

# Dvar Torah for Parshat Ki Tisa

written by Ozer Bergman  
February 17, 2011



Dvar Torah for Parshat Ki Tisa

Based on *Likutey Halakhot, Devarim HaYotzim Min HaChai* 4:40, 51

“Do not cook a kid in its mother’s milk” (Exodus 34:26).

There are many paradoxes in life and for good reason. The universe is built on a paradox of an Infinite Creator and a finite creation. The prohibition of *basar v’chalav* (“milk and meat,” i.e., cooking or eating them together, or benefiting from them if they were cooked together) is meant, in part, to protect us from being overwhelmed by paradox.

Separately, milk and meat are each permitted (assuming they are kosher, etc.). But cooking them together renders them forbidden. Reb Noson explains that meat represents that which human beings are meant to do in bringing the world (and history) to its *tikkun* (rectification). This is indicated by what we have to do to make meat kosher, e.g., *shechitah* (kosher slaughter). Milk, on the other hand, is kosher without our doing anything. This represents what God is doing to bring the world to its *tikkun*.

So, God does what He does and you do what you do. But maybe—and a lot of people have had this question—if God is doing, I don't need to do anything. And if I'm doing, then God has no role in the process. In fact, we do not understand how both—He's doing it, we're doing it— can be true. (That's what paradox means!) The human cannot intellectually fathom paradox, but we must have a means for operating with the paradoxes of life. If we try to “cook” or “eat” or “benefit” from paradox, we will be overwhelmed and undermine our ability to meet our Jewish obligations.

Reb Noson answers the ancient and oft-asked question: Why does the Torah say “in its mother's milk”? After all, the prohibition applies to any milk, not just the mother's. He writes that in fact all *tikkun*, the “milk” as well as the “meat,” ultimately comes from one source. Even the “meat”—what we do—ultimately comes from “mother's milk,” the kindness of God Himself.

But for now, this cannot be understood intellectually. We have to take it on faith. So say “No” to Beef Wellington, Reubens, Philly cheesesteaks and cheeseburgers, and “Yes” to the *cholent*\* and cheese blintzes—just not together!

*agutn Shabbos!*

*Shabbat Shalom!*

© Copyright 2011 Breslov Research Institute

\*Don't know what *cholent* is? See .