

Mishlei: The Right Path in Life

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller-Gottlieb

Human beings naturally relate to tangible reality. It's very difficult for us to think abstractly. *Meshalim* take physical events and relate them to what's happening beyond this world.

Rashi says mother refers to Knesses Yisrael, the community of Israel, which gave birth to our identity.

Rav Moshe Feinstein was once traveling somewhere and a student was driving him. The student mistakenly closed the door on Rav Moshe's finger. He didn't utter a sound. The student only saw it when he opened the door. Rav Moshe didn't want to embarrass him. Humiliating another person is an *issur d'orayata*. Rav Moshe was able to exhibit such extraordinary self-control because he mirrored a unified *Torah* life.

Mishlei begins with an introductory verse adjuring us to learn wisdom. If you go through life without it, without a voice from outside and above you, without the flow of Hashem entering you, you're walking through life like a blind man. The instruction before the first *mashal* is, "*Shema beni mussar avicha...*" See yourself as the child you once were. A child listens to *mussar*. *Mussar* means that which is painful and difficult. It comes from the same root as *yissurim*. *Mishlei* tells us, listen to the *mussar* of your father. It's your GPS which will tell you to turn right. Turning left and being shady may be easier. It's painful to turn right, but that is what you must do. Hashem knows all the directions you could take. He gave us the Written and Oral Torah to keep us on the straight path. They are both called *mussar*. The Written Torah tells us the principles such as, "Don't murder..." The Oral Torah tell us how to apply it. The voice of the Written Torah is Hashem's voice telling us where to head. The voice of the Oral Torah is human response. Treading the straight path means hearing the voice of Hashem as he put it straight in the Torah and His voice as it came through our sages and tradition. We're also told to listen to the *Torah* of your mother.

The first *mashal* in Mishlei speaks about adornment. "For there is a garland around your head and beads around your neck." What makes a garland beautiful is the way the flowers are attached one to the other. They are not separate, each is part of a whole. The idea is that Torah and mussar should be unified.

The path you're going on and the way you get there should be one. There are people who are so absorbed in how to get there that they forget the path and visa versa. There are people who worship the *Shulchan Aruch* and forget about Hashem. *Halacha* requires a person to avoid interrupting in the middle of bentching, but if someone is drowning, you jump in and save him. The *Torah* is one entity just as the human body is one unit with unique aspects that meld together to serve one purpose. If you attempt to isolate specific *mitzvot* which you decide are worth keeping and forget about the rest, you'll end up without a *Torah*. You have to know the direction *Torah* takes you. Know what is primary and secondary, what is a *mitzva d'orayta* and *d'rabanun*, what is a *minhag* (custom) and what is a *chumra* (stringency). Know *mussar*, know the things that affect your *middot*, that make it difficult to change, and live a unified life.

I was once walking in *Geulah*, the big shopping area in *Yerushalayim*, and there was a father publicly berating his child. Rabbi Zelig Pliskin just happened to pass by. He walked over to the father and said to him quietly, "I understand you. I was once a young father too. Here's my phone number, call me and will talk about how to deal with such things in the future." He wasn't going to embarrass the father for embarrassing the son. Nor did he allow the situation to continue. The way you are in *middot* and *halacha* must be one. People sometimes go the other way as well. They don't want to deal with *halacha*. That's probably even worse. There are people who worship their version of Hashem rather than Hashem's version of Himself. If Hashem says to keep *Shabbat* and you take out your instrument and play, you're keeping *Shabbat* on your own terms. There is no unity binding the flowers into a garland. It's worshipping oneself.

Categories of Muktzah Part III

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson

The Shulchan Aruch writes that a keli shemelachto l'issur may be moved l'zorech gufo and mekomo. If an item has multiple purposes, if its primary use is for prohibited melacha, it's a keli shemelachto l'issur. One may not move such a keli on Shabbat to protect it from the elements (m'chamo l'tzel). The Mishna Berura notes an important leniency. If you are worried that the keli will be damaged, you can create a pretext and use it to bring it in, although your primary intention is to protect the object. In general, Chazal allowed creating a harama (pretext) for an *issur d'rabanun*.

The Mishna Berura points out an important stringency when it comes to the din of tzorech

gufo. You can use a hammer to crack open nuts on Shabbat. If, however you have a keli shemeleachto l'heter such as a nut cracker, that is just as accessible as the hammer, then one would not be allowed to use the keli shemelachto l'issur. Rav Bodner quotes in the name of Rav Moshe that this is not a stringency found in earlier sources. If there's any inconvenience involved in getting the keli shemelachto l'heter, one would be permitted to use the keli shemelachto l'issur.

The status of a pyrex dish that is used for both cooking and serving is determined by its dominate use. If its primarily used for cooking and sometimes for serving, it would be a keli shemelachto li'ssur. You would be allowed to

serve with it because that is l'zorech gufo. But if someone accidentally leaves it outside and you want to bring it in, it would be prohibited.

The Rema notes that *issur muktzah* means *tiltul muktzah* -moving muktzah. If a person wants to sit or lean on a large boulder which will not move, it would be permitted. Touching animals which would cause their fur to move, is a problem. The Rema further states that if you move the muktzah in a manner that does not involve touching, for example if you blow on it, it would be permitted. If you have a dollar bill and you blow it under the refrigerator, it would be muttar. The Mishna Berura adds that *tiltul ke'achar yad* - moving things in a manner that doesn't involve one's hands, would be

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have multiple functions. Since its primary function is sewing, it's considered a *keli shemelachto l'issur*. It is however permitted to use a needle to remove a splinter on *Shabbat* as this is *l'tzorech gufo*.

Are measuring cups and spoons *muktza*? Measuring things on *Shabbat* is an *issur d'rabanun*. It's a *gezeira meshum mekach umemkar*. Items on the market were usually sold in units of weight. Therefore, vessels that are used to measure may not be used on *Shabbat*. A measuring cup is a *keli shemelachto l'issur* but it may be moved *l'tzorech gufo* and *mekomo*.

Can you use a mercury thermometer on *Shabbat*? Rav Moshe Feinstein points out that

measuring a person's temperature is not at all related to buying and selling. Therefore, a mercury thermometer would be classified as a *keli shemelachto l'heter* and would not be *muktza*. Tape measurers, rulers, bathroom scales, and yardsticks are *kelim shemelachto li'ssur*.

What about devices that measure time? According to the Shulchan Aruch there's a *safek* (doubt) whether an hourglass is *muktza*. The Rema rules that *minhag Ashkenaz* is to prohibit moving it on *Shabbat*. An hourglass is similar to devices that were used in buying and selling and therefore it is included in the *gezeira*. This means one would not be allowed to play a game using an hourglass on *Shabbat*. The Mishna Berura rules that wrist

watches and pocket watches are not *muktza*. However, when it comes to a larger clock such as a grandfather clock or a time piece affixed to the wall, it would be considered *muktza* as one had no intention to move it on *Shabbat*.

What about kinetic or solar watches which derive energy from the sun or body movement? If you don't intend to add power to the watch and are just moving your body or simply going outside for other reasons, it would be ok as the watch is totally ancillary to what you're doing. A broken watch is *muktza* because it serves no function. An expensive watch that is broken but would still be worn as jewelry, is not *muktza*.

Traveling through Life Accompanied by Tehillim Part III

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

Pain and suffering can easily cause a person to lose his self-respect, but when he trusts Hashem, he will remain strong. This is a very important message. Hashem has high expectations from us. Therefore, He may push us hard to achieve. It may involve a lot of difficulty, but it should enhance our sense of self-worth, not destroy us. A lot of what we go through is a result of how we view it. We cannot control life circumstances, but we can control how we will view it and how we will react. Life circumstances don't define us. What does define us is our relationship with Hashem. Being happy and feeling good about ourselves, cultivating our relationship with Hashem, motivates us to achieve and perpetuates more happiness.

The greatness of Hashem shines through in a Jew who faces challenges with serenity and faith. It's a pure and a genuine connection to Hashem. If we work on trusting Him, we can reach true joy. It's a long journey from

understanding to feeling. Rav Yisrael Salanter famously said, "The distance between knowing and not knowing, is nothing in comparison to the distance between knowing and internalizing." It's a lifetime job, but it's what we're meant to do. Hashem gives us the ability to achieve it and when we do, we've attained something profound and meaningful and immeasurably valuable – a connection to Hashem.

Rav Mendel Futerfass, a Torah educator who grew up in communist Russia, was sentenced to several hard years of labor in Siberia. When he was released, he settled in Israel. One late Friday afternoon, he met a young man in the hospital corridor. The man was distressed that he did not have a change of clothing for *Shabbat*. Rav Mendel grabbed his *tzizit* and said, "In Siberia we didn't even have this but this we did have..." And he began reciting, "*Lechu neranana l'Hashem...*" Let us sing to Hashem..." He had the joy of connection to

Hashem. Sometimes Hashem doesn't enable us to make a blessing on *tzizit* or honor the *Shabbat* with festive clothing. But our relationship remains despite it all.

The son of the Rambam wrote a *sefer, Hamaspik L'ovdei Hashem*- The Guide to Serving Hashem. He categorized people in three groups based on their level of bitachon. The first group are people like David Hamelech for whom Hashem performed miracles. It's a very high level. The righteous don't need to do much to get what they need. The second group are nonbelievers who attribute all their accomplishments to themselves. Most people fall somewhere in the middle in the third group. They cannot rely on miracles nor do they attribute everything to themselves. They do some hishtadlut but they continue to trust in Hashem. David Hamelech says, those who find refuge in Hashem, about them we can say *ashrei*.