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Aging and the aged in Jewish law

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HALAKHIC ISSUES RELATING TO THE ETHICS OF AGING

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HALAKHAH ISSUES RELATING TO THE ETHICS OF AGING

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*"Quo in genere est in primis senectus, quam ut adipiscantur omnes optant, eandem accusant adepti."**

—Cicero, *De Senectute* II

The patrons of the New York subway system are regularly admonished to refrain from chatting with strangers, to avoid eye contact with other passengers, to safeguard their valuables from prying fingers, and to show consideration for the overburdened, the elderly, and the handicapped by not taking seats in areas reserved for their exclusive use. This last appeal, unfortunately, is generally ignored; few of the fit are willing to diminish their own comfort to accommodate a mother trying to corral her frisky brood or an aged person desperately clutching a brace of packages and an overhead strap as the train hurtles into a sharp curve. And yet, on several recent occasions (I being encumbered with bundles), young people, young women—mind you—rose to offer me a seat. For that favor I was much taken aback, because I had not supposed that I appeared incapable of maintaining my balance, however violently the train pitched.

At the same time, I marvel that in our society, with its empty synagogues and churches, with its schools acknowledging very little success in teaching the rudimentary techniques for which they were commissioned, much less the abstract virtue of civility, some still defer to the aged and the incapacitated even in the subway, where stampeding for a seat has become the normal gait. If not in school or church, whence are these refinements of conduct

*From birth on, all hope to live till old age; but when they finally reach it they curse the very thing they had so long hoped for.

acquired? To be sure, there are always a few who diligently peruse their Testament or Psalter, impervious to the turmoil about them. A gratifying number are bent over a *Siddur* or *Humash* or even a folio of Talmud, but these did not interrupt their devotions to invite me to take their place. Perhaps, subliminally, the generous people who did were acting in the spirit of a biblical passage they could not consciously identify. In Leviticus 19:32 the Torah enjoins: *Mipenei seivah takam vehadarta penei zaken, ve-yareita meielohekha; ani adonai*. "You shall rise before the aged, and show deference to the old; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord." I propose to consider this directive within its context; to examine some of the rabbinic interpretations of the verse as the old sages reduced this ethical maxim to statutory law; and, finally, to speculate on the relevance of the rabbinic insights for our own situation. Parenthetically, the great modern halakhist Jehiel Michal Epstein (1829–1908) in his *Arukh ha-Shulhan*¹ provides an answer to a question akin to the one I raised with regard to those in whose daily life Scripture hardly figures yet who nonetheless are guided by this particular precept.

We are generally expected to recite a *berakhah* when we perform a *mitzvah*, as when we break bread, when we light the Shabbat candles, when we put on a new garment, and so on. Yet, remarkably, no blessing is prescribed for the *mitzvah* of honoring parents. Why not? Epstein replies that, in his humble judgment, all peoples—not only Jews—are accustomed to show respect to parents, even though we Jews do so because that is the will of God, and non-Jews do so merely because common sense impels them (and that, he insists, is surely an inferior motivation). But whether we are responding to the Divine mandate or merely to the promptings of our own reason, Jew and Gentile, alike, behave in the same fashion. Epstein concludes, however, that when a course of action can be deduced solely by reason, there is no need to pronounce a *berakhah*

that praises the one who has sanctified us by His *mitzvot* and commanded us to do what our minds have already directed us to do. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that *berakhah* is provided for a popular domestic pastime that often results in *piryah verivyah* in the perpetuation of the species, an activity that, though originally enjoined by the Deity upon Adam and Eve, may also be traced, if not invariably to the exercise of human reason, at least to the inducement of some elemental and universal drive.

The nineteenth chapter of Leviticus presents a melange of *mitzvot*, both ritual and ethical, some of which virtually recapitulate the Ten Commandments. All these *mitzvot* are subsumed under the grand summons to *imitatio Dei*, to the emulation of God's holiness. "You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy." The injunction to treat the aged with deference can be understood in the light of the biblical sentiment that those who are granted long life are to be seen as the recipients of Divine grace, the reward of those who fear God, keep the commandments, and pursue wisdom.² Thus, when those in their prime show respect to their elders, who have earned longevity by reason of their virtue and who are thereby favored of God, they (the juniors) are, as it were, walking in God's ways by respecting people whom He cherishes.³

"You shall rise before *seivah* (the aged), and show deference to the *zaken* (the old); you shall fear your God: I am the Lord." The Torah prescribes special recognition for the elderly, although the age required to attain that favored status is not stipulated. *Zaken* and the related *zikhnah* are used in the Bible to describe an older person; *seivah* designates one whose hair has turned white as a consequence of his years. Our verse does not amplify its intent further. The old rabbis held as a basic tenet of faith, however, that underlying the *peshat*, the manifest content of Scripture, profound truths lie concealed that only

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intensive probing can disclose; these are to be refined and then expounded after a rigorous process of dialectic has taken place. For, as the sages saw it (in Leo Baeck's words), the Bible

did not only tell something, it also meant something.... It was much more than a mere book.... Hence, it was quite insufficient merely to read and to know it; it had to be discovered again and again, word for word.... The word one read could never be a merely written and fixed word; it always spoke, moved, and progressed. It always had something more to say....⁴

Aaron Wildavsky makes a similar observation:

In traditional Jewish thought...every generation, according to its own understanding, holds that its interpretation is part of what the Torah teaches. The ability of future generations to make the text answer their questions without distorting it beyond recognition, is part of the Bible's power. As with any fundamental text, what the Bible is depends partly on what it contains and partly on what each generation makes of it. The varied interpretations of the Bible are part of the meaning, which has to be within us as well as in the text, if we are to hold a dialogue with it.... Divergent views are traditional in Biblical interpretation. No interpretation is unqualifiedly correct....⁵

According to the Mishnah⁶ *ziknah* denotes a man of sixty, whereas *seivah* denotes a septuagenarian. Applying these figures to our verse, one of sixty may be entitled to receive a form of homage

different from that to be accorded the septuagenarian. *Seivah*, the text informs us, is to be acknowledged by *kimah*, rising, whereas the *zaken* is to be granted *hiddur*, respect. (It is difficult to find a single English word to convey the nuances of the root *hadar*, which we render variously as respect, deference, veneration. In the Bible it can be used as well for showing favoritism [Lev. 19:15] or adorning [Isa. 63:1].) On *vehadarta* Rashi provides illustrations rather than a definition: One should not occupy the seat of the one entitled to *hiddur*, nor precede him in speaking, nor contradict him. But perhaps the two clauses merely repeat each other, a frequent literary device in Scripture, and both the person of sixty and the one of seventy are to be recognized by rising to demonstrate respect. We look to the rabbinic deliberations for a solution.

In *Sefer Hamitzvot*, Maimonides' compendium of the 613 commandments of the Torah, he lists as Positive Commandment 209 the injunction "to honor sages, to rise before them, and to exalt them," finding these obligations set out in our verse. Likewise, in the *Mishneh Torah* he classifies this *mitzvah* among the regulations governing the study of Torah (*Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 6:1), reading it as requiring deference to *all* scholars.⁷ Thus, contrary to the clear intent of the Torah, which mandates respect for all elderly persons, Maimonides restricts the display of deference to a learned elite, most of whom would have already qualified for such attention by reason of their age. In making the sages the only beneficiaries of *kimah vehiddur*, Maimonides is basing himself on *Sifra Kedoshim* 7:12 (the passage is repeated in *T.B. Kiddushin* 32b, *Targum Onkelos*, and *Targum Yerushalmi I* on Lev. 19:32).

The motivation for this radical reformulation of the explicit mandate of the Torah obviously arises from the rabbi-legislators' quest for recognition of their status as arbiters of the will of God.

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They enacted thus, perhaps somewhat naively, in the hope that repeated public demonstrations of obeisance would convince the lower classes that the authority claimed by the rabbis was legitimately derived from Heaven. A second motivation for restricting honor to the scholarly few was the fear that if the entire aged population were entitled to some expression of regard, the *rasha*, the malefactor, would have to be accorded public deference, a notion repugnant to the sages and perhaps to many nonsages as well.⁸

The process by which some of the sages justified their right to deference may be described as exegesis by assonance, the construction of *Halakhah* on similar sounds occurring in etymologically unrelated words. The author of the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs personifies *hokhma*, Wisdom, and in verse 22 makes her declare: "The Lord acquired me [*kanani*] as the beginning of His way, the first of His works of old." The *kof nun* of the verb *kanani* are identical with the final two consonants of the noun *zaken*. The rabbis took the first consonant of *zaken* as an abbreviation of *zeh*, "this one." Consequently, *zaken* is to be understood as an acrostic for *zeh kanani*, "This one has acquired," with *hokhma*, Wisdom, supplied from Proverbs 8:22. So *Sifra*⁹ categorically states in the name of R. Jose the Galilean: *Ein zaken ella zeh shekanah hokhma*: "Only he who has acquired wisdom is [to be reckoned] an elder."

A different view is also propounded, anonymously, in *Sifra*: *Ein zaken ella hokhma*. "Only a sage is [entitled to be called] a *zaken*. According to this teaching, the appellation *zaken* need not attest to the attainment of a certain age, but instead denotes one who has achieved high competency in Torah, no matter how few or many his years. He is assumed, of course, to have devoted many decades to his studies before he qualified as a scholar/elder. If, in accordance with this view, the title is not conferred as a recognition of advanced age, it follows

that even a precocious scholar—the rabbis use the picturesque phrase *yanniq vehakim*, “nurseling sage”¹⁰—can be called a *zaken* and that the young man becomes eligible for deference, though some say, for only a modest form of it. If one must rise to full height to do homage to an elderly scholar, the young scholar is to be acknowledged by half-rising before him. According to *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, however, a young man must be *muflag behakhmah*, exceptionally learned, to be worthy of deference, and Epstein observes that such mature wisdom cannot be attributed to a youth.¹¹

A somewhat similar depiction of “old age” as simply another expression for wisdom occurs in Wisdom of Solomon 4:8–9: “For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years, but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.” So also Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, Chapter 8:

[The Therapeutae] do not regard those as elders who are advanced in years and aged if they have only lately devoted themselves to the vocation; but they call those elders who from their earliest years have spent time and strength in the contemplative study of philosophy.¹²

Numbers 11:16 is cited as a proof text to demonstrate that *zaken* can be taken as a synonym of *hakham*. In that passage God directs Moses, “Gather for me seventy of Israel’s elders (*miziknei Yisrael*), of whom you have experience as elders and officers of the people (*ziknei ha’am*)....” There is a parallel to *zaken*, in the sense of mature and tried counselor, in the Greek *geron*, which has the dual meaning of elder, and also one eligible to sit in the *gerousia*, the Council of Elders. Another parallel is in the Latin *senex*, from which

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senator and *senatus* are derived, the common root suggesting people possessed of both maturity and erudition.

Yet, some adobe sages were troubled about the identification of *zikhnah* with *hokhmah*, which allowed only the learned and the wise to enjoy the deference guaranteed by the Torah to the *zaken*. Thus, Issi ben Judah, insisting that the sole requisite for the status of *zaken* should be the attainment of the minimum age, declared: *Mipenei seivah takum—afilu kol seivah bemashma.*¹³ "You shall rise before *seivah* [implies before] every [person who has reached the age of] *seivah*." R. Johanan concurred: "The *Halakhah* is as Issi b. Judah rules." Indeed, the Talmud records that R. Johanan was in the habit of rising even before the Aramean aged (a euphemism for *heathen*), observing, "How many difficulties have these people endured!" Raba would not stand, yet he showed them respect by rising partially and by speaking to them. Abaye would extend his hand to them for support. Raba sent messengers to assist them. R. Nahman dispatched his officers to provide help for them, but he considered it demeaning to the Torah to interrupt his studies for them.¹⁴

Issi's ruling on the *Halakhah* (that every person who has reached *seivah* is entitled to respect) brings up the question: Is it proper to show deference to the seventy-year-old who is an *am ha'aretz*? In his commentary *Keli Yakar* on our verse, Solomon Ephraim Luntschitz (d. 1619) writes that *seivah* is marked out for recognition because greater wisdom is naturally to be found in people of seventy than in those of lesser age and fewer experiences, as is attested by Job 12:12 (read as a statement rather than as a question, as the author of Job had intended): "Wisdom is in the aged, and understanding in the long-lived." But, Luntschitz continues, the *zaken* who, as his title indicates, has striven diligently to acquire wisdom is certainly far more worthy of reverence than is the elder to whom

wisdom comes merely as a consequence of his having lived long, as Job 32:7 promises: "Days speak, and the multitude of years imparts wisdom."

More difficult is the appropriate treatment of the *zaken ashmai*, whom *Sifra* and the Talmud find unworthy of deference but whom Issi would honor.¹⁵ Rashi defines the *ashmai* as a guilty person, a scoundrel, and an ignoramus (*ashem, rasha, am-ha'aretz*). *Tosafot*, differing with Rashi, holds that such a miscreant must be spurned and chastised; since the *ashmai* is still allowed to remain within the community, therefore, he must be deemed a *bur* and an *am ha'aretz*, rather than a scoundrel. These uncomplimentary designations have no universally accepted referent. As Epstein points out,¹⁶ many an *am ha'aretz*, though deficient in knowledge of Torah, is not to be dismissed as a *rasha*, because he still performs *mitzvot*, lays *tefillin*, prays, and listens attentively to the words of the wise, and the command to show respect applies to such as these. Again, there are simple *amei ha'aretz* who do not put on their *tefillin* regularly and who neglect the other *mitzvot*, although this laxness stems from their inability to comprehend what is required of them rather than from their willful rejection of religious obligation. That, says Epstein, is what Rashi meant when he described the *ashmai* as a *rasha* and an *am ha'aretz*: he behaves like a sinner, but he does not sin intentionally. He is really a *bur*, an empty person who belittles the Torah. Although we do not hold these people in contempt, since they do not act obstinately, still we do not rise to do them honor. In our lands, Epstein adds, one almost never encounters such people. Maimonides also takes issue with those who insist that only a scholar is entitled to deference. He writes: "We rise before one who is a *zaken* of distinction (*muflag beziknah*), even though one not a scholar¹⁷ of exemplary learning must rise before a person who is pious and does good deeds (*hasid uva'al ma'asim*). On this, Joseph Caro observes,

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in *Bet Yosei*, that a sage who is preeminent in scholarship may rise before a *ba'al ma'asim*, though Caro does not consider this display of deference obligatory, as does the *Tur*, because the act can be construed as a diminution of the sage's superior status. Epstein notes, however, that the later decisors concur with Jacob b. Asher that there is, indeed, an obligation for all to show respect to a *ba'al ma'asim*.¹⁸

Epstein offers a novel interpretation of our verse to the effect that *seivah*, which is attained at seventy, and *ziknah*, which is reached at sixty, have nothing at all to do with the number of a man's years.¹⁹ The key word, he insists, is *zaken*, which, as we have seen, refers to one who, though even a youth, has acquired wisdom and who alone is entitled to *kimah vehiddur*. There is thus no *mitzvah* to show recognition to *seivah*, to one whose sole achievement is his longevity. Still, one owes some respect to a *zaken muflag beziknah*, a man of remarkable age, and that is demonstrated by half-rising, whereas in the presence of a scholar one rises to full height.²⁰ Hayyim 'Attar (d. 1743) adds in his *Or ha-Hayyim* on our verse that the only proper recognition of the *zaken* is to offer him *hiddur*, whereas *kimah* is reserved for the chronologically aged, since obviously one who has accumulated wisdom by means of his unremitting efforts is more deserving than the man who has merely lived beyond the ordinary span.

The requirement to rise comes into force when the *zaken* is no more than four cubits distant, so that his status can readily be ascertained. If he is farther away, *kimah* can be interpreted as nothing more than a casual, meaningless act rather than as the manifestation of respect in compliance with the *mitzvah*.²¹

Since the root *hadar*, as used in Exodus 23:3 and Leviticus 19:15, can imply some financial consideration, the *Sifra* and the Talmud [Id.] insist that showing respect (both *kimah* and *hiddur*) is to be

accompanied without *hesron kis*, any out-of-pocket expense. The craftsman who is self-employed and is scrupulous about this *mitzvah* is permitted to rise, but one who is working for another person must place his obligation to his employer above his rendering honor to a *zaken* and therefore may not interrupt his labors.²² Epstein comments that this provision had become obsolete by his day, since craftsmen now sit on a chair while performing their tasks, and that allows them to rise and then return to their work very quickly, whereas in former times they were seated on the ground, and getting to their feet made for an extensive interruption.²³

A different rule, says Epstein, applies to those who are occupied in the study of Torah. They must rise, because it is permissible to set aside the *mitzvah* of study to attend to other *mitzvot*.²⁴

The sage should avoid making a nuisance of himself by thoughtlessly (or even deliberately) passing in front of workmen that he knows will be obliged to rise in his presence. Certainly, he should never intentionally call attention to himself and thus compel the obeisance of others who are trying to earn their livelihood; instead he should choose a circuitous route that will keep him out of their sight. The Maharil (Jacob Moellin, d. 1427), we are told, was so sensitive to the inconvenience his passing by caused others that he was in the habit of carrying a Torah scroll through the street so that when people rose, they were paying homage to the scroll rather than to him. Other rabbis would carry a *humash* when they were called to the Torah, so that when the congregation rose, that might be regarded as an act of reverence to the sacred book rather than to a *zaken*.²⁵

Out of their awareness of human foibles, the authorities were aware that some would deliberately avert their gaze (*Ya atzim 'einav*) when a sage passed by, to avoid having to rise.²⁶ Although there can

be no legal penalties for such callous conduct, yet when the admonition to fear God is attached to a *mitzvah*, as it is at the conclusion of our verse, it refers to the right disposition of the heart and forcefully reminds the Jew that punishment for derelictions of the heart remains with God.

Rendering respect to a sage is inappropriate in a privy or the interior of a bathhouse, because respect involves *hiddur* as well as *kimah*, and the former can be shown only to one who is fully clothed. The Talmud prescribes that honor can be rendered (apart from out-of-doors) in a structure suitable for a *mezuzah*,²⁷ and a bathhouse does not qualify for a *mezuzah* because it is not a permanent residence.²⁸ Deference may be extended in the outer chambers of the bathhouse, however, on the assumption that the patrons have not yet disrobed.²⁹

The only reference to women I have encountered in the literature is in *Arukh ha-Shulchan*.³⁰ There, Epstein writes that the wife of a scholar is entitled to honor during her husband's lifetime. After this death, it is fitting to accord her a measure of respect (*k'tzat hiddur*).

A non-Jewish elder (designated variously as *eved Kokhavim*, *zaken goi*, or *zaken Kushi*) is to be addressed courteously, deferentially, with *hiddur* conveyed orally. There is no requirement to rise in his presence, although the *Tur* prescribes half-rising.³¹

De Minimis non curat lex, "The law is not concerned with trifles." So, the maxim of the Common Law. On the surface, any discussion touching on whether one class of people enjoys a legal or moral right to expect deference from members of other classes appears trivial, unworthy of serious debate. Curmudgeons who are deliberately discourteous neither threaten the lives nor abridge the personal liberties of those to whom they are ungracious. Yet, perhaps

the situation is not quite so simple. Granted that in some people attitudes are innocuous and ephemeral, in others attitudes may function as a goad to action, even to rash and pernicious action. Some of the rabbinic comments we have considered mirror attitudes that, God forbid, could be made to reinforce prejudices we already hold; or, more likely, their insights might prompt us to reevaluate our own attitudes. At any rate, this discussion dare not be dismissed as much ado about nothing: it is timely, compelling, disquieting.

The *Halakhah* is devoid of discussion on the subject of exposure and abandonment, the sordid policy of destroying unwanted infants, especially females, and of excluding from the community the elderly who have outlived their productive years, so that they would perish of starvation or disease and by their deaths relieve society of an unwanted burden. This gruesome practice was carried out through much of the ancient world; it still persists in certain countries. In Sparta, every father had the right to commit infanticide; a child considered defective was hurled from a cliff on Mt. Taygetus, to be crushed on the crags below. According to Strabo, the Greek historian and geographer (b. cir. 63 B.C.E.), by the law of Ceos, all over sixty years of age were poisoned with hemlock.³² Plato, advancing the interests of the state as he saw them, would deny medical treatment intended to prolong the lives of those who could not work and who therefore were of no use to themselves or to others.³³ Indeed, he condemned sickness as a crime. The Roman philosopher Seneca extolled suicide as an easy, painless method of escaping the annoyances of existence.

Contrasted with such examples of social engineering, such extreme selfishness, is the Jewish respect for life. It begins with the protection of the newborn and progresses to the act of showing *hiddur* to the aged in recognition of their years and the wisdom they have gained

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through the vicissitudes of life. Nowadays, the definition of *hiddur* has to be expanded to affirm our obligation to those elders who require more than deference if they are to maintain life itself. *Hiddur* in the halakhic sense builds morale, and the aged are the happier for it, but many of them need a form of *hiddur* that involves *hesron kis*, a willingness on our part to assume a greater share of their costs for decent housing, medical attention, proper nutrition, adequate security. As we have seen, Plato advocated the withdrawal of medical treatment from those whose ill health prevented them from working, because in his opinion they no longer performed any useful function for themselves or for the state. Plato has his disciples today. They concoct clever sophistries to camouflage their real designs: to curtail medical expenditures for the elderly to eventually bring the Federal budget into balance and, at the same time, to make possible a reduction in the taxes paid by the more affluent, even though their *hesron kis* will surely be far less burdensome than will the sacrifices demanded of the defenseless of our society.

On the other hand, although discouraging *hesron kis* when we render *hiddur*, *Halakhah* wisely admonishes that the aged should take pains to avoid making themselves an increasingly heavy burden on the men and women in the work force who must struggle to provide for themselves and their families.

Those who ponder the rabbinic debates on *kimah vehiddur* will, I expect, find themselves troubled by the class conflicts between Jews that the texts take for granted. The sages tend to envision society as a pyramid, with a comparatively small group of *z'kenim*, scholars, at the apex and, beneath them, a conglomeration of lesser breeds who must do obeisance to their superiors. Though opinions vary, the other constituents include the *zaken ashmai*, the old reprobate, the unlettered and uncultured *amei ha'aretz*, and, at the bottom, the *bur*

and the *rasha*. Views differ with regard to those who belong in each group, and the degree of deference to be accorded *z'kenim* in the lower classes. Furthermore, membership in the Jewish gerontocracy is not an inherited privilege like the *kehunnah*—though the individual's genome may make for longevity—but access to *ziknah* and its perquisites is open to all who choose to pursue wisdom and to make it operative in their lives, who search constantly for moral excellence.

The Aggadah, the nonlegal tradition, aware of the antipathy between scholars and laborers, shows a way of bringing about peace between the contending classes. It reports that the rabbis of Jabneh were in the habit of declaring: "I am a creature of God, and so also is my neighbor. I work in the city and he in the field. I rise early to follow my occupation, and so does he. As he cannot excel in my work, so I cannot excel in his. You may suppose that my work is important, while his is unimportant. We have learned: it matters little at what we labor, be it in the fields or in the academy, provided only that we direct our hearts to Heaven"³⁴

We have surveyed the differences of opinion among the Rabbis as they probed the intent of the injunction in Leviticus 19:32 that mandates special respect for those who have attained *seivah* or *ziknah*. Is "respect," however defined, to be manifested merely in recognition of longevity, or must the recipient be possessed of learning and moral stature as well as advanced years, or even of learning alone, without his having (as yet) attained old age? After an exhaustive analysis of others' exegesis of our verse, a highly respected modern scholar, R. She 'ar-Yashuv Cohen, concludes: "Apparently [italics mine], to rise before a sage is a *mitzvah* of the Torah, but to extend respect to a *zaken* [in this context, an unlettered aged person] is only a *minhag*."³⁵ A *minhag* [custom] is generally reckoned less

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stringent than a *mitzvah*. It would seem that R. Cohen means to empower pious individuals to arrive at their own decisions on the practical implementation of Leviticus 19:32, always taking into consideration the various points of view set out in this paper.

Notes

1. *Shulhan Arukh, Yored Deah* 240:3.
2. For the conduct that leads to longevity, cf. Proverbs 3:1-2, 13-16; 10:27; Deuteronomy 6:20; 11:8-9, 18-21.
3. According to *Sifrei* Numbers 92, enlarging on Numbers 11:16, whenever in Scripture *z'kenim* (elders) are mentioned, God accords them honor. The tests cited to prove this assertion are Exodus 3:16; 24:1, 14; Leviticus 9:1. Moreover, R. Simeon b. Yohai is quoted as asking: "How do we know that in the Time-to-Come God will again pay honor to the elders?" By reference to Isaiah 24:23: "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be Glory." On this passage, R. Israel ibn Al-Nakawa points out (*Menorat Hama'ior*, edited by H. G. Enelow, Chap. 20, Gate 2, Vol. 4, p. 415) that here Isaiah makes no reference to God's angels or to His prophets, but only to His elders, as testimony to His overwhelming esteem for them.
4. Leo Baeck, *Judaism and Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1858), pp. 46-50.
5. Aarib Wildavsky, *The Nursing Father: Moses as a Political Leader* (University of Alabama Press, 1984), p. 12.
6. *Avot* 5:24.
7. Moses of Coucy (first half of the thirteenth century) classifies the commandment in the same fashion in *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, 13, of the positive commandments. Cf. also *Sefer Hainuh* by Aaron Halevi of Barcelona (end of the thirteenth century), 57.
8. Cf. *Levush, 'Ateret Zahav, Hill. Kevod Rabbo Vetalmid Chakham*, W 244:1.8.
9. *Sifra*, *Ibid.*
10. *Kid.*, *Ibid.*
11. *Hil. Kevod Talmid Hakham* 244:3.

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12. Cf. R.H. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913), Vol. 1, p. 540, n. 8.
13. *Kid.*, *ibid.*
14. *Kid.*, *as.*
15. *Kid.*, 32b.
16. *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, *Hil. Kevod Talmid Hakham* 244:2.
17. *Mishneh Torah*, *Hil. Talmud Torah*.
18. *Ibid.*, 244:14.
19. *Ibid.*, 244:11.
20. *Ibid.*, 10:1.
21. *Kid.*, 32b.
22. *Kid.*, 33a; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh Deah* 244:5.
23. *Ibid.*, 244:8.
24. *Ibid.*, 244:7.
25. *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, *ibid.*, 244:8.
26. *Kid.*, 32b.
27. *Ber.* 47a.
28. *Yoma* 11a.
29. *Kid.*, 32b; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh Deah* 240:3.
30. *Ibid.*, 244:7.
31. *Mishneh Torah*, *Hil. Talmud Torah* 6:9; *Tur*, *Yoreh Deah* 244; *Levush*, *Ateret Zahav Hil. Kevod rabbo vetalmid hakham* 244.7; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh Deah* 244:7.

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32. Strabo, *Geography*, 10:5-6.
33. Plato, *Republic*, 3, 407f.
34. *Ber.*, 17a.
35. "HaZignah BeYahadut," *Assia* 9: 3 (July 1983), pp. 13-24. This journal is devoted to medical ethics and the *Halakhah*.