

Hazy Clarity (Pekudai)

The man who insists on seeing with perfect clearness before he decides, never decides. -Henri-Frédéric Amiel

The modern world is fond of absolutes. People like to be absolutely sure that the course of action they are engaging in is both correct and will turn out as promised. Hence the success of both fast-food establishments and processed food, amongst a host of modern developments. A certain consistency, predictability, is built into a processed chicken part that looks eerily like the next and the next and the next.

Thankfully, in our inefficient world, there are daily reminders of the vagrancy and fickleness of those who attempt to provide us with goods or services. A serviceman who promises to come in half an hour arrives four hours later, or four days later, or not at all. If we would hold all and everyone around us to the standard of perfection, human endeavor would come to a screeching halt.

There is little in life, whether relationships, efforts, or dreams which we can see with absolute clarity. And apparently that is by design.

Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim of Prague, the *Kli Yakar* (1550-1619), makes an interesting observation at the end of the Book of Exodus (40:34). The Divine Presence descends onto the newly constructed Tabernacle. It is surrounded by a cloud. According to the *Kli Yakar*, the cloud is there to enable us to see God. It is impossible for mortals to see the clear, unobstructed vision of God. Hence, a haze is required in order to enable our perceiving the Divine Presence.

May we enjoy the haze of our reality, which enables us to experience it.

Shabbat Shalom,

Ben-Tzion

Dedication

To the completion of the renewal project of the Tower of David Museum in Jerusalem.