

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klimnick
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פרשת מצורע תשע"ו

A man realizes HE should have been punished

בַּנִּנֵּנֶה נִרְאָה לִי בְּבֵיתִי: (י"ד ל"ה)

"Something like a lesion has appeared to me in the house"(14:35)

The phrase "to me" (one word in Lashon HaKodesh) must convey a focused teaching, since it seems superfluous at a surface glance. Would not "a lesion has appeared in the house" have made the point? The Medrash Rabbah (ויקרא ט"ז ס"ו) makes the fundamental point that Hashem takes pity on people, with the stones and beams of a house feeling His wrath, and not the householder. But this redirection, this substitution is intended to spur the person to teshuva/repentance for the misdeeds which caused the punishment at hand. The self-realization that his person has been spared, and that he had best repair his ways, explains why he states "a lesion has appeared to me" -- "It afflicts the house, but it should have taken hold in me. It is a discernible sign for my benefit." (כלי חמדה סטאניסלאב)

Covering all possibilities

וְהָיָה עַל הַמַּטְהַר מִן־הַצֹּרֵעַת שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים וְגו' וַיֵּשֶׁב מִחוּץ לְאֹהֶלֹו שִׁבְעַת יָמִים: (יד ז-ח) He shall then sprinkle seven times upon the person being cleansed from tzara'ath ... but he shall remain outside his tent for seven days. (14:7-8) The number seven plays a decisive role here:

seven sprinklings and seven days of removal from the tzara'as dwelling place. We look to the Gemara (Arachin 16a) to explain the correspondence. א"ר יוחנן: על שבעה דברים נגעים באים: על לשון הרע, ועל שפיכות דמים, ועל שבועת שווא, ועל גילוי ערוה, ועל גסות הרוח ועל הגזל ועל Tzaraas afflictions are caused by seven sins: derogatory speech; murder; vain oaths; illicit relations; haughtiness; theft; and stinginess. There are two remedies "prescribable" for these serious spiritual maladies. The problem is that it may not be clear exactly which of the potential underlying causes is contributing to the person's tzara'as. He may have even transgressed more than one or even ALL of the sins. Because of the seriousness of his status, the tzara'as therefore undergoes seven sprinklings to cover all possibilities. And the expulsion from his house? The Gemara (Sanhedrin 37b) affirms that ר' יוחנן אמר גלות מכפרת על הכל Exile atones for all sins, [even in lieu of other punishment]. Parallel to the blood sprinklings, a stint in galus/exile likewise "covers all the bases" for a person who may have performed multiple transgressions. (נהר שלום - ר' שלום הכהן מחכמי טבריה)

STORY OF THE WEEK

(By Yehuda Z. Klimnick and translated by Dovid Pinchas Rose)

Saved from even a "mashehu" of anger during Layl Pesach

The Holy Rebbe Rav Aharon of Karlin זצוק"ל זיע"א, author of the celebrated sefer Bais Aharon, taught that the miniscule measure of a "mashehu" of chametz (the smallest imaginable amount) is forbidden on the Rabbinic level, the Torah itself forbidding only chametz in the amount of "kezayis (an olive's equivalent)." But when it comes to the poisonous trait of anger, the Torah itself bans it in the smallest measure, a "mashehu." The story is told of a Karliner chossid, a Reb Bertsche, a simple and sincere servant of Hashem, whose wife was not the most skilled "baal-ha-buste" in the world, to put it mildly. In truth, she was downright inept. It was so extreme that Bertsche had to shoulder the burden of making all the pre-Pesach preparations, for his household, unassisted. Up to the last minute, before stepping out to Shul, he personally set the Seder table with the matzos, wine and all other appurtenances mandated by Shulchan Aruch, so that he could launch the seder by making Kiddush as soon as he returned home.

While he was in Shul, the unthinkable happened, a genuine calamity. At home, his wife was passing by the Seder table when a corner of the tablecloth caught on to a hook or fastener on her dress. Oblivious to the danger, she kept on striding by -- and dragged the entire beautiful Yomtov set up on to the floor. Wine, matzohs, dishes, silverware, glasses -- everything went flying and the room, which Bertsche had worked so hard to set up, was a shambles. But this perverse woman, instead of feeling even a tinge of remorse, started to blame her poor husband for the mishap and as soon as he came into the house, began berating and castigating him. After

sizing up the situation, which was clearly attributable to his wife's carelessness, he maintained his composure to the ultimate degree. The self-mastery which he displayed was beyond the bounds of ordinary people. His wife's tirade continued unabated, until he calmly and deliberately picked up everything from the floor, reassembled the Seder tisch, relit the candles and in a word, restored the table to its prior gleaming state. Not a harsh word of anger passed his lips. That was not our Bertsche. He spoke only gentle and reassuring words to the woman. She gradually relinquished the verbal barrage and their Seder got under way. The simple Jew was transformed into a noble gentleman throughout the Holy Seder, which he conducted with a true simchas Yom tov. The following morning, the Holy Beis Aharon announced publicly, "I might have thought that I conducted a proper Seder last night. But it did not come even close to the spiritual madreiga that Bertsche showed in his house, at his Seder. By guarding himself from even the smallest "mashehu" of anger, he set an example for all of us, high and low, big and small."

This story has remained a cornerstone of sippurei tzaddikim, related with wonderment among Stolin chassidim to this day.

[Our story forms a natural parallel to an amazing episode of tzidkus told of Rav Nochum of Tchernobel in connection with Sukkos, another pole of the Shalosh Regalim. His wife, in a fit of rage, invalidated his precious esrog by breaking its pitom. The Rav responded with not a word of angry retribution, but merely by saying "Even without my prized esrog, I still have simchas yomtov!" An exalted madreiga like that could be expected of a tzaddik, but Bertsche of our story was known as a "simple Jew." Perhaps he was underrated! [DPR]]

Matzah in the Midbar: Yes or No?

A few weeks ago, in Parshas Vayakhel, we touched briefly on a historical question about whether our forefathers in the Midbar were able to fulfill the

mitzvah of matzah during Pesach. In honour of Shabbos HaGadol this week, let us expand a bit on this question as a Pardes "Special Feature." We will see firsthand the impact of שבעים פנים לתורה, "the Torah has seventy facets", for in answering the question, we will traverse some

seemingly irreconcilable positions, זה לאומת זה [This is credited to HaRav Tzvi Aryeh Reinhold of Boro Park, (ר"ת) (שליש"א תשואות הן חן לו)]

Our forefathers were sustained in the *Midbar* by daily rations of manna. This is the starting point for our analysis.

Each of the following points is grounded in contemporary *psak halacha*, as codified in Shulchan Aruch and later poskim. Since *Torah sheba'al peh* had already been bestowed at Sinai, we postulate that these points applied full-force in the Wilderness as well.

§§1-6: The Yidden were NOT *yotzei matzos mitzvah*

§§A-E: The Yidden WERE, or could have been, *yotzei matzos mitzvah*, at least to some extent

§1. Meforshim write that Matzah made from *manna* could not have been valid for Pesach, because it must be made from the five cardinal species of grain (*barley, rye, oats, wheat and spelt* [acronym *BROWS* (heard by DPR from Rav Avrohom Blumenkrantz (רצל)] and we assume that these products were not obtainable in the Wilderness. (הריטב"א קידושין (דף לז: ד"ה והשתא. וכן כתבו התוס' מנחות)

§2. Manna was incapable of becoming fermented; there must be at least the potential of *חיימוץ*-fermentation in the making of Matzah, specifically so that it can be quashed. No *חיימוץ* possibility, *ergo* no Matzah. (בנין צבי ח"ב סי' ב' ועוד אחרונים פירשו כן דברי הריטב"א הנ"ל.)

§3. Matzah must be capable of satiating the eater, just as conventional bread, "the staff of life." Yet it failed to satiate in the same way, which is why a new serving was delivered daily. It was forbidden to store it up overnight. (ר' מאיר שפירא בספרו אור המאיר סי' כ"א)

§4. Matzah must be simple, unadorned *להם*, "bread of affliction", devoid of taste other than that derived from its simple recipe of flour and water. Yet Shemos 16:31 informs us clearly regarding manna, that *it tasted like a wafer with honey*. We would call that *מצה עשירה*, "enriched Matzah", which is invalid for healthy people. (ס' דרכי דוד)

§5. The grain for Matzah has the requirement of being grown from the ground (גידולי קרקע). One may not even use wheat grown in an unperforated flower pot! (ש"ת מנחת יצחק ח"ג סי' י"ד) Manna, which fell from Shomayim, did not grow as a conventional grain, and hence would have been invalid to use for Matzah. (ס' מקראי קודש)

§6. "Manna-Matzah" would have another disqualification. It is disputable whether one can legally acquire something which came into being by miraculous means. Manna-Matzahs would thus not "belong" to the person, and would thus lack the crucial requirement of being *מצתכם* מן, from "YOUR Matzos." (מקרא מפורש קוטנא, עפ"י רד"ק) ("See below")

Now for the opposing views:

§A. In the first post-Exodus year, the Yidden **did** fulfill Matzos Mitzvah, but not in all the subsequent years. That first year, they had authentic Matzos, since there was some settlement in the vicinity of Har Sinai, but for the subsequent years, they had only Manna, which, as we have earned above, was not "kosher" for Matzos. (אבן עזרא שמות יב. פ"כ"ה)

§B. We learn also that the *Shtei HaLechem* offering was not brought in the Midbar for the simple and obvious reason that Manna is not termed "lechem." (רש"י מס' מנחות דף מ"ה ב' במדבר קרבו) But an alternative position is that the Yidden did indeed offer *Shtei HaLechem*, using the wheat which they purchased from itinerant peddlers, probably from among the Bedouins. While not in and of itself pertinent to Pesach, the supposition is that just as they had access to wheat to bake *Shtei HaLechem*, they may also have obtained wheat for Matzos. (תוס' ד"ה) *[Of course, the advantage of shmira misha'as ketzira (guarded from time of reaping) would perforce have been lacking! Recall that the basic requirement is shmira misha'as techina (guarded from time of grinding), which, in this light, would have been fully feasible. [DPR]]*

§C. There is proof adduced from the posuk *וַיִּתֵּן תְּהִיָּה לָךְ עַל אֲזוּנְךָ* (Devarim 23:14) that the Yidden did eat wheat in the Midbar, and not exclusively manna. How so? The tool's purpose was to bury one's bodily waste. Manna was fully absorbed by one's body; there was no waste thrown off from it. The fact that Yidden were commanded to have a shovel alongside their weapons means that they had to attend to waste disposal. Only availability of grain would have made that necessary. And that grain could have been one of the two raw ingredients for Matzah. (יומא ע"ה ע"ב)

§D. Yet another beautiful and inspiring approach is taught by *אורח"ק פ' שלח* – that the miraculous well of Miriam, which accompanied Klal Yisroel in the Desert, irrigating ground for gardens and orchards, could just as well have been the source of water to grow wheat for matzos.

§E. Over against this preponderance of debate, as a limiting position, there is what would seem to be a near-unique opinion that indeed, Yidden in the midbar **DID** use the manna in fulfilling matzas-mitzvah. [*Speculating, perhaps "manna-matzohs" relied upon a "hora'as sha'ah", a temporary ordinance for the duration of the sojourn in the Midbar. [DPR]]* (אגרא דכלה פ' בא ופ' בשלח מקרי דרדקי להגאון ר' הלל קאלמאיא)

*We have written in the earlier gilyon about the issue of whether actual personal ownership of the seder matzos is required in order to fulfill the *mitzvah mid'oraysoh* of *achilas matzah* on layl Pesach. The Gemara (Pesachim 38a) proves that matzos used for the mitzvah on Pesach must **belong** to the eater. Just as an esrog must be *לכם* "owned by you", likewise the factor of *מצתכם* applies -- "matzos belonging to you" are required. A full discussion of this topic would be out of place here, but we can just point out that the Shulchan Aruch paskens clearly that *stolen* matzos, for example, are not valid, with the Mishna Brurah discussing *borrowed* matzohs. Rav Eli Mansour writes very succinctly (in the electronic communication *What are the practical applications of "Stolen Massa?" Daily Halacha* 3 April '16): "The very fact that the householder lets his guests eat the matzah indicates that he intends for it to be theirs. There is no possibility of merely *borrowing* food items." (Comparison to gifting vs. loaning one's lulav to a friend on the first day of Sukkos comes to mind.) Still, Gedolei HaPoskim from our time (Rav Eliashiv ז"ל and Rav Auerbach ז"ל) write that it is commendable (ראוי להדר), although not essential, for the leader of the seder to legally transfer ownership of matzos to each guest for his or her use (by a kinyan), although the preponderance of poskim, including Chazon Ish ז"ל, do not insist on this stringency. Normative opinion (Misha Berurah) would insist, however, that one pay in full for matzos he purchases to avoid even the slightest overtone of theft.

(ש"ע א"ח סימן תנ"ד ס"ד, מ"ב ס"ק י"ד, מהדורת דרשו 17 ע"ש) (Thanks to R' Chaim Yeshaya Mandell for drawing the editor's attention to this source.)

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