



Ibn Ezra (Lev. 19:31): "Torah prohibits falsehoods, not truths." They include fortune telling, horoscopes, palm readers, and all acts that based on nature, are unrelated to the promised results. Modern day Kabbalists fall under this prohibition.

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Weekly Parsha

Shoftim

RABBI BERNARD FOX

"When you siege a city many days to wage war against it, to seize it, do not destroy its trees - by swinging an ax against them - because from them you will eat. And you should not cut them down. Is the tree of the field a person that it will enter into siege before you?" (Devarim 20:19)

The Torah includes various laws that regulate the waging of war. One of these laws is presented in

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40 Days & Nights

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

"And the glory of God dwelt on Mt. Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days, and He called unto Moses on the seventh day from the cloud. And the appearance of the glory of God was like a devouring fire at the summit of the mountain in the eyes of the Children of Israel. And Moses came in the midst of the cloud, and he ascended the mountain, and it was that Moses was in the mountain 40 days and 40 nights." [1]

What is the importance of Moses' 40-day stay on Sinai? In Deuteronomy, Moses tells the Jews that he fasted during these first 40 days on Sinai. (The omission here is

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Ancient Hebrew, as may have been written by Moses' in his first Torah sections

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Weekly Parsha

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the above passage. When we lay siege to a city, we are not permitted to destroy the fruit-bearing trees that in the countryside surrounding the city. The passage is somewhat vague in its explanation for this prohibition. Sforno, Nachmanides and others explain that the prohibition reflects our confidence in the ultimate outcome of the campaign. How is this confidence represented by this law? We are not permitted to destroy the fruit-bearing tree because we will be successful in our efforts to conquer this territory and we do not want to take possession of a territory that we have ravaged. We will want to take advantage of the territories productive resources. Therefore, in waging war we must take care to protect the resources of the territory. We will benefit from our restraint when we ultimately triumph in our efforts.[1]

This passage explicitly prohibits the destruction of fruit-bearing trees when waging war. However, Sefer HaChinuch explains that this mitzvah also prohibits any unjustified destruction of fruit-bearing trees. In addition, this mitzvah does not only prohibit the destruction of fruit-bearing trees. It also extends to the destruction of any object of utility. It is prohibited to destroy vessels, clothing or food. Sefer HaChinuch relies on Maimonides for this ruling. Sefer HaChinuch posits that the general prohibition against destroying fruit-bearing trees and other objects of utility is included in this mitzvah on a Torah level. In other words, although the passage only mentions the destruction of fruit-bearing trees in the course of waging war, the destruction of other objects of utility is included in the Torah's prohibition.[2] Others argue that this is not Maimonides' positions. They contend that the Torah level prohibition only includes the destruction of fruit-bearing trees. The destruction of other objects of utility is included in the commandment on a Rabbinic level. In other words, the Torah does not

prohibit the destruction of the objects. The Sages formulated this prohibition as an extension of the Torah's prohibition against the destruction of fruit-bearing trees.[3]

There is a strong basis for this second position. Maimonides comments that the punishment for the violation of this commandment is lashes. However, he also notes that this punishment is reserved for instances in which a fruit-bearing tree is destroyed. If any other object of utility is destroyed, lashes are not administered.[4] This seems to support the position that the destruction of these other objects is a Rabbinic injunction. Like other Rabbinic injunction, no lashes are administered for its violations.

However, Sefer HaChinuch responds to this argument. He explains that in order for lashes to be administered for the violation of a mitzvah, the prohibition must be clearly stated in the Written Torah and not merely included in the Oral Law. The passage above only refers to the destruction of fruit-bearing trees. The inclusion of other objects of utility is based on the Oral Law. There is not clear reference to this inclusion in the Written Law. Therefore, although the Torah law includes all objects of utility, lashes can only

be administered for the destruction of fruit-bearing trees.[5]

Maimonides explains that it is permitted to destroy a tree that is not of a fruit-bearing species. Similarly, it is permitted to destroy a tree that is of a fruit-bearing species but is too old or unhealthy to yield an amount of fruit worthy of harvest.[6]

This law seems to contradict Maimonides' ruling regarding the destruction of objects of utility. As mentioned above, Sefer HaChinuch contends that this prohibition is included in the mitzvah on a Torah level. Maimonides explains that this prohibition includes the destruction of food. However, he seems to indicate that the destruction of any amount of food is prohibited. We can assume that Maimonides would acknowledge that the

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Weekly Parsha

amount must be useable to be included in the prohibition. But clearly even an unhealthy tree or old tree will produce a useable amount of fruit. True, it may not be practical to harvest this amount of fruit. But the fruit is still of use. So, as long as the tree can bear a usable amount of fruit, why can it be destroyed?

In order to answer this question, it must be recognized that there are two approaches to understanding the prohibition against destroying fruit-bearing trees. The simple explanation is that the tree is of importance and significance because of the fruit it bears and will bear in the future. Because it is prohibited to destroy the fruit, it is also prohibited to destroy the tree that bears and will bear the fruit. In other words, the primary prohibition included in the mitzvah is the destruction of fruit or food. The passage tells us that even the tree that will produce the fruit cannot be destroyed. This seems to be the position of Sifrei.[7]

The alternative approach is that the destruction of a fruit-bearing tree is not a secondary prohibition. Such an act of destruction is inherently prohibited. It is prohibited to destroy a resource. The destruction of this resource is not prohibited simply because of the product that it will produce. The very status of the tree as a useful resource creates a prohibition against its destruction.

What is the practical difference between these two approaches? According to the first approach, it will only be permitted to destroy a fruit-bearing tree if it can no longer produce an amount of fruit that is of significance. Whether a person would actually trouble oneself to harvest this small amount of fruit is irrelevant. But according to the second approach, the tree must be evaluated as a resource of value. If it is no longer a resource of value, then it can be destroyed. True, the fruit it will bear may be of some utility. But the tree must be evaluated as a useful resource – a tree that will be harvested. If it is not worthy of harvesting, it is no longer a useful resource and it can be destroyed. This seems to be Maimonides' position.

In other words, according to Maimonides, the specific definition of destruction differs from object to object. In each case, halacha considers the utility of the object or its general purpose. In the case of food, any amount that can reasonably be eaten cannot be destroyed. This is because food is designated for eating. If it will be eaten it cannot be destroyed. But a fruit-bearing tree also has a purpose or utility. It is a resource. Its purpose is to provide an amount of food that is worthy of harvesting. No one plants a tree for a single fruit. The planter's intent is to nurture a resource that will bear a harvest of fruit. Once the tree can no

longer serve this purpose, it has lost its utility and can be destroyed. ■

[1] Rabbaynu Ovadia Sforno, Commentary on Sefer Devarim, 20:19. Rabbaynu Moshe ben Nachman (Ramban / Nachmanides), Commentary on Sefer DEvarim 20:19.

[2] Rav Aharon HaLeyve, Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 529.

[3] Rav Yehudah Rosanes, Mishne

Le'Melech, Hilchot Melachim 6:9.

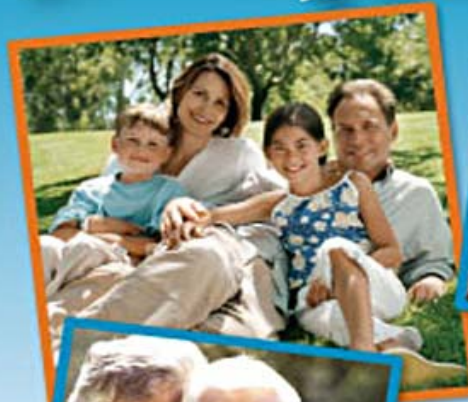
[4] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Maimon (Rambam / Maimonides) Mishne Torah, Hilchot Melachim 6:10.

[5] Rav Aharon HaLeyve, Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 529.

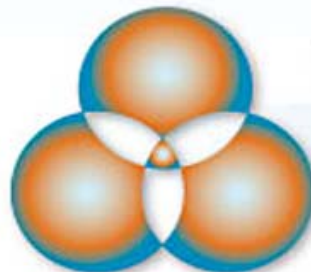
[6] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Maimon (Rambam / Maimonides) Mishne Torah, Hilchot Melachim 6:9.

[7] Sifrei Parshat Shoftim, chapter 60.

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(40 Days continued from page 1)

of interest) Ibn Ezra states that Moses' fast of 40 days and 40 nights is a "great, unprecedented wonder".[2] But we must learn whether this fasting was Moses' idea, God's command...or did it just happen? And what would be lost, had Moses not fasted? He would still have received the Torah, as it says "Ascend the mountain to Me and remain there and I will give you the Tablets of stone, and the Torah and the Mitzvah which I have written to teach them"[3]. What difference would it make, had Moses received the Tablets, without fasting?

Let us review the order of Moses' ascensions on Sinai. Moses first received and wrote the Torah, commencing with Genesis and concluding with his present-day, the event of Revelation on Sinai located in Parsha Yisro. This means that all of the Torah subsequent to Sinai (Parshas Yisro) was not yet given to Moses at Sinai.[4] Moses then descends Sinai and informs the Jews of this Torah, which they accept. On the 7th of Sivan, Moses ascends Sinai for his first of three 40-day periods on the mountain, to receive the first Tablets. On his last day – 17th of Tammuz – Moses learns of the Jews sinning with the Golden Calf. He remains there on the mountain that last day, prays for the Jews not to be destroyed, and receives a favorable reply from God[5]. But keep in mind that during these 40 days until the Jews sinned, Moses' abstinence from food was not on account of any sin, since no sin was revealed to him until day 40[6]. On this 40th day – the 17th of Tammuz – Moses descends, breaks the first set of Tablets, punishes the wicked Jews, and ascends to pray for the Jews. He prays for 40 days and night, until the 29th of Av: although God rescinded His initial decree to kill the nation, the Jews still bore the sin[7] of the Golden Calf which Moses wished to remove during this second 40-day period. At God's command to receive a replacement set of Tablets, Moses descends and quarries a new set of sapphire Tablets on which God will inscribe the original 10 Commandments. He then ascends for a final 40-day period dwelling on the mountain, and received complete atonement for the Jews on Yom Kippur, forty days after the 29th of Av. (Rashi)

When describing the actual events at Sinai in Exodus, the Torah omits any mention of Moses' abstinence from food or drink, "...and it was that Moses was in the mountain 40 days and 40 nights." Not a word of his abstinence. Why then does Moses tell the Jews about his fasting when he rebukes the Jews in Deuteronomy? The Torah is silent about his fast until this point:



"And in Horeb you angered God, and God was angered with you to destroy you. When I ascended the mountain, to receive the Tablets of stone, the Tablets of the Treaty which God forged with you; and I dwelled on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights; bread I did not eat, and water I did not drink."[8]

During those first 40 days to receive the first Tablets, the Jews had not yet sinned. Why then did Moses include this ascent in his rebuke? Additionally, why now does he mention his abstinence from food?

Moses continues his rebuke, "And I beseeched God like at first; 40 days and 40 nights, bread I did not eat and water I did not drink." [9] Here, Moses refers to his second ascent upon Sinai to obtain forgiveness for the Jews' sin. But we wonder, why did Moses commence with the rebuke "And I beseeched God like at first"? What does Moses mean by the words "like at first"? We are surprised to read this, since we already proved that Moses' first ascent was not for any sin of the Jews, but to receive the original Tablets at God's

command. This ascent predated the Golden Calf. So what is Moses' equation between his second ascent to gain forgiveness, and his first ascent? We are forced to say that Moses' abstinence during his first 40 days is somehow akin to his subsequent ascension and prayer for another 40 days after the Jews sinned, where he again did not require any nourishment. What is the equation?

Abstinence: Moses' Lesson

What was Moses responding to with his second ascension on Sinai? The answer: the Golden Calf, the Jews' sin of idolatry. What is this sin?

Idolatry is man's attempt to gain goodness in his life, but does so through the misconception that animals, man, inanimate, or imaginary objects possess powers and can offer goodness. Humans are indeed dependent beings: we require food, clothing and shelter and have a myriad of insecurities. We sometimes become feeble, unsure that we can provide for ourselves, also in doubt about our future. Therefore, we succumb to hearsay regarding "powers" that can guarantee our needs. We create idols; seek out palm readers, even those as great as King Saul sought to resolve insecurities by inquiring of the dead[10]. Unless we arm ourselves with truths, we will be no different. Today's Parshas Shoftim clearly prohibits all such false practices, as Ibn Ezra says, "the Torah prohibits that which is false." [11]

This very need expressed in idolatry, is precisely what Moses emphasized, and desired to address. Moses teaches that we can obtain not only our needs, but so much more...but only with adherence to God. He tells the Jews that God "did one better" by removing any of his human needs. Idolatry attempts to secure the needs one has according to his natural disposition, that of an organism in need of food, clothing and shelter. And these, an idol cannot accomplish. In stark contrast, not only can God deliver those needs, but also, He can sustain man without needing to satisfy these natures...God can override nature. This is why Moses tells the Jews that he did not eat or drink, even during his first ascent, which had nothing to do with the Jews' sin. During that first stay on Sinai, Moses' attachment to God and His system procured such Divine Providence, that his normal needs were obviated. Revealing this great wonder to the Jews, Moses wished to awaken the sinful Jews to the exact foolishness of their sin. As an educator, Moses decided to unveil the Jews' underlying notions

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Perfection

that led to their sin: "You sought protection from gold which is inanimate, while God completely overrode my very needs. In this manner, Moses wished the Jews might realize their falsehoods, and abandon them. In this manner, they can truly repent. Informing the Jews that God removed his need to eat, Moses contrasted their idolatrous motivations, which never succeeded, to God's manifest proof of His complete control over all. This should make an impression on those seeking security, that it could only come from God.

Earlier in Deuteronomy[12] Moses states, "And He afflicted you and hungered you and fed you the Manna that you and your forefathers did not know, in order to make known that not on bread alone does man live, but on all that comes forth from God's mouth does man live. Your clothing did not become worn from upon you, and your feet did not swell these forty years." Again, Moses teaches the Jews how God sustained them with a miraculous food, how their clothing miraculously never wore, nor did they show physical symptoms normally met with those who traveled for so long.

Moses' message is not that we should abandon natural law and rely on nature, for Moses himself would not do so. Moses' entire life was spent educating the Jews about a land that would provide sustenance, for the very reason that we must live in accord with our natural need for sustenance. So what was Moses' goal in mentioning all God's miracles, and his endurance with no food for 40 days and nights?

Moses' lesson is that while we witness natural law to be constant, we must have greater conviction in He who created and guides this law. If God says that Torah adherence will earn us all our needs, we must not abandon Torah because we feel this loss of work hours will lessen our income. We don't know how God will assure our needs are met, and truthfully, we don't need to know, nor can we know. God created this universe...do you know 'how' He did so? No man ever did. God's knowledge and controls are unknowable, but His words are clear: He will provide, if we live the life He commands, for our own good. So if we are convinced that God exists, and that He does in fact control all, and that He promises to care for our needs if we follow Him, then other considerations must not take priority in our minds. Creating Golden Calves we assume will protect us, is an extreme illustration of the same falsehoods we harbor today: we work tirelessly, assuming everything we earn, is a result only of how much we work. God is not in our equations, just as God was not in the equation when the Jews created

the Calf.

God addresses this insecurity in Malachi[13], where He says that we may test Him when giving our charity: "...and test Me please with this, says the Master of Hosts, (see) if I do not open up the storehouses of heaven, and empty out (for you) a blessing until you have more than enough". God is guaranteeing that by giving tzedaka, we assure for ourselves financial security, and not an average income, but "until we have more than enough". Our normal disposition is that when we part with money, we have less. But God teaches the opposite.

So what will you follow: human thinking based on natural law, or God, who created and controls those very laws?

Moses had no plan to abstain from natural law while on Mount Sinai. It happened that while there, engaged in prophecy and Torah study, God suspended natural law so that Moses endured for 40 days and 40 nights, awake, and not eating. Moses' attachment to Torah earned him God's providence. Our attachment to Torah will earn us the same. ■

[1] Exod. 24:16-18

[2] Exod. 24:18

[3] Exod. 24:12

[4] Rashi, Exod. 24:4,7. This is reasonable, since all subsequent events recorded in our Torah from Yisro through Deuteronomy had not yet transpired. And even if God had included these future events comprising the Jews' future sins in this version of the Torah, free will would be affected, which violates God's will.

[5] Exod. 32:14

[6] Deut. 9:11

[7] Deut. 9:18 states that Moses sought to remove the Jews' "sin", since he already obtained pardon from their destruction, as seen in Exodus 32:14.

[8] Deut. 9:8,9

[9] Deut. 9:18

[10] Samuel I, 28:7-19

[11] Lev. 19:31

[12] Deut. 8:3,4

[13] Malachi 3:10

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A Wise Statute of Limitations

RABBI DR. MICHAEL BERNSTEIN

Contrary to what we might expect, the attempt to do harm may elicit a more severe judicial response than the harm or transgression itself. This phenomenon occurs with regard to the prohibition against perjury (19:18-19). “And the judges shall investigate thoroughly, and behold, the witnesses testified falsely, they spoke falsely against their brother. Then you shall do to them as they conspired to do to their brother, and you shall eradicate the evil from your midst.”

How do the judges in this case determine that the witnesses perjured themselves? The Talmud explains (Makkos 2a) that when two witnesses place the first witnesses in a different location at the very time they claim to have witnessed the crime, the second witnesses are believed. For instance, the second witnesses say, “How could these men have seen the defendant commit murder in New York on Monday afternoon when they were with us in Los Angeles on Monday afternoon?” In this case, the Torah demands that we accept the second witnesses, thereby discrediting the first witnesses and exonerating the defendant. The perjurers then suffer the selfsame punishment the defendant would have suffered had their testimony stood. These perjurers are called eidim zomemim, conspiring witnesses.

Strangely, however, this entire process can only take place from the time the court hands down their sentence (gmar din) until it is carried out. The Talmud states (Makkos 5a) that if the second witnesses appear after the court has administered its sentence, the first witnesses are not liable to punishment (kaasher zamam velo kaasher asah). For instance, if the court has executed the defendant for his crimes, the perjurers receive no punishment.

It is hard to fathom the justice in this detail of the law. Why should God grant immunity from punishment to perjurers if their schemes succeed? Wouldn't that be all the more reason to punish them? The Maharsha suggests that causing the courts to carry out an unjust sentence is too heinous a crime for mere punishment in the courts; only God can deal with criminals of this sort. Perhaps we can

offer another suggestion.

The overriding goal of the Torah's legal system is to achieve the closest possible approximation to absolute and comprehensive justice. In the case of false witnesses, perfect justice would demand that they be given a variable punishment, depending on the harm they sought to cause with their testimony. There is, however, a practical difficulty with such a formulation of the law. Since the second, unrebutted witnesses are believed over the first, there would be a dangerous opportunity for high mischief. For instance, a disgruntled relative of the executed defendant, whose anger may fester and mushroom over time, may then decide to take the law into his own hands and exact revenge. All he needs to do is find two scoundrels who happen to have been out of sight on the day in question and would, for a few pieces of gold, testify that the first witnesses were with them in a remote place at the time of the crime. Without a statute of limitations, witnesses would forever be vulnerable to this sort of revenge, which is nearly impossible to disprove. A law so structured would discourage truthful witnesses from testifying and forever endanger courageous ones who do. Therefore, the Torah establishes the execution itself as the cutoff for their vulnerability.

Accordingly, the duration of the witnesses' vulnerability is relatively short, from the time the sentence is handed down until it is carried out. If they did indeed perjure themselves, there is enough time for truthful witness to come forward and contest their testimony. As for vengeful friends or relatives of the defendant, they are unlikely to be moved to action before the accused is actually convicted, and once he is executed they can no longer do anything. This leaves them with very little time to suborn perjury. Furthermore, from a psychological perspective, the motivation for revenge will not arise until the sentence has actually been carried out, and by then, it is too late to do anything. These laws, therefore, protect the witnesses from attack and allow the legal system to function with maximum integrity. ■

Curriculum: a Fundamental Omission

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

In a recent article published by World Jewish Digest, "Will Your Grandchildren be Jewish?" Anthony Gordon and Richard Horowitz cite some unnerving statistics:

"According to the NJPS 2000, 5.2 million people in America today constitute the core Jewish population. Of these, approximately one fifth classified themselves as having been born Jewish, but having no identification with any religious group. Forty-seven percent of Jews who married in the past five years wed non-Jews, up from a readjusted intermarriage figure of 43 percent a decade ago. Put differently: the rate of intermarriage has risen dramatically in the past 30 years, from an average of 9 percent before 1965 to 52 percent in 1990. (Secular Jews in the 18-39 age group have an intermarriage rate of 72 percent, while those over age 39 have an intermarriage rate of 35 percent.) What is more, the NJPS 1990 indicated that secular, Reform and Conservative Jews are far more likely to intermarry than Orthodox Jews."

"According to the NJPS 1990, mixedmarriage households contained 770,000 children less than 18 years of age. Only 28 percent of these children were being raised as Jews; 41 percent were being raised in another religion; and 31 percent were being raised with no religion at all. Moreover, while 28 percent of children of intermarriage are being raised as Jews, only between 10 percent to 15 percent of this entire group ultimately marries Jews themselves."

The intermarriage rate and cult-induced conversions of our Jewish youths are sadly found even among more observant families. Certainly, less informed teens succumb to the persuasiveness of missionaries, and to their own lack of conviction in Judaism, in even larger numbers.

Over the years, we have highlighted this problem, urging parents and educators to take real, meaningful and effective steps to halt this crime. Insuring that your Jewish schools offer mandatory classes in false religions, their flaws, and how Judaism differs based on its clear proofs and reason...is not an option. Inexcusably, many schools and parents do not respond to this holocaust, and curriculums still omit any class on this subject. This is due to parents' and educators' own lack of conviction in Judaism's unique nature.

Tragically, this year we witnessed orthodox rabbis who hosted cardinals and bishops at their yeshiva, inviting them to engage in Talmud and Torah study, as if these Christians contribute to Torah understanding, and as if these religions are valid. This illustrates how liberal and opposed to truth Jewish leaders have become. These rabbis care more for social acceptance by idolatrous religionists, than they care about the truth: Judaism abhors such religions for its denial of the true concept of God, and for its destruction of human souls. Insecurities of such leaders and parents are to blame, that Judaism and Jews are diminishing. The result: 1000s of young Jews are unaffiliated with reasoning to reject other religions. But this could have been averted.

As World Jewish Digest concluded, the only recourse is education. Those of you who recognize this problem must take action, since no one else will. No one else can. The responsibility falls squarely on us.

The school year is about to resume. We have just commenced sounding the Shofar to call our hearts back to repenting. As Torah study and education is the one mitzvah that surpasses all others, the lack of this education is the greatest sin. The one area neglected in most Jewish schools, and the one area that will also correct the problem of intermarriage and conversions, is the study and education of Judaism's Fundamentals. Make certain now, before curriculums become solidified, that your schools include at least one mandatory class at every middle and high school grade level on what makes Judaism true, and other religions false. With this knowledge, students will become convinced of their heritage, preventing any attraction to other religions, intermarriage and conversion years later. Knowledge of the falsehood and lies of other religions, teamed with clear understanding of Judaism's Fundamentals is a powerful defense, and the most primary knowledge every Jew must know.

Can you as a parent or teacher prove to your children and students why they should not accept any other religion?

We will mention again that we have addressed alien religions, their flaws, and Judaism's fundamental and proven truths in our JewishTimes, issues 116-126. Use these issues as a springboard to your own discussions.

Judaism is Judaism, primarily due to its foundation in a few fundamental truths. Above all else, reasoning and proof are the only barometers used in accepting any idea. Judaism rejects what is baseless, and opposed to proven knowledge. Only that which is proven by the mind, experienced by ourselves, or accepted by the Rabbis, can be part of Judaism, and is something that we must accept. It is for this reason that we reject religions based on the claims – and no

witnesses – of one or a few people. Such claims prove nothing, and therefore, acceptance of that which is not proven means that one wishes to lie to himself. It is self-destructive. But these are the methods by which all other religions function: they ask adherents to blindly accept supposed events. Legends of Jesus walking on water, feeding the masses and healing the sick do not become spread until hundreds of years after the "supposed" events. Where were the supposed masses during this interval? Why the absolute silence about such miracles? Silence existed precisely because the stories of such vents were fabrications. These questions expose Christianity as lies. Few individuals were successful at generating belief in these stories initially, and only later, others created a religion based on this blind faith. But no claims were ever proven. The same with Islam, which commences as an idolatrous star worship religion, depicted in their flag. Unfortunately, many Jews are ignorant of these facts, and also accept other religions as "good for them". These notions send a message of acceptance to Jewish youths, and so, intermarriage grows. But had these parents benefited from classes on religion, they would have developed into adults with clear conviction in Judaism, they would have insured this education in their schools, and far less Jews today would live as Christians.

In direct opposition to the blind faith nature of all other religions, Judaism demands every person – Noachide of Jew – to use his and her mind to realize what is true about all this existence we witness. Judaism demands we view prove religious truths the same way that we prove natural law. We know the universe exists, and the many laws that govern all in, and above the Earth. No missionary can cause anyone to abandon his or her conviction in gravity, math, or the sky's blue hue. Persuasive arguments are ineffective, if they contradict proven truths. So too, we can imbue our youth with this level of 100% conviction, if we stop omitting classes from yeshivas and day schools that address other religions' flaws, and teach Judaism's Fundamental truths.

Do you as a parent or teacher know Judaism's Fundamentals?

In this week's Parshas Shoftim (Deut. 18:9) Rashi taught that although we must not learn the other religions for purposes of practice, we must study them so as to teach our children how damaging they are. It is only he or she who has no answers, who is susceptible to intermarriage and conversion.

Make sure your child leads a long life dedicated to what is true, to Judaism. Insure their education includes classes on Judaism's Fundamentals, and the falsehoods of man made religions, as Rashi teaches. In this manner, your children and grandchildren will live as God deems the best life...as Jews. ■

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expectancy is extremely limited without a kidney donor. None of us are a match. Help us give to a man who has always given to us, help us give him a tomorrow. We are pleading with everyone to please help save our father. If you or anyone you know can find it in your hearts to give the gift of life, a most selfless and humane act, please contact us toll free at 1-877-489-6567. Only 0 blood type please. There is no expense to the donor. www.kidneyfordad.com

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The depth of our love for our father can only be matched by the depth of the pain that we feel for his suffering. How do you watch the man, who has given his life for his family, lay night after night hooked up to the dialysis machine and fighting sleep because he fears that the morning will not come for him. This is our father living with kidney failure. Our Dad was diagnosed with kidney failure and placed on dialysis, which for many is a lifeline. But, our father is in the small percentage for which dialysis has not helped. His life

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