



MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 7:04 PM

Vol. 14 Issue 26

Parshas Netzavim 5778

THE MITZVAH OF TESHUVA

BY RABBI AHARON SPERKA

The timely mitzvah of Teshuva is discussed in this week's parsha. Following the commandment to do Teshuva, the pasuk says, "For this mitzvah that I am commanding you today, it isn't hidden from you, nor is it distant from you: It isn't in the sky, that you shall say 'who will go up to the sky and get it for us and so that we can listen to it and we shall perform it': Nor is it across the sea that you shall say 'who will go across the sea and get it for us and hear it unto us and we shall keep it': Rather the matter is close to you, it is in your mouth and heart to do:"

The Torah is teaching us that this mitzvah is very accessible to us, and therefore we are responsible to do it. However, the pasuk is unclear as to which mitzvah it is referring to. Rashi explains that it is the mitzvah of Talmud Torah, Torah study. The words, "and get it for us and hear it unto us and we shall keep it", seems to imply that the mitzvah is Torah study. However, the context implies otherwise for the previous pesukim were talking about the mitzvah of Teshuva. Therefore the wording, "For this mitzvah that I am commanding you today..." would seem to be a continuation to the mitzvah of Teshuva. In fact, this is the approach taken by the Ramban. How do we reconcile the simple meaning of the passuk (Torah Study), and the context (Teshuva), and the seeming difference of opinion of Rashi and the Ramban? To resolve this difficulty we must get a deeper understanding of the mitzvah of Teshuva.

The Ohr Hachaim points out an apparent difficulty in the parsha of Teshuva. First the pasuk commands us "... and you shall return all the way to Hashem your G-d and listen to him ..." This is followed by "and Hashem your G-d will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your children..." which the Targum Unkelos explains to mean that Hashem will cut away the "tafshus leeba" - the foolishness of the heart. The pasuk then continues, "and you will return and hear the voice of Hashem, and follow all His commandments..." The Ohr Hachaim asks, if we indeed have done Teshuva, why is it still necessary to have Hashem circumcise our hearts? And once Hashem circumcises our hearts, we are now at the epitome of Teshuva, so how can the pasuk now say that we will do Teshuva once again? What more Teshuva can one do?

The action we must do to fulfil this mitzvah, is to return to Torah study, which in fact is not hidden or distant from us

To answer this, the Ohr Hachaim establishes that there are three main categories of Teshuva. The first is Torah study. The second is the negative commandments. And the third is the positive commandments. First, a person must do Teshuva on Torah study. After that, Hashem will circumcise the heart so he will not have the inclination to violate the negative commandments, and he will return to Hashem to follow the positive commandments.

When the pasuk speaks about the first step of Teshuva, it commands us, "and you shall return all the way to Hashem your G-d and listen to him." This is something that we must initiate. We must take the first step in our Teshuva for Torah study. The rest will come, as a result of our initiation, with the help of Hashem. "And Hashem your G-d will circumcise your heart", "and you will return and hear the voice of Hashem, and follow all his commandments..." will happen because we returned to Torah study. As we say in davening "Hashivainu avinu l'torahtecha- Return us, our Father, to your Torah," and after that we say "v'hachazirainu beteshuva sheleima lefanecha- and return us to You with complete repentance." The return to Torah comes first.

What is the significance of Torah study? Perhaps it is because the lack of Torah study is what caused us to sin to begin with, so returning to Torah study is what will bring us to Teshuva as well. But we must take the first step.

Perhaps now we can now understand that the mitzvah that Hashem commanded us to do, is in fact the mitzvah of Teshuva. The action we must do to fulfil this mitzvah, is to return to Torah study, which in fact is not hidden or distant from us. Rashi and Ramban are not necessarily arguing. Ramban is referring to the general mitzvah of Teshuva, while Rashi is referring to the practical aspect of the mitzvah

Teshuva is not just retrospection and repentance for our actions. We must strengthen ourselves in Torah study as well; it is a prerequisite to Teshuva.

May we merit to do a complete Teshuva, and have a Ksiva V'chasima Tova.

DVAR HALACHA



GEVINAS AKUM: Soft and Hard Cheese

Part 2

BASED ON THE SUNDAY MORNING HALACHA SHIUR

GIVEN BY RABBI Y. BIBERFELD, ROSH KOLLEL

WRITTEN BY: OVADIA GOWAR

Milk contains many components, one of which is a protein called casein. A glass of milk is about 3% casein. The cheese that we all familiar with is made from this casein.

There are two main types of cheese:

1. Enzyme-set cheese
2. Acid-set cheese

In enzyme-set cheese, an enzyme is mixed into the milk and that enzyme coagulates the casein into what we call "curds" (the hard, solid part). There remains a liquid part called "whey" that is separated and removed.

So the key to making cheese is using an enzyme. In the Gemara we've learnt that one of the enzymes used by non-Jews was the stomach lining of their animals, commonly called rennet.

Today we have access to many types of delicious cheeses such as American cheese, blue cheese, cheddar, feta, mozzarella, parmesan and Swiss cheese. These are all examples of "hard" cheese that is made using the enzyme method. The *gezeirah* (decree) of *gevinas akum* clearly applies to these types of cheeses and therefore only Jewish-made varieties are kosher.

The problem is what do you do with acid-set cheeses? First of all, what do we mean by "acid-set" cheese? In reality milk contains a small quantity of acid. If you leave the milk to sit for a while, this acid will eventually cause the casein to coagulate. This all works without an enzyme. What you end up with is what we call "soft" cheese such as cottage cheese and cream cheese. Nowadays they use acid-based agents for this, but the result is the same.

So the question is, does "soft" cheese fall under the *gezeirah* of *gevinas akum*? One could argue that the *gezeirah* was only on cheese because they are *maamid* (stand) it with *ohr keivas beheimah temeiah*. But acid-set cheese, even in the times of the Gemara, would not have been made using

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MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

DVAR HALACHA



[cont. from front]

rennet. Perhaps it never went into the gezeirah at all, which would mean that we could all consume non-Jewish-made soft cheese. Some infer from the specific language of the Shulchan Aruch that only cheese that is maamid falls under the gezeirah.

On the other hand, one could argue that anything that is regarded as "cheese" falls under the gezeirah, no matter what type. Some Acharonim, such as the Chochmas Adam and the Aruch HaShulchan maintain that all types of cheese are regarded as *gevinas akum*.

The shaila was asked to R' Moshe and can be found in his teshuvos in Yoreh Deah. In one teshuvah R' Moshe addresses cottage cheese and in another separate teshuvah he deals with cream cheese. While he does side with the more lenient opinion, in both teshuvos he ends by saying that it is better to be stringent and that he doesn't want to publicize his heter. However, he says that one shouldn't protest against those who are lenient.

Nowadays you can get soft cheeses, such as Philadelphia Cream Cheese, that is non-Jewish-made but has a hechsher. Given R' Moshe's reluctance to give a public heter for this cheese, who are they relying on? The answer is that they are relying on R' Yosef Henkin. R' Moshe and R' Henkin both came over from Russia and both were giants in halacha. However, not many people know about R' Henkin because of R' Moshe's overwhelming fame during the time. Regarding our topic, R' Henkin either agreed with R' Moshe's reasoning, or developed it on his own, but either way there is an oral tradition that he permitted soft cheese that was non-Jewish-made.

This soft cheese with a hechsher is made from *cholov stam*. Although there are arguments that even one who is *makpid* (particular) on cholov yisroel could consume soft cheese made from *cholov stam*, nonetheless the minhag is that those who are *makpid* on *cholov yisroel* are also *makpid* to only eat *gevina* that is made from *cholov yisroel*.

KOLLEL News

MAZEL TOV:

MAZEL TOV TO BETH AND LEN GINSBURG
UPON BELLE'S ENGAGEMENT TO MICAH ALTMAN OF MINNESOTA.

ARTHUR & TZIVIAH TORAN
ON THE BIRTH OF A GRANDDAUGHTER TO DAVID & BRYANA TORAN.

CONDOLENCES TO:

DR. IRA AND JULIA STRASSMAN
ON THE LOSS OF JULIA'S FATHER, MR. ARTHUR REITER, Z"L

THE KOLLEL RABBIS AND STAFF EXTEND
A HEARTY MAZEL TOV TO

RABBI YOEL DOVID AND SHAYNA MALKA ZEFFREN

ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF THEIR
DAUGHTER FAIGY,
TO ELIJAHU COOPER
OF BROOKLYN, NY

SHIVTI

THANK YOU TO
ALL THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE
ROSH HASHANAH SERIES ON
SHOFAR!

KEEP TUNED FOR THE NEXT SHIVTI SERIES.

DAVENING TIMES:

Friday, September 7:

7:04PM Candle Lighting
7:22PM Shkiya/sunset

Shabbos, September 8:

8:15AM Shacharis
9:10AM/9:46 Latest Krias Shema
Kiddush this week is Sponsored by Ovadia and Miriam Gowar in honor of the birth of their daughter Chana Baila Gowar and Ovadia Gowar and Akiva Dworkin To commemorate their Siyum on Meseches Rosh Hashana

6:00PM Mincha
7:21PM Shkiya/Sunset
8:16PM Ma'ariv
8:33PM 72 minutes

KOLLEL WOMEN'S ANNUAL YOM TOV BAKE SALE EVENT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

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Daughter of Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis, a"h
Join the inspiration of this all-important and uplifting event by becoming a sponsor. Sponsorship on all levels includes admission.

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WE THANK BETH & LEN GINSBURG
FOR OPENING THEIR HOME FOR THIS EVENT



RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

Whose bracha do we recall when we dip the apple in the honey? And when was that bracha given?

Answer to last week's riddle

Q. In the merit of which Mitzvah did Hashem create the world?
A. Bikkurim

STORY

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SHOFAR: MORE THAN THE SOUND

A poor farmer had a wealthy uncle who lived in the city and who once invited him for a visit. Thrilled with the invitation the farmer wasted no time setting out for his rich uncle's home. When he arrived he was greeted warmly and led immediately into a large dining hall with a long table. As they spoke and shared stories about family, the uncle picked up a brass bell and clanged it. Immediately, a troupe of servants emerged from side doors with trays of appetizers. The farmer had never seen such enticing food in his life. The servants returned to the kitchen quarters and the two relatives continued the conversation.

Shortly thereafter, the uncle clanged the bell again and the servants reappeared, taking away the old trays and bringing out new ones with the first course. The farmer's eyes bulged. He had never seen such enormous quantities of food and such dedicated service. This pattern continued throughout the evening. Each time the uncle rang the bell an entourage of servants answered his call, removing the old food and replacing it with the new. And with each clang the poor farmer was more dumbstruck.

When it was time to leave, the farmer thanked his uncle heartily and made a stop at a local store before rushing home. When he arrived he woke up his wife and excitedly told her. "You'll never believe what I did. "What?" "I spent our last penny!" "You what?!" "Don't worry. I spent it on something you will thank me a million times for buying. Here, look." And he took out of his pouch a brass bell just like his uncle's. "This," the farmer said, "is a magic bell." His wife looked at him as if he was crazy. Undaunted, the man said, "You'll see, all I have to do is ring it and, immediately, servants will come out and serve us the most exquisite food which we can eat till our hearts' content."

Of course, the servants didn't appear. The bell possessed no magic. It only worked when used as a signal to servants already waiting in the wings.

So too the Shofar sound only works when we understand why we blow the Shofar and what it is supposed to accomplish.

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