

## Quotes of Kitzur Shulchan Aruch by Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried Volume 1 Translated by Rabbi Avrohom Davis

"I have set Hashem before me always." [Psalms 16:8] This is a fundamental rule of the Torah and of the attributes of the righteous who walk before God. For we cannot compare a person's lifestyle, his activities and affairs when he is alone, to his lifestyle, and activities and affairs when he is before a great king. Similarly, his conversation and speech when he is amongst family or relatives, [cannot be compared] to what they would be in the presence of a king, because then he would certainly take special care that all his activities and conversations be refined and correct. How much more so when you contemplate that Hashem, the greatest of kings, the Holy One, blessed is He, Whose glory fills the entire world, stands above you and views your actions, as it is said: "If a person will hide in hidden places will I not see him? Says the word of Hashem, Do I not fill the heavens and the earth!" [Jeremiah 23:24] [Bearing this in mind] it is certain that you will immediately acquire a feeling of reverence and submissiveness for the awesomeness of Hashem, Blessed be He, and be ashamed [to sin] before Him.<sup>1</sup>

In the lavatory it is forbidden to think about Torah matters (as is stated later, Chapter 5 par. 2). Therefore while you are there, it is best to think of business affairs and accounts in order not to think of Torah or God forbid indulge in sinful thoughts. On Shabbos, when it is forbidden to think of business you should think of interesting events that you saw or heard.<sup>2</sup>

Every Jewish man must study the Torah, no matter whether he is poor or rich, whether he is healthy or suffering pain, whether he is young or very old. Even a beggar who goes from door to door must set aside a certain time for Torah study during the day and night, as it is written: [Joshua 1:8] "And you shall meditate in it day and night." If a person lacks the knowledge to study Torah or it is impossible for him [to study] because he is burdened with too many concerns, then he should support others who do engage in Torah study, and it will be considered as though he himself had studied, as our Rabbis of blessed memory, explained the verse: "Rejoice Zevulun in your going out and Yissachar in your tents." [Deuteronomy 33:18] Zevulun and Yissachar entered into a partnership; Zevulun engaged in business and supported Yissachar, so that he would be free to be engrossed in the study of Torah. Because of this, the Torah mentions Zevulun before Yissachar, since the Torah learning of Yissachar was made possible through the support of

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<sup>1</sup> 3 – Chapter 1:1

<sup>2</sup> 17 – Chapter 4:4

Zevulun. And so we find in the Mishnah: "Shimon the brother of Azaryah said ...," [Zevachim 1:2] Shimon is described as the brother of Azaryah, because Azaryah was engaged in business and provided the needs of his brother Shimon, who was engrossed in Torah study. They made an agreement between themselves, that Azaryah would have a share in Shimon's reward for [Torah] study. Even so, every person should do his utmost to study Torah, even just a little, every day and every night.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps a person might say: "Since envy, lust and glory and the like, are bad character traits that remove a man from the world, I will completely abstain from them, and keep away from them entirely," to the point that he will not eat meat, nor drink wine, nor marry a woman, nor live in a comfortable dwelling, nor wear decent clothes, but he will put on a sackcloth, or something similar; this too is a bad way of life, and it is forbidden to follow it. Anyone who follows this life-style is called a sinner. For in regard to the nazir it is written, [Numbers 6:11 (Nazarite)] "To atone for him who sinned by the dead," [...is translated by the Rabbis as "for committing a sin against his soul," "against himself," by denying himself things which are permitted.] and [our Rabbis] of blessed memory said, "If a nazir who abstained only from drinking wine, needs an atonement, a person who abstains from everything, how much more so does he need [an atonement]." [Ta'anis 11a] Therefore, our Rabbis of blessed memory ordained that you should abstain only from those things which the Torah prohibits, but do not prohibit to yourself, things which are permitted by means of vows and oaths. Thus said our Sages of blessed memory, "Is not what the Torah forbids enough for you that you have to prohibit to yourself things which are permissible?" [Yerushalmi, Nedarim 9:1] And our Rabbis of blessed memory have forbidden us to inflict pain on ourselves with more fasting than is required. Concerning all these and similar matters, King Solomon, peace be upon him, said, "Do not be excessively righteous, nor overly wise, why destroy yourself." [Ecclesiastes 7:16] And he said [in the same vein], [Proverbs 4:26] "Measure well the path of your foot then you will stay on a straight course." [Footnote: Malbim explains the word paleis as a form of peles, the name of a measuring instrument. Man should measure carefully to find the middle road of life, staying clear of the extremes.]<sup>4</sup>

Anyone who gives short measure or weight, even to a non-Jew, transgresses a negative commandment as it is said: Leviticus 19:35. "Do not falsify measurements, whether in length, weight, or volume," (see Ch.182:1, 4 below). The punishment for giving short measure and weight is very severe, as it is impossible for a person who gives short measure or weight to repent

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<sup>3</sup> 191 – Chapter 27:2

<sup>4</sup> 201-203 – Chapter 29:7

properly, since he does not know how much and whom to compensate. Even the active participation in communal affairs is not considered suitable repentance.<sup>5</sup>

The holy Shabbos is the great sign and covenant which the Holy One Blessed is He gave to us, to know that in six days the Almighty made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and abstained from work on the seventh day. This is the foundation of our faith. Our Sages of blessed memory said: [See Talmud Yerushalmi, Maseches Nedarim 3:9 and Rambam, Shabbos 30:15.] "Shabbos is equivalent to all the mitzvos." "Whoever keeps the Shabbos in accordance with its laws is regarded as though he fulfilled the entire Torah;" [Zohar, Beshalach 47.] and "whoever desecrates the Shabbos is like one who completely denies the whole Torah." [See Maseches Chulin 5a.] And so it is said in Ezra: "And You came down on Mount Sinai and You gave Your people righteous judgments and true laws ... and Your holy Shabbos You made known to them." [Nehemiah 9:13. According to tradition, both the books of Ezra and Nechemiah were authored by Ezra.]<sup>6</sup>

[Laws of a Woman at Childbirth on Shabbos]: As soon as a woman feels the first signs of labor, even if she is unsure, a midwife may be summoned even [if she must come] from a great distance. [Or the woman may be taken to the hospital.] A woman at childbirth is considered a critically-ill patient, and the Shabbos may be violated for whatever she requires. However, if it can possibly be done in an unusual manner, or by a non-Jew, it should be done. [Though her situation is critical, a woman in confinement is part of the normal pattern in life. Therefore, it is preferable, where possible, to do the melachos in an unusual manner or have a non-Jew do them.] She is considered "a woman at childbirth" when seated on the birthing-stool, [Or delivery table] or as soon as there is a flow of blood, [Or waterflow] or if she doesn't have the strength to walk on her own. Also a woman who has miscarried more than forty days after having immersed herself [in a mikveh] has the classification of a "woman at childbirth." [Shulchan Aruch 330: 3; Biur Halachah 617].<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 401 – Chapter 62:7

<sup>6</sup> 463 – Chapter 72:1

<sup>7</sup> 653 – Chapter 93:1-2