

Relatives

Becoming a happy person is easier said than done. Even people who understand that they have so much more than others are struck with dissatisfaction as soon as someone else appears with a new possession that the observer lacks. "Sure, I do have a lot – but I am also missing many of the things that make people happy," is the thought that immediately crosses the hungry mind. In *Hobot haLebabot*, Rabenu Bachye says: "One should always keep one's eye on those who have fewer benefits in life, and not on those who have more."

The *Gemara* tells of the poverty of Rabbi Akiba and his new wife, Rachel. When they got married, her millionaire father disowned her because he was unhappy with her choice of Rabbi Akiba as a spouse. The couple accepted their lot. They lived in a barn where they covered themselves with straw to keep warm for lack of anything else to provide warmth. One day, Eliyahu *haNabi* came to them, disguised as a pauper, and begged for some straw with which to cover his destitute wife and newborn infant. Rachel gladly gave from her limited supply of worldly comfort and agreed with Rabbi Akiba, who said, "See, here is one who does not even have the straw with which we are blessed."

Life is a matter of relativity. There will always be people who have more than you do, and there will always be others who have less. It's all a matter of how you look at things.

When the pangs of dissatisfaction strike your heart, adjust your sights from looking at one who is wealthier than you to one who has less. The laws of relativity will determine your happiness quotient. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Custom Made

It was *Ereb Pesah* and I was doing some last-minute shopping. I was hoping particularly to find some red radishes to use for *karpas* at the Pesah Seder. Although my husband likes to use potatoes for the blessing, he understands that I like to keep the custom of my parents and grandparents, and we always have both potatoes and red radishes on the Seder plate.

I checked the vegetable departments of several stores in the area where we live, but either the radishes were all sold out, or it had been a poor season for radishes. One store had pre-washed, packaged radishes, which was not acceptable for the holiday in our household. At last I decided not to spend any more time looking, for I was extremely tired and still had many things to do at home to prepare for *Yom Tob*. It was a great disappointment for me to be unable to observe this *minhag*, but it seemed I had no choice.

The Seder table was set, the food was ready in containers and pots and the younger children were taking naps. It was late in the afternoon, and my eagerly awaited guests arrived: my married daughter, her husband and their children. My son-in-law handed me a bag and said rather apologetically, "I hope you don't mind, Mom, but Faige insisted on our bringing you this one red radish." Faige is my five-year-old granddaughter. "She saw our neighbor plucking some radishes in his garden, and he told her he was going to use them at his Seder. Faige decided she had to have one for her *bubby!*"

I was both touched by Faige's affectionate gesture and deeply moved by the *hashgachah pratit* (Divine intervention) that enabled me to observe my family's *minhag* yet another time. I sat right down to say some *Tehillim* to express my awe and gratefulness no Hashem *Yitbarach*. (When the Time is Right)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמוֹת לְאָהַב בְּתַתּוֹתָיִךְ

בס"ד

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SHABBAT SAV ✪ בֵּן עֶשְׂרִים

SHABBAT HAGADOL

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 7:21-8:3, 9:22-23

MARCH 26-27, 2021 14 NISAN 5781

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 6:46 pm Shaharit: 5:48, 7:00 am
Shir Hashirim (Midrash): 6:35 pm **No other minyan for shaharit**
Minhah (Midrash): 6:45 pm Morning Shema by: 9:08 am
Candlelighting: 6:56 pm Shabbat Class: 5:25 pm
Evening Shema after: 7:54 pm Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 6:25 pm
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Ends: 7:55 pm (R"Y 8:27 pm)

This bulletin is dedicated by Mitchell & Robin Antar
in memory of Marilyn Shamula לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמוֹת מְזֻלָּה בְּתַתּוֹתָיִךְ

This bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of our grandmother,
Annette Doueck לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמוֹת חֲנָה בְּתַתּוֹתָיִךְ וְרַגִּינָה
By Hal, Gary, Sammy and Annette Doueck

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Raymond Kairey
by his wife and children לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמוֹת רַחֲמִים בֶּן אֲדֵל

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Darlene Kassin
by her husband and children לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמוֹת נְעָמִי בְּתַתּוֹתָיִךְ וְזִקְנָה

A Message from our Rabbi

מִצָּה זוֹ שְׂאֵנוּ אוֹכְלִים עַל שׁוּם מָה

"This matzah which we eat – for what reason? (Hagadah shel Pesah)

The Hagadah explains that we eat matzah because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before Hashem revealed himself to them and redeemed them.

Rabbi Matisyahu Solomon *shelitah*, *Mashgiah* of *Bet Midrash Govohah*, Lakewood, quotes the books of *kabbalah* that matzah reflects the trait of humility. It's made of plain flour and water, whereas bread represents haughtiness (*ga'avah*). The Rabbi asks, how does this logic fit in with the reason stated above that we were rushed out of Egypt?

The *Maharal* explains that even though the Jews wanted to leave *Misrayim*, at the time the Egyptians were urging them to leave, they weren't ready. They were busy preparing to leave. Although they ate matzah the night before, that was because they had a special *misvah* from Hashem that they must eat matzah with the *korban Pesah*. But now they were busy preparing to leave. They probably wanted to eat a morning meal before leaving, and wanted to prepare provisions for the trip. So they preferred to bake bread first and then to go. But Hashem worked it out that they would be kicked out even against their will. Since this was orchestrated by Hashem, this showed them that they had no hand in their redemption. That's the meaning of the words "Hashem revealed Himself to them" stated by the Hagadah.

Now we understand why the redemption is represented by the *misvah* of matzah. The fact that there was no time to bake the dough into bread is not just an interesting part of the story. It is the whole story. The matzah teaches us that it was all Hashem that did it, and they had no part in it.

Now the reason for humility from matzah is clear, that from our part we do nothing. Hashem does everything. Therefore one who wants to be haughty and wants to attribute his success to himself will be contradicted by the matzah. Therefore the preparation to learn the lesson of matzah is to acquire humility and to distance himself from haughtiness.

Shabbat Shalom and *Tizku l'shanim rabot*

Rabbi Reuven Semah

All Good

The *Midrash* teaches that in the future End of Days, all *korbanot* (sacrifices) will be nullified with the exclusion of the *korban todah*, the Thanksgiving offering. The sound of *todah*, gratitude, will continue to resonate even when all others have been halted. We wonder, what purpose will gratitude serve in the End of Days? There will no longer be any pain or sorrow, hunger or thirst, illness or personal trauma! There will be no questions, no accidents, no issues that need resolving. Everything will be good. People will be good. Indeed the first *korban* to be nullified should be the *todah*. After all, we will have no reason for it.

Rav Chaim Zaitchik explains that while we will have no reason to offer a *todah* for present miracles, we will have more reason to offer a *korban* for **past** experiences – which we now realize had actually been beneficial. Then we will see with unimpeded clarity how those circumstances, which we once thought were hurtful, painful, shameful, were in fact the best things that could have happened to us. In many instances they changed our lives for the better. We will also discover that we had been wrong concerning situations that presented themselves as good. Perhaps to the casual observer they had appeared favorable, but at that time we had been privy to only part of the picture. Had we known more then, we would not have been that overjoyed.

We have all experienced episodes in our lives which we judged superficially with our limited subjective vision. One day we will see that we interpreted these events inaccurately. Would it not be best if we would just place our trust in the Almighty, Who has been here from the beginning and will be here until the very end? His perspective is far better than ours. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

Pure Confusion

As the laws of the *korbanot* (sacrifices) progress through the ensuing week's Torah portions, we find more and more complex issues that deal with esoteric spirituality. The concept of animal sacrifice is difficult for us to comprehend, and the Sages of yore, included *Rambam* and *Ramban* deal with the concepts, rationale and purpose of them in

great detail. This week, in addition to defining the various laws that distinguish different types of sacrifices, the Torah tells us of the concepts of *tumah* and *taharah*, loosely translated as spiritual purity and impurity. Of course, these laws have nothing to do with sanitary conditions; rather, they define a state of spirituality that varies with the state of life and death. The Torah tells us that the meat of a sacrifice that will contact any *tameh* (impurity) shall not be eaten.

The law is that when *tahor* meets *tameh*, pure meets impure, *tameh* prevails and lowers the *tahor* to a state of *tameh*. The Kotzker Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenstern, was bothered: why so? Why is it that *tumah* depreciates *taharah*? Why is it not the opposite? When purity meets impurity, it should automatically purify it? Let the impure become elevated with its contact with purity.

Rabbi Shaul Kagan, of blessed memory, was the *Rosh Kollel* (Dean) of *Kollel Bais Yitzchok* in Pittsburgh, PA. In addition to his being a brilliant *Talmudic* scholar, he was very witty. As a member of the *Kollel*, I was a student of his, and he once related the following story to me:

A man was committed to an insane asylum due to his aberrant behavior. After months of treatment the doctors felt he was cured and allowed him to leave. The man, however, refused to go. "I will not leave this institution unless you sign a document that I am sane," he declared. The doctors had given him a clean bill of mental health and figured they might as well acquiesce to the strange demand.

Not long after his release, the man went for a job interview. After answering the questions quite impressively, the man leaned toward his prospective boss and asked in earnest. "Now that you asked me about myself may I ask you a question?"

The interviewer replied, "Certainly!"

"Mr.," the former mentally-ill patient began, "are you normal?"

The supervisor was taken aback but replied, "I surely think so. Why do you ask?"

"You see, mister," declared the applicant while proudly displaying his signed document, "you only think that you are normal. I have a certificate!"

The Kotzker Rebbe explained that when it comes to the world of pure and impure there are facts we know for certain, and there are particulars we can never be sure of. The world of purity, unfortunately is not as assured as the world of impurity. We may think something is actually pure, we may assume that it is untouched and unhampered. However, we may never truly know the truth. We do not know its history; where it went; what it touched or what affected it. We are shocked with horror at the deeds of youngsters who were deemed innocent and pure, or leaders who should guide us on high moral ground. We thought they were *tahor*. Unfortunately, however, what we may think is pure, innocent and holy is sometimes not.

Tumah, impurity, on the other hand, is well defined. We know with certainty what is not pure and holy. It has a certificate. Therefore, explains the Kotzker Rebbe, when bona-fide *tumah* attaches to something that is at best hopefully and assumedly pure, definite impurity prevails and defiles that what was assumed *tahor*.

When asked if an item is kosher, I have heard others reply, "I know that it is under supervision. I hope that it is kosher!" In a world of mixed-messages and confusing signals, we can try to cling to perceived purity. And we can hope and pray that the role-models and values that we have chosen are the correct ones. But we surely can keep away from those ideas and actions that are clearly defined as impure. Those deeds can leave an impact powerful enough to taint the purest of *neshamot* (souls). And we can avoid them. After all, they have a certificate! (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)