



MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 8:15 PM

Vol. 14 Issue 18

Parshas Chukas 5778

A PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

BY RABBI YOSEF PRUPAS

The common perception of death is fear, dark, and doom. Life ends and what is beyond is an abyss of the unknown. In Judaism, however, the idea of "passing on" has a whole different meaning. The righteous are unfazed with the prospect of moving into another world. This world is only a corridor leading to the main room of the palace. The work of this world is rewarded in the next.

This attitude resonates in the seemingly unfortunate occurrences in this week's Parsha. When the venomous serpents attack, Hashem commands Moshe to erect a pole with a replica of a snake on top. Moshe is informed that when the victims direct their attention to the top of the pole they will be healed. The Gemarah asks the following question, "Do you think it is the snake that kills or gives life? Rather, when the Jewish People looked up they would make themselves subservient to their Father in Heaven and be healed. If not, the venom would have its effect." This is difficult to understand. What was the need for a copper snake on top of a pole? Why didn't Hashem just command them to look up at the heavens and they would be healed? The Maharal tells us that placing the source of affliction in their direct line of vision would cause them to pray with greater intensity.

A similar concept is derived from the juxtaposition of the story of the death of Miriam with the laws of the *para aduma* (red heifer). Our sages tell us that we learn from this that just as the *para aduma* brings purity to the impure, so too the death of the righteous brings forgiveness to the Jewish People. This explanation is puzzling,

since the concept of human sacrifice runs contrary to the basic tenets of Judaism! The **Meshech Chochma** explains, it is not the death that brings forgiveness, rather it is the effect of the death that brings repentance. Shock from the death of a special person brings on a sense of remorse. People repent after being shaken from their complacency and their sense of guilt over having not taken heed to the words of the righteous one. They regret not having taken the opportunity to learn more and grow from the teachings from the tzaddik that was in their midst. These feelings serve as a catalyst for greater introspection and to seek atonement for their sins.

LIFE ENDS AND WHAT IS BEYOND IS AN ABYSS OF THE UNKNOWN

Suffering, pain, and death are not the result Hashem desires for His people. Rather, only when the subtle hints remain unnoticed, does Hashem employ physical aids to prompt us and set us on the path of repentance. The death of the tzaddik is of no consequence to him. The world he enters is far better than the one he left. The symbolic snake, created solely by the command of Hashem, served to bring those who sinned to greater remorse.

External stimuli are not new to Judaism. Hashem gave us positive symbols as well, such as tefillin, mezuzos, and tzitzis, to serve as constant reminders of our service and subservience to the One Above. May the positive reminders be sufficient to maintain our path of growth. And may we merit the day when death, pain, and suffering will be forever abolished from our lives.

DVAR HALACHA



CHOLOV AKUM - Dairy Detective Part 1

BASED ON THE SUNDAY MORNING HALACHA SHIUR GIVEN BY RABBI Y. BIBERFELD, ROSH KOLLEL WRITTEN BY: OVADIA GOWAR

The Shulchan Aruch in Yoreh Deah 115:1 deals with the kashrus of various non-Jewish dairy products. The three main products discussed are *gevinah* (cheese), *chemah* (butter) and *cholov* (milk). The general rule is that *gevinah* is the most strict, *chemah* is the most lenient and *cholov* falls somewhere in the middle.

In the first paragraph of YD 115, the Shulchan Aruch writes: "*Cholov* that was milked by a non-Jew and a Jew did not see the milking, is forbidden, perhaps he mixed in *cholov tamei* (non-kosher milk)".

What kind of milk is non-kosher? The Mishnah in Bechoros teaches us that anything that comes out of a non-kosher creature is non-kosher as well. So therefore milk from animals such as camels and horses is forbidden on a Torah level for us to drink, since those animals themselves are non-kosher.

Just like the *gezeiros* (decrees) of *pas akum* and *bishul akum* that we've learnt about before, the *gezeirah* of *cholov akum* is another *gezeirah* where Chazal saw the need to make a protective fence for the Jewish people. However, in the case of *pas akum* and *bishul akum*, Chazal were focused on preventing *chasnus* (intermarriage). Therefore even if you could prove that these items were 100% kosher, they would still be forbidden because of the concern of *chasnus*. With *cholov* though, the concern is purely about *kashrus*, i.e. is the milk kosher or not?

What is the source in the Gemara for the *gezeirah* of *Cholov akum*? It is mentioned in Avodah Zara 35b, where the Gemara lists a number of items that Chazal forbade. Among these are "*Cholov she'chol'va ovdei kochavim v'ein Yisroel roeihu*" (milk that a

[cont. on back]



Menucha Vesimcha has been dedicated by **Kutest Kids Early Intervention Services.**

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KOLLEL News

To receive Menucha Vesimcha by weekly email or to dedicate/sponsor an issue menuchavesimcha@phillykollel.org

MAZEL TOV:

RABBI MICHAEL AND DENISE STERN ON THE UPCOMING MARRIAGE OF THEIR DAUGHTER, DEVORI, TO ZECHARIA FERTEL OF BALTIMORE, MD

ZACH AND YANA WEISER ON THE UPCOMING MARRIAGE OF THEIR DAUGHTER, SHANA, TO CHAIM SINENSKY.

RABBI BARUCH AND MIRIAM LICHTENSTEIN ON THE BIRTH OF A GRANDDAUGHTER, BORN TO RABBI SHMUEL AND YOCHAVED LICHTENSTEIN.

BOB AND JUDY PRANSKY ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF THEIR GRANDDAUGHTER, MALKA PRANSKY, DAUGHTER OF RABBI DONI AND MRS ESTHER PRANSKY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA, TO AARON RIBAKOW OF BALTIMORE, MD.

CONDOLENCES TO:

RABBI TZVI SCICHAR ON THE PASSING OF HIS DEAR MOTHER, TEMA SWICHAR

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL WOMEN'S DIVISION

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A SHABBOS AFTERNOON ONEG FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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ENJOY CAMARADERIE, REFRESHMENTS, AND WORDS OF INSPIRATION.

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DAVENING TIMES:

Friday, June 22:

8:15PM Candle Lighting
8:33PM Shkiya/sunset

Shabbos, June 23:

8:15AM Shacharis
8:41AM/9:17 Latest Krias Shema

Ramban Shiur by Rabbi Eskenazi

5:30PM SHIVTI
6:30PM Mincha
8:33PM Shkiya/Sunset
9:28PM Ma'ariv
9:45PM 72 minutes

SPECIAL KIDDUSH NEXT SHABBOS!

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL INVITES YOU TO

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL KIDDUSH

IN HONOR OF

THESE PENN LAW GRADUATES WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO THE KOLLEL OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. WE WISH THEM LOADS OF HATZLACHA AS THEY EMBARK ON THIS NEW STAGE IN THEIR LIVES.

RABBI DANI EPSTEIN

SHMUEL AND Yael BALDINGER

CHAIM AARON AND FAIGY GROSS

REUVEN AND ELISHEVA ROSEN

YEHOSHUA ABRAHAM

DOVID SHEPS

(LIST IN FORMATION)

non-Jew milked and a Jew did not witness the milking). The Gemara tries to clarify the specific case that we are concerned could happen. If we are worried that the non-Jew switched the cow's milk with non-kosher milk, we would recognize this immediately. The Gemara explains that milk from kosher animals is white, while milk from non-kosher animals has a yellowish color.

Then the Gemara suggests that perhaps we are concerned that some non-kosher milk was mixed in with a majority of kosher milk. We wouldn't be able to use the color test because the mixture would still be white. The Gemara says that you could test it by making it into cheese. Only kosher milk can be made into cheese, non-kosher milk cannot.

The Gemara says that if your original plan was to make cheese, then obviously this test would help. But what if you didn't want to turn the milk into cheese? The Gemara says that you could take a sample of the milk and try to make the sample into cheese. If the sample doesn't become cheese, then you know that non-kosher milk has been added. However, the Gemara then concedes that even with 100% kosher milk, not all the milk turns into cheese. In the cheese-making process, a liquid called whey gets separated from the rest of the milk and sits above the cheese. So if there was non-kosher milk present, it would just get mixed in with the whey and you would have no way of knowing if it was present or not. So without supervision, we have no way of knowing the status of the milk and this is the reason Chazal saw it necessary to make the *gezeirah*.

In the coming issues we will look at the different ways in which the Rishonim and Acharonim understood the exact nature of the *gezeirah of cholov akum*. We will also look at the famous heter of R' Moshe Feinstein and how this heter applies to us today.



RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

Answer to last weeks riddles:

1. Who was swallowed up by the earth's mouth?
Dasan and Aviram, and according to the Ramban, Korach and his family as well
2. What was so miraculous about the earth opening its mouth – isn't it just an earthquake? *Ramban explains that with an earthquake, the earth opens apart and stays that way. In our case the earth opened its mouth, swallowed the people, and then closed its mouth again*

STORY

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JUST A LETTER

In the back of the Shul where Rabbi Avraham Pam regularly prayed, there was an old man who could be found day after day in his customary seat. One day he was missing and Rabbi Pam's inquiries elicited the news that the man was sick in the hospital. Although Rabbi Pam wished to visit the man, he could not, because the rabbi was a Kohen. (Kohanim are in some circumstances forbidden to enter a hospital.) Instead, Rabbi Pam wrote the man a letter saying that his presence in synagogue was missed, that he prayed for his recovery every day, and that he would love to visit, but was unable to because he was a Kohen.

The old man was ecstatic with his mail. The great Rabbi Pam, the head of the famous Yeshiva Torah Veda'as, had written to him. He prayed for him. He would even have visited him if only he could. The man showed the letter to anyone who entered his room. His elated spirits soon boosted his physical strength as well, and a full recovery ensued. When Rabbi Pam heard of the impact his letter had made, he cried: "What did it take to write that letter? Nothing. A pen and a piece of paper. I jotted a few lines and sent it over."

With that quick gesture, he restored a person to life...

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