devarim 17:15) which from this Chazal learn that the fear of the King must be firm within the heart of every Jew.

On the other hand, the source of the prohibition to be haughty is found in parshah of the King. The posuk says, “.....So that he shall not lift his heart above his brethren” (Devarim 17:20) which the Ramban explains is the source

for the prohibition to be haughty. The Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Shachne Sommers, once pointed out how interesting it is that the same man who there a mitzvah to be in awe of is also required to be the quintessential embodiment of humility. But the truth is that when contained within one man both the epitome of power together with ultimate humility, that is true greatness.

This is something found by our leaders as well. My Rebbe once had an argument with his son as to how much soccer he should be playing. My Rebbe's view was that more than a half an hour a day was excessive. His son disagreed. The two went his Rebbe, Rav Shlomo Wolbe, who was then well into his 80's, to have the matter decided. After hearing the two sides of the argument, Rav Wolbe turned to my Rebbe and said, “What's a half an hour of playing soccer worth?!”. A man in his upper 80's busy with his own lofty world of Torah and Mitzvos was able to understand the mundane needs of a small child. These are our leaders! May we all merit to grow in both directions thereby growing higher.

Ask the Rabbi Doorway Disputes

Name@Witheld wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I will be moving into a home that is presently occupied by Jewish people. I know that one can not take the mezuzos down if you know that the new occupants are Jewish. The wife called me to ask me to bring 9 mezuzos to replace the 9 she is

taking with her. Since she has expensive mezuzos (\$60 each) she figures I'd rather replace them than pay for them. She is correct, especially since I already own a few. My question is this:

There will be a few weeks between the time they leave and I move in when the painters will be painting. I would prefer not putting up my mezuzos until

Stories For The Soul

Kindness Repaid

Rabbi Yechezkel Landau, known as the Noda B'Yehuda (1713-1793), was Rabbi of Prague. He once saw a non-Jewish boy crying in the street and inquired what was wrong.

The boy told him that his stepfather, one of the town bakers, had sent him to sell a basket of loaves of bread. He had sold all the loaves but had lost the money, and he was afraid to go home because his cruel stepfather would beat him mercilessly. The Rav gave him the necessary sum out of his own pocket.

Many years later, there was a knock on the Rav's door. A non-Jewish man wished to see him.

“I am the little boy who cried many years ago, and the Rabbi, in his great kindness and generosity, saved me from my stepfather's anger.

“I have come now to repay that good deed,” he continued. “The city bakers are planning a terrible plot for Passover. Since after the holiday the Jews buy bread from non-Jews, the bakers agreed to poison all the loaves of bread that they will sell to the Jews.

“I have come to warn you of this plot. I must leave. It is dangerous for me to be here with you.”

The Rav thanked him profusely and began formulating a plan.

On the eighth night of Pesach, the Rav sent messengers to tell everyone to gather in the main shul the next morning. Every Jewish resident of Prague came to the shul as the Rav had ordered.

“A mistake was made this year in our calendar calculations, and we

Kollel Happenings

LEGAL HOLIDAY LEARNING MON., SEPT. 5

The next legal holiday learning program will take place on Labor Day, Mon., Sept. 5 at Zera Avraham. Shacharis will be at 8 followed by breakfast and a class from 9:10-10:10. \$125 sponsorship is still available. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rye@denverkollel.org.



'GOOD GOSSIP?' AT SEPT. 7 TORAH FOR TYCOONS

Join Dean Phil Weiser, Dean and Thompson Professor of Law, University of Colorado Law School. Former Senior Advisor for Technology and Innovation in the White House's National Economic Council and Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers Schwab for "Good Gossip? The Ethics of Speech Where Knowledge is Power" at the next Torah for Tycoons, Wed., Sept. 7. The program will be held at noon at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$20. To RSVP, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org



CHERRY CREEK MUNCH AND LEARN, MON., SEPT. 11

The next Cherry Creek Munch and Learn for men, led by Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, will be held on Mon., Sept. 11, at 12:30 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli, 499 S. Elm St. . The class focuses on Pirkei Avos. For information, contact Rabbi Amsel at 303-820-2855 or at rya@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues When Bal Tolin Doesn't Apply

Bal tolin applies only where the payment wasn't requested. worker or his agent didn't request the money. There are some authorities, however, who say that it is Rabinically forbidden to pay late even where the

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

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after they have painted and I can buy nice mezuzah covers. The wife prefers that my mezuzos be up when she takes hers down. Do I have time or must I do as she says? Can the mezuzos be wrapped in plastic and put up with tape rather than with a proper cover and nails until I move in?

Dear Name@Withheld,

Yes, you have time: Before you move in you have no obligation at all to put up mezuzos, and you don't need to comply with the request of the current occupants.

But you are a nice person and you want something tactful to tell them. So I suggest you tell them the following:

Generally, when moving out of a house it's forbidden to remove the mezuzos if a Jewish person will be moving in. This is based on an incident in the Talmud where a person moved out, took his mezuzos, and as a result, ended up burying his wife and two

sons.

But the Poskim qualify this rule: One may take down the mezuzos if he needs them and the new tenant is not going to pay for them.

That's the case here: They need the mezuzos and you don't want to pay for them. Therefore, the present occupants need not worry about removing them.

Furthermore, you said the house is going to be painted. Before painting, it's recommended that the mezuzos be removed so they don't get damaged. Once the current occupants remove the mezuzos for a permitted reason -i.e., painting - the unoccupied home may remain 'mezuzah-less' until you move in.

If for some reason you decide to put up the mezuzos before you move in, don't say the blessing since the mitzvah doesn't apply yet. Later, when you move in, remove the mezuzah, say the blessing, and put it back up. Tape or glue may be used to affix the mezuzos.

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Stories for the Soul

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started Pesach a day early," the Rav announced. "Therefore, tomorrow is a holiday. We must still eat matza and may not eat chometz (bread)."

All the members of the community, albeit shocked, adhered to the Rav's words.

At the end of the holiday, the bakers could not understand why the Jews weren't buying their bread. Instead,

policemen came and caught the bakers red handed. They arrested the plotting bakers and threw them into prison.

Shoftim (judges) in the Jewish court must be unyielding in upholding the strict law of the Torah. At the same time they must be compassionate people. Mercy, compassion and justice are vital traits.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.

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