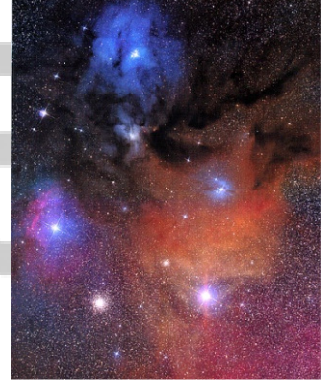


Why Mitzvot?

power to do great things...
By Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok
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Mitzvot are religious commandments, this we all know this. Yet, most do not know that the concept of religion is something foreign to Torah from Sinai. How interesting is it that we call the mitzvot of Torah religious and yet there is not a single word in the entire Torah for the word, term or concept of religion. If there is no Torah word for religion then it must be that there is no concept of religion before G-d, author of the Torah. If so, how then do we conclude that the mitzvot are religious commandments in any size, shape or form. There is no mention of religion in Torah and thus nothing religious about observing mitzvot. Being that this is the case what exactly are mitzvot? What is their purpose?



Those mitzvot which govern interpersonal human relationships have wisdom and a rationale that is clear and evident for all to see. Those commandments which govern how we deal with one another create a sane and stable society. However, much of Torah also contains ritual commandments that govern our relationship with Heaven. Many of these boggle the mind. In ancient days, when Torah was originally received, the mitzvot must have made sense to the people. However, we, now many centuries removed, have lost touch with the original understandings that our ancestors, the ancient Semitic desert nomads, knew so well.

Torah ritual laws, in both the worship and social sectors, were rather radical in their day, yet they were not completely bizarre. One can look to other ancient law codes of the time period, such as the Hammurabi and by comparison see that many a Torah law was similar to other laws in affect in other nations at the time. Still, Torah reveals unique innovations, the likes of which have no human origins. We are left to ponder the question why.

In ancient days observing Torah rituals had a profound effect upon the people psychologically. When the Tabernacle and later Temple stood the people were in awe of the actual Presence of the Divine in their midst. Still, however awed they might have been, there was still a level deep inside their psyches where Torah did not penetrate. As such inside their conscious and unconscious minds there was a struggle between everything that Torah meant and everything else that represented a world outlook contrary to Torah. This schism inside their individual psyches led to weakness in national resolve. For once one individual becomes psychologically weak, many others follow in suit.

Psychological conditions are contagious. We learned this from the lesson of the twelve spies who returned from spying out the Land of Israel. When too many individuals become paralyzed in their minds, then the nation, which is only the collective whole of such individuals also becomes equally

paralyzed. The fear of ten men contaminated the collective nation, leading to a national calamity.

When the collective psyche of the nation is weakened because of the lack of resolve of its individual members, social cohesion begins to break down. The same psychological confusion, contamination and mental illness that infect the individual are felt on the national level. When this occurs then the nation acts insane. When this occurs, needless to say, others surrounding it take advantage of the situation, almost always wreaking harm on the weak and ill neighbor nation. Needless to say, this is a recipe for disaster and destruction. Modern politicians should take note.

Torah was given to address such problems as these; to create a sane and stable society. Its laws each serve as a means to an end. Torah laws are not an end unto themselves. They were each given for a purpose. Nothing in Torah is arbitrary. The laws of Torah, given to us from outside our world, came from a source that could see our entire world and us in it, as a collective whole. Torah encompasses the entire holistic whole of humanity and of planet Earth. Its laws are meant to be the channels that, again, bring both sanity and stability, not only to human society but also to the holistic planet. Torah is the grounding force that enables us to be individually psychically stable and by being so create such psychic stability in the world at large. Essentially Torah laws are a balancing act between the people and Heaven, the people and the Earth and the people and itself.

Knowing well the psychic needs of both the people and the planet at large, mitzvot were formatted and ordained to be stabilizing factors for both, person and planet. In other words, mitzvot are psychic and ritual behaviors that channel psychic energy enabling there to be a stabilized flow of energy from the inside world to the outside world. Once this psychic life-force energy flows properly from inside to outside, from human psyche to human action, our stabilized world is empowered to return the flow from outside to inside, thus completing a circuit.

In other words, our proper actions create a stable society. The stable society serves us as a blessing of security, which in turn enables our minds and thoughts to give thanks to Heaven. Of course, in order to give such thanks, we cultivate and develop our spiritual inner powers that enable us to connect to Heaven. This is the greatest thanks we human beings can offer to Heaven. The stable flow and movement of psychic energy is what keeps the whole universe in balance. Thus the observance of Torah commandments is the conduit through which the people of Israel participate in this great universal program.

Ritual commandments are predicated upon the basis of the proper flow and movement of psychic energy through the entire system of our planet. The entire system of which I speak includes humanity, Israel and our individual psyches as integral parts of the structure. Ritual observances were specifically designed to unleash the inner content of the national collective unconscious as well as to interact with external nature, aligning the natural forces with the internal individual psyche. This is the foundation of the principle of mind over matter; where focused and concentrated thought can actually affect matter and form at the atomic level. This is the underlying method of being a "light to the nations."

The fundamental structure of our great universe is that there are three general dimensional boundaries; these being time, space and mind. Our physical universe expands outward seemingly infinitely through space; time marches on and apparently it always has. Yet, before there was time, and prior to there being any space, first there was mind.

There had to be some form of primordial thought or will or else how could the Big Bang ever have occurred? Something inside the Bang made it go off. Something inside it knew that it must explode. Something there understood that the present state of existence was untenable and had to change, and thus, it did. Prior to their being action, there must always be a thought. The presence of thought betrays the presence of Mind. As we say in the song L'kha Dodi, Sof Ma'aseh B'mahshava Tehilah (last in action, first in thought).

Mind is consciousness; consciousness is thought; thought is sentience; sentience is awareness; awareness is intelligence; intelligence is of the mind. Thus, we have gone full circle. Time and space had its beginning and will also have its end. We cannot say the same thing for mind. Mind consciousness preceded this universe and will outlast it. Mind consciousness enters this universe, creates and inhabits finite physical forms. These are our bodies. We exist before them and we will continue to exist after them. Bodies are merely temporary tools of transportation and interaction for our brief sojourns here in finite space time.

As we enter space time our minds find that they are indeed too grand to be completely squeezed into finite forms. Therefore, only the smallest portion of our minds enters into the physical body. The vast majority of our minds stand outside of space time in its original place. There is never any separation between that part of ourselves in the temporary finite body and the rest of us residing outside it and outside this universe. However, for that part of ourselves that squeezes into the physical body, its focus is drawn entirely towards this finite physical world. When this occurs it is as if it turns away from those portions of itself that cannot fit into the finite body.

Therefore, what occurs is a split of focus. The small part of our minds that resides in the temporary physical body comes to be called the conscious mind; whereas the greater whole of our being fails to be recognized by the small part of the mind distracted by the physical universe. Thus the great whole of the mind becomes known as the unconscious. Remember this, these terms and relationships are only applicable from the vantage point of this finite universe. From the vantage point of the greater mind, there is no separation between conscious and unconscious. Outside of space time all is still one as it always has been. Only the small portion entering the finite physical realms experiences a breach.

Our minds are split between two universes, the one we know as space time and the other we simply know as mind. Both universes are actual and real. They are not simply metaphors or symbols. Just as our minds exist mostly in the greater universe, so too does the source of space time exist in this greater universe. In other words, only the smallest portion of matter and form make up our finite universe. This is why we only need the smallest portion of mind to deal with it. Yet, surrounding all is the greater universe in which reside the greater mind and the greater space time, which is the source of our entire finite universe.

Torah is a reality that transcends the mind. Its source is from an even higher universe. Like everything else, Torah takes a finite physical form when it comes into our space time universe.

Thus we have the Book; just as we have a body, just like everything else has a form. Torah emanates from the source of all things; it is the source of mind and consciousness. As such Torah is actually the source of form; within it resides the sentient consciousness that has arranged and formatted all the universes. Torah is the blueprints of existence. However, in order to understand it beyond its surface applications one must cultivate deeper consciousness in order to recognize deeper strata.

Torah is an anchor through multi-dimensional space time and consciousness. Its present form of rituals and commandments specifically outline how it is that we, through consciousness, channel the universal creative energies through the thought in our minds and projected outwards through the archetypal deeds we perform.

Ritual commandments of Torah therefore have nothing to do with religion. Religion is an exercise of the mind. It is the study and practice of theology. Theology is merely a portion of philosophy. Both are mental exercises that try to explain the reality of the finite physical world surrounding us. Torah is not limited to such petty pursuits. Torah is far more than a mental exercise. Torah transcends the physical mind as it does the physical universe. Therefore, observing Torah mitzvot should not be called religious; it should be called natural. It should be called the natural psychic function of everyone of the nation of Israel.

The purpose of mitzvot therefore is that they make us to be what we are: fully actualized human beings, created in the Image of G-d. One does not have to be religious in order to fully observe the mitzvot of Torah. Funny as this may sound, but it is true.

Today, religious observance is more about politics, culture and ethnicity than it is about Torah. What we need therefore is to become less religious and more Torah observant. Sounds so contradictory by modern standards, does it not? Yet, reread what I have written here, contemplate it well. Seek out Torah beyond its finite form and you will see the truth in my words here. I will not have to convince you, we will have no need of philosophical debates and dialogues. You will see for yourself and know for sure.

You will experience true Mind, above the limitations of finite space time. When you see with your own greater eyes the greater Truth of Torah, then no one will be able to blind you again. Take the time, see for yourself.

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