

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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Wishing Eliron and all the family Much Hatslacha

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
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THE CHOICE IS OURS

The story is told about a man that didn't believe in free will. After 120 years he went up to heaven and was met with two paths in front of him. The first had a sign saying "Believers in predestination" and the second said "Believers in free will".

Needless to say, he chooses the first and goes down a long path. Finally, he arrives at a large brick wall up to Shamayim and a small door. He knocks on the door and an angel appears asking him, "What brings you to my door, mortal?" And the man says, "Well, there were these two signs, and I chose the one that said predestination." The angel says, "You chose it? You can't come in here" and slams the door. The man is heartbroken.

Finally, he trudges back to the crossroads and goes down the other road. Eventually he comes to another giant wall and a door that says 'FREE WILL.' He knocks and another angel opens the door and says, "Why did you come this way, mortal?" And the man says, "I had no choice!"

We believe that free will lies at the essence of our existence. Hashem has placed us here with the ability to decide our actions. He has created a world of reward and punishment that is governed by our free will.

In this week's Parasha, we learn a great lesson in how much we are supposed to appreciate this free will. When a person came to the Bet Hamikdash to offer up a Korban, his intentions (together with those of

the Kohen) had to be clear and focused on the special mitzvah. All Korbanot were the same. Nevertheless the Torah seems to go out of its way and single out the Korban Todah (thanksgiving offering) to mention the importance of good intention when being offered up, it should be offered up Lirtonechem - willingly (22:29).

Every Korban had to be offered up to Hashem with good intent. Why does the Pasuk single out the Korban Todah? The Korban Todah was brought as a thanksgiving to Hashem for saving the person from one of four things: release from jail, recovering from a serious illness, safely travelling across the sea and wilderness).

The Oneg Yom Tov explains that the word Toda - thanks comes from the word Modeh - to admit.

One can only admit something that one is able to deny.

Let us take a thought for a moment.

Hashem's power is infinite and the whole world is full of His presence. How is it possible for man to sin with Hashem there at the same time? How is it possible for Hashem to be present and allow man to sin?

This is one of the greatest acts of kindness of Hashem, that in order for us to have free will, He enables us to go against His will. When something bad happens and someone survives, they have two paths in front of them. They can use their extra life to enjoy the physicalities of this world or they can focus that extra life on serving Hashem. The person that brings the Todah admits and shows his love of Hashem.

This is the meaning to our Pasuk; Lirtonechem Tizbachuhu - we are acknowledging the gift of free will. We thank (Toda) Hashem for the free will that he has given us even whilst He is present.

So how should we guide our free will?

The Torah teaches that 3 types of domesticated animals were offered as Korbanot (sacrifices) in the temple - the cattle, the sheep and the goats. These 3 are mentioned in our Parasha. (22:27) ▶

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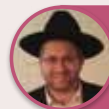
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DVAR TORAH

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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

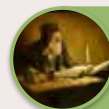
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The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni, Emor) has a fascinating insight as to why these three animals were given the merit to be offered up and stand as a merit for Am Yisrael.

The ox – Shor, was in the merit of Avraham. When the 3 angels arrived at his house as guests, he ran to the flock and chose a calf (young ox). The sheep - Kesev was in the merit of Yitschak. At the Akeida (binding of Isaac) Avraham offered the Kesev when prevented from offering his son.

The Ez – goat was in merit of Yaakov. Rivka commanded Yaakov to get two goats so that she would cook for Yitschak tasty food and he would bless Yaakov (thinking he was Eisav).

Rabbi Yehuda Leb Eidel (lyeh Hayam) asks that whilst we can understand why Avraham and Yitschak actions are a merit for their children, why are Yaakov's actions- which essentially were deceiving- a merit for his children? Yaakov wore the goats skin as a means to deceive his father – is that a merit?

R' Yehudah Leb gives a fascinating answer. When Rivka approached Yaakov with the idea, he was frightened. He stated that Eisav is an Ish Sair – literally hairy, VeAnochi Ish Chalak – and I am smooth.

On a deeper level, Yaakov was saying that Eisav always attributes everything to Seir – demons and idols, whereas I attribute everything to Hashem. Surely, he said to Rivka, Yitschak will realise. Rivka responded and calmed his fears and Yaakov dressed in the goat's skin.

When we delve deeper, we see that Yaakov had a much better option to 'deceive' his father.

When Yaakov came in to his father, he was asked how come he managed to prepare the food so quick. He answered it was because Hashem had caused things to be quick. This triggered some doubt in Yitschak's mind. If Eisav was before him, how come he mentioned G-d's Name – something he didn't usually do?

It was only then that Yitschak asked him to draw near so that he could feel him to check it was really Eisav.

Surely Yaakov could have initially responded by attributing his swiftness to the idols (seirim). If that would have been the case, perhaps Yitschak would have never had any doubt and wouldn't have needed to feel him.

Why didn't Yaakov choose this path? R' Yehudah Leb explains that Yaakov was a man of truth. Lying was not his nature. He had to attribute all to Hashem. He would rather dress in goat's skin and be put in a predicament than to miss out mentioning Hashem's Divine providence. This explains R' Yehudah, is the reason that goats were offered up and stood as a merit and reminder to Yaakov's testimony of Hashem's Divine providence in all.

When we guide our free will in the right direction, the effect is eternal. ■

MORDECHAI OVADIA - MEAM LOEZ KOLLEL, RAMAT BEIT SHEMESH

DVAR
TORAH



EMOR

Chapter 23 Pasuk 34

“Speak to the Bnei Yisrael saying on the 15th day of this 7th month it will be Chag Hasukot seven days for Hashem”.

Interestingly, both our Pasuk here and Pasuk 27 which discusses Yom Kippur mention this 7th month, whereas it later in Pasuk 39 which mentions the Mitzva of Lulav the it does not mention the word this month; it only says on the 15th day of the 7th month. The Baal Haoneg Yom tov asks what is the essential difference between the Pasukim where it uses the words this month for Yom Kippur and Sukkot, but not for Lulav?

The Oneg Yom Tov cites the Gemara in Ketuvot 10b where the Gemara explains the reason that a widow is called an Almana is because an Almana is given the sum of a Mana for her Ketuva if her husband divorces her. The Gemara asks how that is possible since the

Mana was an amount instituted by the Rabbis which happened many years after the Torah was given. The Gemara answers that the Torah gave the name based on the future Takana that the Rabbis would institute.

The Gemara in Rosh Hashana 29b mentions that when Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat they would blow the Shofar only in the Mikdash but not in the Medina. The Gemara explains that the Rabbis made such a decree to prevent someone from carrying the Shofar 4 amot in the public domain and thereby transgress the Shabbat. The Gemara further explains the 2 different expressions the Torah uses. In Parashat Emor (23:24) the Pasuk uses the expression Zichron Teruah and in Bamidbar (29:1) it says the phrase Yom Teruah. The expression Yom Teruah is used when Rosh Hashana falls on a weekday when we blow the Shofar and the verse Zichron Teruah is used when Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat when we do not blow the Shofar.

The Baal Haoneg Yom Tov explains that in our Parasha the Pasuk says on the first day of the 7th month it will be a day of Zichron Teruah. This refers to when Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat and we do not blow the Shofar because of the decree someone might come to carry. If Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat, then Sukkot will

also fall on Shabbat but Yom Kippur will fall on a Monday.

So when Yom Kippur falls on a weekday then all the Dinim are as normal and the Pasuk uses the expression this month. Also regarding Sukkot the Pasuk uses the word this month as the Mitzvah of sitting on the Sukkah remains the same even when Sukkot falls on Shabbat. However when the Torah mentions the Mitzvah of Lulav it does not mention the word this 7th month, meaning during the year that the Lulav falls on Shabbat then one is not allowed to perform the Mitzvah of Lulav because of the decree that someone might come to carry. The Mitzvah of Lulav is performed on other years when it does not fall on Shabbat and that is the reason it does not mention the word “this” month, as we refrain from performing the Mitzvah when Yom tov falls on Shabbat.

The Pasuk that speaks about Rosh Hashana when it says Zichron Teruah also does not mention the phrase this 7th month. This must also be for the same reason, as one does not blow the Shofar when Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat.

As Chazal have told us there is nothing that is not hinted in the Torah. ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MEIR BAAL HANESS

Rabbi Meir Baal Haness, of the fourth generation of Tannaim, belonged to that group of men who developed Torah instruction after Bar Kochva's revolt.

His teachers were Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Ishmael, and Elisha ben Abuya, and his manner of instruction consisted of one-third Halachah, one-third Aggadah, and one-third Proverbs. All classes of people appreciated his lessons.

His lineage was not well known. According to the Aggadah, Rabbi Meir Baal Haness stemmed from a family of converts to Judaism, descendants even of Emperor Nero himself.

They say that when Emperor Nero came to conquer Jerusalem, he shot divining arrows into the air and they all landed pointing in the direction of Jerusalem. Sensing that the event had been sealed and that he would only be an instrument of grief, he repented. From his descendants was born Rabbi Meir Baal Haness.

Rabbi Meir would say, "One should always teach his son a simple trade and pray to Hashem, Who is the source of all wealth. For wealth does not come by one's trade, since each trade has its rich and its poor."

He would also say, "There exist two types of friends: Those who rebuke you and those who do not. Love the first type above all."

And again, he would say, "Where do we learn that the resurrection of the dead is explicitly mentioned in the Torah? It is written, 'And Moses will sing'. The verb is in the future."

We say that his father-in-law, Rabbi Hanania ben Teradion, was busy spreading Torah during that difficult time. The Romans ordered that he and his wife be burned. His daughter, the sister-in-law of Rabbi Meir, was sent to a brothel. Rabbi Meir's wife, Bruria, told him, "It is an insult that my sister is in such a state." Rabbi Meir took a sum of money with him and said, "If she has not sinned, may a ness [miracle] be done for her." He disguised himself as a Roman and asked to meet her.

"Get away from me," she told him, "I don't feel well." With this, Rabbi Meir understood that she was innocent. He presented himself to the guardian of the brothel and said, "Give me this one." He then gave him the money and said, "Half of it is for you. The rest is to help her leave." The guardian asked him, "And when the money is spent, what will I do?" Rabbi Meir told him that when this happens, he should say, "May the G-d of Rabbi Meir save me," and assured him that in so doing he would be saved.

"Let us test what you say," the guardian replied.

"Here are some vicious dogs," Rabbi Meir said. He then threw a stone at them and the dogs ran to attack him. He immediately said, "G-d of Rabbi Meir, help me," and the dogs calmed down.

The guardian then agreed.

Nevertheless, what the guardian did eventually became known, and he was ordered into prison. However, he uttered what Rabbi Meir had told him and was saved.

Amazed at what happened to him, he guardian told people of his encounter with Rabbi Meir. Drawings of Rabbi Meir's likeness were affixed everywhere in the market, and one day someone eventually recognized him. When he saw him, he ran towards him. Rabbi Meir then spotted some non-kosher food and dipped one finger in it and put another finger in his mouth. The man who had recognized Rabbi Meir then thought that this could not be him.

He thereafter went into exile and died outside of the land of Israel. His bones were buried in Tiberius, the place where people still go to make a pilgrimage to his grave. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

BORER-PEELING ONIONS, GARLIC AND FRUITS ON SHABBAT

The Shabbat prohibition of Borer forbids separating undesirable food from desirable food on Shabbat, except under certain conditions. The Poskim addressed the question of whether this prohibition would apply to removing the inedible peel that surrounds a vegetable or fruit. Would one be allowed, for example, to peel an onion, or a clove of garlic, on Shabbat? On the one hand, peeling entails removing the undesirable substance (the peel) from the desirable substance (the onion), and this situation would thus seemingly qualify as a case of Borer. Peeling would then be permissible only under the conditions that apply to Borer generally. Conversely, however, one might argue that peeling does not constitute Borer because the two substances are not mixed. Borer means separating undesirable food from desirable food in a mixture. In the case of an onion, however, the peel simply covers the edible food, and does not combine with it to form a mixture. One might therefore argue that the Halacha of Borer should not apply to peeling fruits and vegetables.

This issue is subject to a debate among the Halachic authorities. The work Tal Orot held that Borer does not apply to peeling, and one may therefore peel fruits and vegetables on Shabbat without any restrictions. Most other authorities, however, disagree, and held that peeling indeed constitutes Borer, because the peel is attached to the edible food and they are thus considered a "mixture" of sorts. These authorities allow peeling on Shabbat only "Samuch La'achila," just prior to eating the food item or prior to the meal at which it is served. One may not, however, peel an onion in the morning in preparation for Se'uda Shelishit later that afternoon. Since, according to this view, the restrictions of Borer apply to peeling, it is allowed only just prior to the meal. This is the ruling codified by the Rama (Rabbi Moshe Isserles, Poland, 1525-1572) in Siman 321, and is the position taken as well by Rabbi Moshe Halevi (Israel, 1961-2001) in his work Menuhat Ahaba.

The exception to this rule is situations where some pieces of fruit are invariably removed along with the peel. When one peels a mango, for example, small pieces of mango come off together with the peel. This occurs as well when one peels certain kinds of melon. In these cases, peeling would not constitute Borer, since one is considered separating desirable food from other desirable food, rather than undesirable food from desirable food. Therefore, it would be permissible to peel a mango or certain kinds of melon on Shabbat morning for a fruit salad to be served later in the day.

This would not apply to common fruits such as oranges and bananas, where the peel separates cleanly from the fruit, without any pieces attached. One may peel an orange or banana on Shabbat only just prior to the meal, but not in preparation for later in the day.

Summary: It is forbidden to peel an onion, garlic or fruits on Shabbat unless he does so just prior to the meal in which it will be eaten. The exception to this rule is fruits such as mango and certain melons, where pieces of fruit invariably come off together with the peel; these fruits may be peeled even in preparation for later in the day. ■



TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ The Torah states in verse 22:3 that one who "approaches holy objects" while in a state of tumah (impurity) is penalized with excision. What does the Torah mean by "approaches"?
- ❷ What is the smallest piece of a corpse that is able to transmit tumah?
- ❸ Who in the household of a kohen may eat terumah?
- ❹ If the daughter of a kohen marries a "zar" she may no longer eat terumah. What is a zar?
- ❺ What is the difference between a neder and a nedavah?

Answer

- 1 22:3 - Eats. 2 22:5 - A piece the size of an olive. 3 22:11 - He, his wife, his sons, his unmarried daughters and his non-Jewish slaves. 4 22:12 - A non-kohen. 5 22:18 - A neder is an obligation upon a person; a nedavah is an obligation placed upon an object.

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