



The Ziegler School  
of Rabbinic Studies

בית המדרש ע"ש זיגלר

להתהלך בצדק  
Walking with Justice

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# HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER?

RABBI MORRIS ALLEN

“So that you walk in the way of the worthy, and follow the paths of the righteous.” [Proverbs 2:20]

The laws of kashrut are typically understood in a classic ritual way; things either meet the ritual requirements for being eaten or they do not. It is true of fish; it is true of animals. There are fish that are appropriate for us to consume and there are fish that are not; there are animals that are appropriate for us to eat and animals that are not. For most of us, the observance of kashrut has for years been understood only in ritual terms; and yet we need to understand as Jews that it is not enough to see Judaism as only being *mitzvot bein adam lamakom*, as those commandments between God and a human being, but also as *mitzvot bein adam l'havero*, as commandments between one person and another.

As long as 40 years ago, Abraham Joshua Heschel remarked that to be a fully observant Jew one needs to be as concerned about ethical behavior as one would be about ritual observance:

I am grateful to God that in the official establishments and hotels kashrut is observed. But what hurts is the question why it is only required for butcher shops to be under religious supervision? Why not insist that banks, factories, and those who deal in real estate should require a hekhsher and be operated according to religious law? When a drop of blood is found in an egg, we abhor the idea of eating the egg. But often there is more than one drop of blood in a dollar or a lira and we fail to remind people constantly of the teaching of our tradition.<sup>1</sup>

We all know that the intricate rules of kashrut are classic examples of *halakhah* in practice. The extensive corpus of Jewish law on the subject<sup>2</sup> is witness to how seriously we take our halakhic obligations in this area. Heschel, though, explicitly makes the connection between *halakhah* and social justice, and it is on this connection that we wish to focus.

The kosher food market is enormous. Consumers spent approximately \$165 billion for kosher products in 2003, according to data compiled by Integrated Marketing Communications, compared to the \$250 million spent on kosher products 25 years earlier. The kosher food market grows at approximately 15% per year (in comparison to the approximately 4% growth of non-kosher food sales in American supermarkets). In 2006, there were over 10,000 kosher producing companies and close to 400 kosher certifiers worldwide. 40% of retail products in the United States bear some kind of kosher certification.<sup>3</sup> Yet, as we stand in the aisle in the supermarket, how often do we consider how the food came to be on the shelf, and what it means for us to be buying it without questioning how it was produced?

For too long we have allowed others to dictate what kashrut means. We have failed to take our own teachings to heart, and instead have passively allowed ritual law alone, devoid of its ethical partner, to determine what it is that we should eat and how it is that we should ensure that our food is produced.

It is this tension which has given rise to the *Hekhsher Tzedek* initiatives on kashrut. *Hekhsher Tzedek* translates to mean “justice certification”. We consider that it is incumbent upon us, as Jews, to understand and exemplify both halves of the term – both *hekhsher* (kashrut – ritual law) and *Tzedek* (justice – ethical law). In the first part of this essay we will briefly consider the some of the issues relating to kosher meat. We will then explore how the *Hekhsher Tzedek* initiative – created in association with the USCJ and the Rabbinic Assembly – proposes to address these issues. Finally, we will propose a new understanding of what constitutes kashrut.

<sup>1</sup> Edward K Kaplan, *Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel in America, 1940-1972*, Yale University Press 2007, p. 361

<sup>2</sup> eg *Shulham Arukh, Yoreh Deah*. All of the first 86 laws and subsections of laws in this code deal with the kashrut and kashering of meat and meat-related products.

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://kosherfood.about.com/od/kosherbasics/p/kosherstats.htm>



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## TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Let us begin with where the chain of kashrut itself begins – with the animals. Every day Empire Chicken *shechts* 90,000 chickens; every day Agri *shechts* 60,000 chickens and 500 heads of cattle.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, there have been exposes of *shechting* practices in kosher slaughterhouses which have forced us to focus on how Jewish law expects us to treat animals, and how we have been falling short of those expectations.

In an article in the Jerusalem Post of 3 February 2005, Rabbi Adam Frank of Moreshet Yisrael synagogue in Jerusalem considered some aspects of the treatment of animals slaughtered to provide kosher meat:

...In 2000, the Conservative movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards (CJLS) unanimously ruled that slaughtering animals in an inverted position, whether by use of a mechanical inversion pen or the more brutal system of shackling and hoisting an animal by its rear legs, violates the Jewish law prohibiting *tza'ar ba'alei haim*, the unnecessary infliction of pain on an animal. There is a better way.

...It has been scientifically determined that industrial holding pens that allow the animal to stand upright during *shehitah* (kosher slaughter) greatly reduces [sic] the animal's pain and stress at the time of slaughter. When *shehitah* is performed properly in this manner, the animal does not kick or bellow or display other outward signs of anxiety, and evidently is rendered insensate within seconds.

This is hardly the case with the shackle and hoist method, nor an inversion holding pen... Since more humane systems exist, the inversion methods are avoidable, and thus a violation of Jewish law... Only slaughter that employs both the requirements of *shehitah* and of *tza'ar ba'alei haim* can avoid unnecessarily inflicting pain on an animal and ensure compliance with the corpus of applicable *halakhah*.<sup>5</sup>

Rabbi Frank pointed out that the Conservative movement "has long contended that unnecessary pain to the animal can be greatly reduced if the imperatives of Jewish law are applied to their full spirit and clear intent."<sup>6</sup>

## TREATMENT OF WORKERS IN THE KOSHER FOOD INDUSTRY

In recent years, we have seen Press coverage of conditions at kosher slaughterhouses, and there has been wide-spread discussion of how workers are treated. It is not the purpose of this essay to consider these cases in depth: rather, we wish to refer to our own, personal experience of this aspect of the kosher food industry.

In the summer of 2006, a five-person group visited a kosher slaughterhouse, having first made contact with local senators and clergy. The two-day visit was filled with meetings – with officials of the business, with workers, with clergy in the community and regular citizens in the streets. The results were sobering. On one of the on-site visits, a worker from a kosher plant other than the one being visited was brought by a union to discuss his perceptions of the differences between a union plant and a non-union plant. Once we had introduced ourselves as a group of concerned rabbis and laity, the worker – whose name was Carlos – turned to us, and said, "I have worked at my plant for 10 years, every day working next to rabbis and not once in those ten years has any one of them asked me what it is like for me to work in the plant."

The issues raised by our visit transcend any one specific location or case. What does it mean for us to be concerned about the chicken and not the worker who holds the chicken for slaughtering? What does it mean that we have become a people for whom the question "Is the meat glatt or non glatt?"- meaning, is the lung of the cow smooth or not? – has become more important than worrying about the bladder of the of the person on the line as the meat is being processed? We found out that workers on the line couldn't leave the line for the bathroom unless another worker was there to replace them. Imagine a pregnant woman standing all day needing to go to the bathroom, waiting until an extra worker shows up. The cow's lung, or the worker's bladder - which one makes it kosher?

<sup>4</sup> From the evidence of Rabbi Rubashkin, August 2006

<sup>5</sup> Rabbi Adam J Frank, article in *The Jerusalem Post*, 3 February 2005

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*



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We have been a people that has worked long and hard for the dignity of the individual - whether in creating inclusive congregational communities or in advocating for the needs of those who exist on the margins of our society. We have supported migrant workers. We have marched at the front of many protests and stood with many a worker. But here is the opportunity to demonstrate that all of our religious life is seamless - that ritual religious obligation and ethical religious obligations are impossible to separate one from the other. Neither has a greater tug at our hearts than the other.

The corpus of Jewish law concerning our food and the volumes of Jewish law concerning human dignity cannot continue to live in isolation one from the other. In the *Shulhan Arukh* – literally, “the set table” - there are laws concerning employment and economic life. These are contained in volumes called *Hoshen Mishpat*. Then there are laws which detail how kashrut is to be understood, how *shehitah* is to be done, what constitutes proper salting. These laws are found in *Yoreh Deah*. For too long, these two volumes have existed as silos - side by side but not at all interconnected. We need to realize now that *Hoshen Mishpat* and *Yoreh Deah* exist together on our own tables as we sit down to eat.

Jewish folk don't need to be a token addition to migrant worker marches reminding us all of our own story of origin in this country. Rather, we need to demonstrate that at its core, Judaism holds out the dignity of the human being as being a primary value. If not for us, who will worry about the Gutatemalan mountain people, illiterate in Spanish let alone in English, who produce our food? How can we view them simply as objects, as a means for production? And thus, when presented with a situation in which our need to keep kosher is possibly imperiled by a kosher plant's treatment of workers, we cannot be silent.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTION

We sincerely doubt whether the *Hekhsher Tzedek* project would have taken off had it been the result of simply a theoretical search for ethical standards in food production, and not been tied to the real lives of a community that is working hard to understand the purpose and the meaning of keeping kosher in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Jewish law, however, mandates, “*Lo ha-midrash hu ha-ikar elah ha-ma'aseh*”<sup>7</sup> - it is not the words that matter, but rather the actions we undertake that are important. It is this approach which underpins the *Hekhsher Tzedek* initiative, which is a joint initiative of the USCJ and the Rabbinical Assembly.

*Hekhsher Tzedek* is a certification which will be placed on already designated kosher products to reflect production benchmarks consistent with Jewish ethical standards. The *Hekhsher Tzedek* evaluation process is uniform, objective and verifiable. Five separate categories have been designated:

- Wages and benefits
- Health, safety and training
- Product development
- Corporate transparency
- Environmental impact

A manufacturer or organization meeting the standards in all of these categories can choose to mark their products with the *Hekhsher Tzedek*, which will indicate that the product has been made in compliance with a set of social justice criteria, in keeping with the teachings of the Jewish faith.

Why is the *Hekhsher Tzedek* necessary? For the very same reason that kashrut is necessary. It will train us to do the right thing. We will be able to do right by purchasing food with a *heskher tzedek* whether or not we feel like doing right.

<sup>7</sup> *Mishnah Avot 1:17*



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The passion we felt during our visit was only the beginning of an ongoing process. Passion fades. What sustains our ideals is that we are able to transform passion into commitment. Passion provides energy, but commitment is what keeps you going when you have no energy left, when you'd much rather be doing something else. Commitment is keeping your word, even when your body, mind and heart are crying out for you to run away and lead an easier life. What sustains us when we are spent as Jews is not the passion of the heart, but the responsibility of our being. For us it is called mitzvah; it is the act that we undertake when the passion itself is not present. Mitzvah reminds us that perfecting or bettering the world is not about good thoughts or feeling right, but about *doing* right. Judaism engenders good in the world by training us to see commitment as more enduring and more significant than any passion that we might be feeling. Passion is about an autonomous response to the world, but commitment to mitzvah is about remaining on the correct side of the law, and of the possibility of bettering the world when we feel least equipped to do so.

People ask us why we need *Hekhsher Tzedek*. We need it because we are all good people who believe in doing the right thing. No one using these materials believes that animals should be abused and degraded for human satisfaction. No one reading this essay believes that people producing the food we eat shouldn't be safeguarded in their workplace, and that their labor should not be treated with dignity. No one clicking on the website link for "Walking with Justice" actually thinks that cheating people out of their pay for work they performed is appropriate, or that the environment should take a back seat to the production of kosher food. But what *Hekhsher Tzedek* does is to take us out of the realm of belief and place us in the realm of action. It reminds us that *mitzvot bein adam l'havero* – between one human being and another – are no less significant than *mitzvot bein adam lamakom* – between humans and God.

## CONCLUSION

Robert Sternberg, a Yale psychologist, theorized that there are three elements in love – passion, intimacy and commitment.<sup>8</sup> We suggest that this same paradigm carries over from the psychological to the life of the religious individual and community. Passion, intimacy and commitment need to permeate our religious beliefs and the habits of our communities. It was our belief then, and remains our belief now, that creating an environment for Jews to engage with kashrut is a core value for us as a people and as a community, and exemplifies an ideal forum in which to manifest Sternberg's characteristics. As we have seen, kashrut is not a mere matter of ritual – rather, it is a rigorous moral practice, a three-dimensional commitment requiring us to think "outside the label".

Judaism has wisely understood that unless we can transform our feelings into action, unless we see outcomes as being more important than the purity of one's own thoughts, then our purpose on this earth has been lost. The Torah and the corpus of rabbinic law are permeated with justifications for the work we are doing. We are not promoting *Hekhsher Tzedek* because it's a nice thing to do, because it's politically correct, or because it identifies us with a particular political belief system. We are promoting it because it represents what Jewish life is all about, it is what Jewish norms call us to do.

We need to act as a consistent, effective force for good in our world of kosher food. Being good for us, as Jews, is about taking responsibility; it is about making sure that things really can change for the better. It is not about the passion of political propriety, but rather a statement that the world can indeed change for the good, and we are the agents to effect that change. We cannot allow Judaism to become a religion that demands our observance of kashrut while abusing animals and ignoring human dignity. We need to put our religious capital where our religious mouths have long been.

<sup>8</sup> Robert J Steinberg, *The Triangle of Love: Intimacy, Passion, Commitment*, Basic Books, September 1988.



# HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER? – TEXT 1

ספר משלי יבי

יודע צדיק נפש בהמתו ורחמי רשעים אכזרי:

## PROVERBS 12:10

A righteous person has regard for the life of their beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

רמבם מורה נבוכים ג:מח

באשר הביא הכרח טוב המזון להריגת בעלי חיים כִּינָה תוֹרָה לְקַלָּה שְׂבָמִיתוֹת וְאֶסְרָה שְׂיַעֲנָה אוֹתָם בְּשַׁחֲטָה רָעָה וְלֹא בְנַחֲיָה.

## MAIMONIDES [RABBI MOSHE BEN MAIMON, THE RAMBAM], GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED III:48

When the necessity for good food led to the killing of animals, the Torah chose the easiest of deaths and prohibited tormenting them through an inferior slaughter or by piercing.

רמ"א שולחן ערוך אבן העזר היד

כָּל דָּבָר הַצָּרִיךְ לְרִפּוּאָה אוֹ לְשֶׂאֵר דְּבָרִים לִית בֵּיהּ מְשׁוּם אִיסוּר צַעַר בְּעַלֵי חַיִּים... וְלִכֵּן מוֹתֵר לְמָרוֹט נוֹצוֹת מֵאֲוִוּוֹת חַיּוֹת וְלִכְפֹּא לְמִיחָשׁ מְשׁוּם צַעַר בְּעַלֵי חַיִּים... וּמִ[כָּל] מְ[קוּם] הַעוֹלָם נִמְנָעִים, דִּהְיוּ אֶכְזְרִיּוֹת.

## REMA, SHULCHAN ARUKH EVEN HA-EZER 5:14

Anything that is necessary for medical purposes, or for anything else, is exempt from the prohibition of causing suffering to animals....Therefore, it is permissible to pluck the quills of live geese without concern for causing the suffering of animals. Nevertheless, people refrain [from doing so] because it would be cruel.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

- How are the principles of the first text applied in the second?
- How are the principles in the second text modified in the third?
- What can we learn from these texts about how animals should be treated?
- What are the implications of these texts for kashrut?

<sup>1</sup> Rema is Rabbi Moses Isserlis, who wrote the intertextual commentary to the Shulkhan Arukh.



## HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER? – TEXT 2

ספר תהלים קמה:ט  
טוב יהוה לכל ורחמיו על כל מעשיו:

### PSALMS 145:9

The Holy One is good to all, and has compassion upon all The Holy One has made.

### תלמוד בבלי בבא מציעא פה:א

דההוא עגלא דהווי קא ממטוי ליה לשחיטה, אזל תלמיא לרישיה בכנפיה דרבי, וקא בכי. אמר ליה: זיל, לכד נוצרת. אמרי: הואיל ולא קא מרחם - ליתו עליה יסורין... יומא חד הוה קא פנשא אמתיה דרבי ביתא, הוה שדא בני כרפושפתא וקא פנשא להו, אמר לה: שבקינהו, פתיב (תהלים קמה) ורחמיו על כל מעשיו. אמרו: הואיל ומרחם - נרחם עליה.

### BABYLONIAN TALMUD *BAVA METZIA* 85A

Once there was a calf on its way to being slaughtered. It ran and hid its head under the garment of Rabbi<sup>1</sup> and wailed. Rabbi said, “Go! This is why you were created!” Because he showed no compassion, they said [in Heaven], “Let us bring suffering upon him.”...One day, Rabbi’s maidservant was sweeping the house. She saw some young weasels lying there and wanted to sweep them away. Rabbi said to her, “Leave them be - it says: [Psalms 145] “and has compassion upon all The Holy One has made.” They said [in Heaven], “Because he showed compassion, let us show compassion to him,” [and he was cured].

### STUDY QUESTIONS

- How many understandings of the word “compassion” appear in these passages?
- How does Rabbi exhibit a lack of compassion, and how does he then rectify the situation?
- What can we learn from this text about how animals should be treated?
- What are the implications of these texts for kashrut?

<sup>1</sup>Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Nasi, the editor of the Mishnah



## HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER? – TEXT 3

ספר משלי ב:כ  
לְמַעַן תֵּלֶךְ בְּדַרְךְ טוֹבִים וְאַרְחוֹת צְדִיקִים תִּשְׁמֹר:

### PROVERBS 2:20

So that you walk in the way of the worthy and follow the paths of the righteous.

### תלמוד בבלי בבא מציעה פג:א

רַבָּה בַר בַּר חֲנַן וְתַבְרוּ לִיה הִנְהוּ שְׁקוּלָאֵי חֲבִיתָא דְחַמְרָא. שְׁקַל לְגַלְמִיָּהּ, אָתוּ אָמְרוּ לָרַב. אָמַר לִיה: הַב לְהוּ גְלִימִיָּהּ. - אָמַר לִיה: דִּינָא הֲכִי? - אָמַר לִיה: אִין, [מְשָׁלִי ב:כ] לְמַעַן תֵּלֶךְ בְּדַרְךְ טוֹבִים. יְהִיב לְהוּ גְלִימִיָּהּ. אָמְרוּ לִיה: עֲנִי אָנוּ, וְטַרְחִינָן כּוּלָּהּ יוּמָא, וְכַפִּינָן, וְלִית לָן מִיָּדֵי. אָמַר לִיה: זֵיל הַב אֲגְרִיָּהּ. - אָמַר לִיה: דִּינָא הֲכִי? - אָמַר לִיה: אִין, [מְשָׁלִי ב:כ] וְאַרְחוֹת צְדִיקִים תִּשְׁמֹר.

### BABYLONIAN TALMUD *BAVA METZIA* 83A

Some porters broke the wine keg of Rabbah bar bar Chanan. He took their cloaks. They brought the matter before Rav. He told Rabbah: “Give them back their cloaks.” Rabbah said, “Is that the law?!” Rav answered: “Yes - ‘So that you walk in the way of the worthy.’” [Proverbs 2:20] So Rav gave back the cloaks. The porters said: “We are poor people. We worked all day and are bent over [from the work], yet we have nothing [to show for it].” Rav said to Rabbah: “Go, pay their wages.” Rabbah said, “Is that the law?!” Rav answered: “Yes! - ‘and follow in the paths of the righteous.’”

### STUDY QUESTIONS

- What do you think Rabbah means when he says, “Is that the law?!”
- What use does Rav make of the verse from Proverbs?
- What can we learn from these texts about how workers should be treated?
- What are the implications of this text for kashrut?





## HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER? – TEXT 4

### משפטי עוזיאל ד חושן משפט מג

אם אָמַנְם מִצַּד הַהֲלָכָה אֵין בְּעַל הַבַּיִת חַיִּיב בְּנִזְקֵי הַפּוֹעֵל...נוֹטָה אֲנִי לֹאמַר שֶׁבְּעַל הַבַּיִת מוֹזְהָר מִן הַתּוֹרָה לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל מָה שֶׁאֶפְשֶׁר לְהַבְטִיחַ פּוֹעֲלָיו מִסַּכַּנַּת מוֹת אוֹ מוֹם כְּפִתּוּב: "וַיַּעֲשֵׂת מַעֲקָה לְגִגֵּד, וְלֹא תֵשִׂים דָּמִים בְּבֵיתְךָ" שֶׁכּוֹלֵל כָּל מְכַשׁוּל הָעָלוּל לְהִזִּיק כְּמוֹ כָּלֵב רַע וְסוּלָם רְעוּעַ וְכו'. מִכָּאן אֲנִי לְמַדִּין חוֹבַת בְּעַל הַבַּיִת אוֹ הַקְּבָלָן לְדַאֵג בְּדִיקְנוּת זְהִירָה בְּתַנְאֵי הָעֵבוּדָה שֶׁיְהִי בְּטוּחִים מִכָּל מְכַשׁוּל הַגּוֹרֵם לְאַיִזָּה אֶסוֹן שֶׁהוּא... וּבָאֵם לָאוּ הוּא נִלְכָּד בְּעוֹוֹן "לֹא תֵשִׂים דָּמִים בְּבֵיתְךָ" וְצָרִיךְ כְּפָרָה. אֲבָל אֵין זֶה דָּבָר הַיּוֹצֵא בְּדִינָיו.

### **MISHPETEI UZZIEL<sup>3</sup> IV, HOSHEN MISHPAT 43**

Though it is the case that according to the law the owner is not liable for the damages of the worker... I am inclined to say that the owner is warned by the Torah to do all that is possible to insure his workers from the danger of death or disability, as it says: "You shall make a parapet for your roof and you shall not bring blood-guilt upon your house" [Deuteronomy 22:8], which includes any hazard which is likely to cause injury, like a mad dog or a rickety ladder [Bava Kamma 15b, Hoshen Mishpat 427:5]. From this we learn the obligation of the owner or contractor to address the working conditions with strict care, so that they are secure from all hazards which might precipitate an accident...for if not he is guilty of the sin "you shall not bring blood-guilt upon your house" and needs atonement. But this is not adjudicable before judges.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS

- According to this text, what kind of provisions must an owner make for the conditions of his workers?
- How might an owner 'atone' for breach of these provisions?
- What can we learn from this text about how workers should be treated?
- What are the implications of this text for kashrut?

<sup>3</sup> Mishpetei Uzziel are the halakhic responsa of Israel's former Chief Rabbi, Ben Zion Chai Uzziel



# HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER? - TEXT FOR GROUP STUDY

## HEKHSHER TZEDEK AL PI DIN - CORPORATE INTEGRITY

The *Hekhsher Tzedek* Policy Statement identifies corporate governance and accounting controversies as an area of monitoring. It refers, under those categories, to “allegations or convictions of bribery, insider trading or other fraudulent activities” and “controversies regarding accounting practices”. Unlike the categories of product development and marketing, these are internal matters of which it might be asked, to the extent that they do not affect the consumer directly, are they rightly in the purview of a consumer seeking to guide their consumption by the paths of righteousness? Here, too, the reach of halakhah is long, and does not allow us to absolve ourselves of the wrongdoing of our neighbors.

In the first instance there is the command, “You shall surely remonstrate with your fellow,” [Leviticus 19:17] which, at very least, sets an aspirational goal of communal responsibility for and intervention in the acts of others. That is properly the domain of *Hekhsher Tzedek*. While there are numerous exceptions to this directive, there is an unambiguous obligation to avoid abetting or supporting wrongdoing directly. Thus, the clear ruling concerning purchasing stolen goods in *Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat* 356:1:

It is forbidden to purchase a stolen article from a thief. This is a great sin, for one supports the hands of sinners and causes him to steal other things, for if he does not find a buyer he will not steal.

The behavior contemplated here, purchasing a licit item from a person suspected or found guilty of wrongdoing in the course of his business, while it does not rise to the level of the technical prohibition as did the earlier matters reviewed here in which the consumer could be likened directly to one who purchases from a thief, is clearly still within the broad outline of this prohibition. And it is to that matter of propriety that the *Hekhsher Tzedek* is addressed.

- Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner

Taken from *Hekhsher Tzedek Al Pi Din*, the companion to the *Hekhsher Tzedek* Policy Statement and Working Guidelines approved by the *Hekhsher Tzedek* Commission of the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.



# SESSION SUGGESTIONS – HOW KOSHER IS KOSHER?

## INTRODUCTION

This essay occupies something of a middle ground between the essay on the environment and the essay on business ethics – you may wish to ask participants to consult their manifestos prior to opening the session in order to re-focus on what their insights were.

The essay, essentially, falls into three parts:

- issues related to animals
- issues related to workers
- the re-framing of kashrut in the light of those issues

You may find that participants wish to focus more on one specific issue than the other two.

## CHAVRUTA STUDY

The texts deal two by two with the main areas of the essay – animal issues and worker issues. The two final questions are common to every text, with a view to enabling participants to come up with some ideas they can share about animal welfare and fairness in the workplace.

## GROUP STUDY

The text provided is from the *Hekhsher Tzedek Al Pi Din* document and considers an area not dealt with in the essay – that of corporate integrity. Allow participants to discuss the implications of this in light of what they have studied in the session so far; why is corporate integrity important, and what difference does it make to their consumer choices?

If you do not wish to use the text – one possibility is to consider the whole *hekhsher tzedek* document, which can be found by following the link at Rabbi Allen's blog - <http://rabbimorrisallen2.blogspot.com>.

Or you could initiate a wider discussion about consumer action, since this is an area where the choices participants make has a direct influence on the industry. Rabbi Adam Frank points out, in a piece from his Jerusalem Post article we did not cite in the materials, that the Conservative movement has a constituency of more than one million members, 750 affiliated congregations, 70 Solomon Schechter day schools, and more than 10 summer camps servicing thousands of children and staff. The movement has ordaining seminaries on both the East and West coasts and a rabbinical union with more than 1,400 members. It represents nearly one-third of American Jewry and is influential enough not to compromise its high standard for the ethical treatment of animals in conjunction with its commitment to kashrut. How might participants use that power for good?

The *Hekhsher Tzedek* initiative is an excellent example of how passion translates into direct action – so a further approach you could take in the group would be to consider that aspect. Rabbi Allen's blog is once again a good starting point for such a discussion.

## CONCLUSION

Allow time for participants to update and amend their personal manifestos. Kashrut is one aspect of social justice which is going to be directly relevant to the choices participants make in their everyday lives. Do they wish to record a new definition of kashrut to use in future? Hand out the essay for next time, and conclude the session.



## CONTRIBUTORS

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# MUSICAL PLAYLIST TO ACCOMPANY EACH SESSION

Compiled by Noam Raucher

You can use any or all of the songs in the suggested sessions. They are listed in the order of title-artist-album, and all are available on iTunes. Please note that one or two have explicit lyrics – these are clearly marked.

## Introduction

How Come – Ray LaMontagne – Trouble  
For What It's Worth – Buffalo Springfield – Buffalo Springfield  
If I Had A Hammer – Peter, Paul and Mary – The Best of Peter Paul and Mary  
What's Going On – Marvin Gaye – What's Going On

## The Prophets and Social Justice

Fuel – Ani DiFranco – Little Plastic Castle  
Chimes of Freedom – Bob Dylan – Bob Dylan: The Collection  
Keep On Rockin' In The Free World – Neil Young – Greatest Hits

## The Ethical Impulse in Rabbinic Judaism

Talkin' Bout A Revolution – Tracy Chapman – Tracy Chapman  
Blowin' In The Wind – Peter, Paul and Mary – The Best of Peter, Paul and Mary  
Down By The Riverside – Waste Deep In The Big Muddy And Other Love Songs

## A Torah of Justice – A View from the Right?

Hands – Jewel - Spirit  
The Times They Are A Changin' – Bob Dylan – The Essential Bob Dylan  
We Are One – Safam – Peace By Peace

## A Torah of Justice – A View from the Left?

He Was My Brother – Simon and Garfunkel – Wednesday Morning, 3AM  
Oxford Town – Bob Dylan – The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan  
A Change Is Gonna Come – Sam Cooke – Ain't That Good News

## Environment

The Horizon Has Been Defeated – Jack Johnson -On and On  
Holy Ground – The Klezmatics – Wonder Wheel  
Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology) – Marvin Gaye – What's Going On  
Big Yellow Taxi – Joni Mitchell - Dreamland

## Business Ethics

Working Class Hero – John Lennon – Working Class Hero: The Definitive Lennon  
Carpal Tunnel – John O' Conner – Classic Labor Songs From Smithsonian Folkways  
We Do The Work – Jon Fromer - Classic Labor Songs From Smithsonian Folkways

## International Economic Justice

We Are The World. – USA For Africa – We Are The World (Single)  
Outside A Small Circle of Friends – Phil Ochs – The Best of Phil Ochs  
El Salvador – Peter, Paul and Mary – The Best of Peter Paul and Mary

## Special Needs

What It's Like – Everlast – The Best of House of Pain and Everlast – **EXPLICIT LYRICS**  
Mr. Wendall – Arrested Development – 3 years, 5 months, and 2 days in the life Of...  
The Boy In The Bubble – Paul Simon – The Essential Paul Simon

## Kashrut

All You Can Eat – Ben Folds – Supersunnyspeedgraphic, The LP – **EXPLICIT LYRICS**  
Mr. Greed – John Fogerty - Centerfield  
We Just Come To Work Here, We Don't Come To Die –Anne Feeney - Classic Labor Songs From Smithsonian Folkways

## Israel

Hope: Pray On – Sweet Honey In The Rock - 25  
Yihyeh Tov – David Broza – Things Will Be Better, The Best Of David Broza  
Misplaced – Moshav Band

## Afterword

With My Own Two Hands – Ben Harper – Diamonds On The Inside  
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