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PARSHA ENCOUNTERS

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Parshas Maasei ✍️ Rabbi Nosson Lederer

Really Going Places

With the summer heat upon us, the travel season is now in full swing. In today's world traveling from place to place and city to city has become commonplace and is conducted without much contemplation. Let us take a closer look at the nature of *Klal Yisrael's* travels mentioned in our *parsha* and see how this can have a positive impact on our own excursions.

The *parsha* begins, "These are the travels of the *Bnei Yisroel* who went out of the land of *Mitzrayim*." A look into the commentaries reveals that the travels of *Bnei Yisroel* through the desert involved more than meets the eye. The *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh zt"l* states that according to *kabbalah* the purpose of these travels and encampments was to cleanse and redeem the "sparks of kedusha" residing in the desolate desert that were captured and overtaken by the evil forces. This explains why the length of their stopovers varied; it depended on the accomplishments necessary to bring about a spiritual revival in each particular place. He further explains that this is why the *pasuk* identifies this journey as "the travels of *Bnei Yisroel* who went out of the land of *Mitzrayim*". Only *Klal Yisrael*, a nation purified through suffering in the "furnace" of *Mitzrayim*, was capable of accomplishing this lofty task. Indeed, the *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh* points out, the *parsha* begins with the words, "*Ai'leh Ma'asei* – **These** are the travels" indicating that these travels had unique significance, to the exclusion of other less spiritual journeys.

Perhaps, in light of this, we can clarify a difficulty in the *Torah's* account of *klal yisrael's* travels. For each of the forty two places visited, the *pasuk* follows the pattern of saying, "And they traveled from... and they camped in... , and they traveled from... and they camped in..." Why is it necessary for the *Torah* to mention the point of departure of every journey; obviously they departed from where they had last camped?

As we've explained, the encampments mentioned in the *parsha* were not merely places to stop and rest. There was a specific purpose for each stopover and a certain spiritual mission that was to be accomplished there. The *Torah* mentions "they traveled from..." after each stop to imply that *klal yisrael* had developed a connection to that place, as a result of the positive change they created there, which made it necessary to uproot themselves in order to move on.

In our own travels, at times we clearly comprehend our purpose and mission in the various places we find ourselves. Other times, we pass

through or visit places without giving much thought to why we are there. Nevertheless, *Hashem*, who "prepares the steps of man," certainly has a master plan for our actions of *kedusha* to produce the necessary positive impact in the places we go no matter where we are or why we chose to be there. One can never know if a *tefila* said in some far-out area may some day help another *Yid* be saved in that very spot, or if a *blatt Gemara* learned in some town will pave the way for a *makom Torah* to later develop there.

The story is told of the *Chazon Ish zt"l* once walking with someone in *Bnei Brak* when he suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "sometime ago, two *yeshivah bochurim* were talking in learning on this spot!" The *Chazon Ish* was able to identify the exact location where *kedusha* had been infused as well as its source. Although we are certainly not on his level, each one of us does have the ability, through his actions, to create a spiritual impact on his surroundings. With a bit of contemplation we can turn endless hours of travel into an uplifting experience. We will leave vacation spots and rest areas knowing that we have brought *kedusha* to these places through our *Torah* and *tefilla*. This, in turn, will encourage us to strive for greater heights in all aspects of our *avodas Hashem*. (Not to mention the added fringe benefit of easing our tensions over high gas prices as we realize that every gallon is serving a higher purpose). May we be *zoche* to always have a positive impact on our surroundings.

Rabbi Lederer, a rebbi in Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi, learns with the Zichron Ahron Mechanchim chaburah at the kollel.

YARCHEI KALLAH 5768
DAILY LEARNING FOR MEN
Beginning Monday August 11, 2008

First Seder Shiurim given by:

Rosh Kollel, HaRav Dovid Zucker

Second Seder Shiurim given by:

Mon. & Tues.:

HaRav Naftali Jaeger

Wed. & Thurs.:

HaRav Tzvi Berkowitz

HALACHA ENCOUNTERS

Havdalah Part III

Rabbi Akiva Niehaus

Mistakes during Havdalah:

If one reversed the order of the *brachos* and recited the *bracha* on the candle directly after the *bracha* on the wine, he should recite the *bracha* on *besamim* afterwards and continue with the last *bracha* (*M.B.* 209:6). Even if one has only *begun* the second *bracha* (having already recited the name of Hashem) intending to complete it over the candle, ideally he should finish the *bracha* for the candle as he originally intended and continue with the *bracha* on *besamim* (*Chayei Adam* 5:14). If one did conclude with the *bracha* on *besamim* instead, he has nevertheless fulfilled his obligation, and should continue with the *bracha* on the candle (see *S.A.* 209:1). In the event that one completed the entire *bracha* on the candle and immediately corrected himself [i.e. he said, "... *Melech haolam borai meorai ha'aish, borai minei besamim*"], the *halacha* will vary depending on his original intention while reciting the *bracha* of *borai meorai ha'aish*. If he **did** intend to say the *bracha* on the candle and upon realizing his mistake switched to *borai minei besamim*, he has fulfilled his obligation for the *bracha* on the candle and should continue with the *bracha* on *besamim*. On the other hand, if he was holding the *besamim* in his hand intending to recite the *bracha* over them and mistakenly said the words for the candle instead, he has then fulfilled his obligation for the *bracha* on *besamim*. In this case he should smell the *besamim* and continue on with the *bracha* on the candle (*M.B.* 209:6). If one finished *Havdalah* and before drinking the wine realized that he forgot to recite the *bracha* for *besamim* and/or the candle, he should recite the missing *bracha* at that point (*Shulchan Shlomo* Vol. 1 pg. 338). If he has already begun drinking the wine, he should drink the required amount and then recite the missing *brachos* (*The Radiance of Shabbos* 18:V:1).

Havdalah on Special Days:

If *Havdalah* is recited on any night of the week other than *Motzai Shabbos*, the *brachos* on *besamim* and the candle are omitted (except for *Motzai Yom Kippur* when the *bracha* on the candle is recited in certain circumstances- see the forthcoming details) (*S.A.* 491:1). Additionally, the introductory *pesukim* of *Hinei Keil* etc. are not recited and it is also unnecessary to cause the cup to overflow (*S.S.K.* 60:23, 62:7).

If Tisha B'av Falls on Shabbos or Sunday:

When *Tisha B'av* falls out on Sunday (like this year, 5768), or *Shabbos* (in which case the fast is pushed off until Sunday), *Havdalah* may not be recited on *Motzai Shabbos* due to the fast. Instead, *Havdalah* is recited on Sunday night after the fast is over. At that time, only the *bracha* on wine and the last *bracha* of *Havdalah* are recited (*S.A.* 556:1). (The *bracha* on the candle is not recited even if one forgot to recite the *bracha* on *Motzai Shabbos*. *M.B.* 556:4)

On *Motzai Shabbos* the custom is to recite the *bracha* on the candle in *shul* before reading *Megillas Eicha* (*S.A.* *ibid.*). The reason for this is that the *posuk* in *Eicha* (3:6) says, "Bimachashakim hoshivani, He has placed me in darkness." After reading that Hashem has placed us in darkness, it would not be proper to recite a *bracha* on light. Additionally, it is preferable to recite the *bracha* on light before receiving any benefit from it (*M.B. s.k.*1). [See *Halichos Shlomo* (*D'var Halacha* 15:21) who says that in keeping with the general rule of *b'rov am hadras melech*, the *bracha* should be recited by one person for the entire *shul*. He also rules that everyone should be seated (on the ground) while the *bracha* is recited in order to be considered a unified group.] The *bracha* on *besamim* is not recited on *Motzai Shabbos* because smelling the *besamim* is enjoyable and inappropriate on *Tisha B'av* (*M.B. s.k.* 1).

What should women who are not present in *shul* do regarding the *bracha* on the candle? The *Birkei Yosef* (*O.C.* 693:1) says that the *halacha* is like the *Shulchan Aruch* that women are obligated to recite *Havdalah*, and they should recite the *bracha* themselves. However, Hagaon Rav S.Z. Auerbach *zt"l*

(*S.S.K. perek* 62 footnote 98) says that according to the *Biur Halacha* women may not be obligated to recite the *bracha* on the candle. Consequently, it is preferable that the husband have in mind not to fulfill his obligation in *shul* so he can recite the *bracha* for his wife when he gets home. If the husband did fulfill his obligation in *shul*, the woman should recite the *bracha* herself (*Halichos Shlomo* 15:14).

Motzai Yom Tov:

Just as *Havdalah* is recited on *Motzai Shabbos*, it is recited on *Motzai Yom Tov* (*S.A.* 491:1). Additionally, *Havdalah* is recited on *Motzai Yom Tov* going into *Chol Hamoed* (*ibid.*). When *Motzai Yom Tov* falls on Friday night, *Havdalah* is not recited because the *kedusha* (holiness) of *Shabbos* is greater than the *kedusha* of *Yom Tov* (*Pesachim* 104a, see *Rashbam* *ibid.*).

When *Yom Tov* falls on *Motzai Shabbos*, *Havdalah* is incorporated into *Kiddush* in a procedure known as *YaKniHaZ* (an acronym for *Yayin-wine, Kiddush, Ner-candle, Havdalah, and Zman-shehechyanu*). *Besamim* are not necessary because the tasty *Yom Tov* food will revive us instead (*M.B.* 491:3). Since the *bracha* on the candle should preferably be recited on a torch, many have the custom to bring two candles together so that the two flames are touching each other (*Elef Hamagen* 600:3, *Be'er Moshe* 8:144. The standard *Havdalah* candle is not lit since it is forbidden to extinguish a candle on *Yom Tov*). Some *poskim* say that one should be careful to connect the flames but not let the candles themselves touch (*Y.T. Sheini K'hilchasa perek* 1 footnote 68 in the name of Hagaon Rav Y.S. Elyashiv *shlita*). Other *poskim* are concerned that connecting the flames may cause wax to drip which may be considered decreasing the fire. Instead, the *bracha* should be recited on two candles placed close together without connecting them at all (*ibid.* footnote 67 in the name of Hagaon Rav S.Z. Auerbach *zt"l*). According to all opinions, if the candles were actually brought together they may be separated afterwards (*ibid.* 1:20).

Motzai Yom Kippur:

The *bracha* on *besamim* is omitted from *Havdalah* on *Motzai Yom Kippur*. If *Motzai Yom Kippur* falls out on *Motzai Shabbos*, in the opinion of some *poskim*, the *bracha* on *besamim* is still not recited (*S.A.* 624:3). Other *poskim* say that the *bracha* should be recited after one drinks the wine (*S.S.K.* 62:28). However, many *poskim* maintain that this *bracha* is recited as usual (see *M.B.* 624:5, *A.H.* 624:1, *M.E.* 624:5).

On *Motzai Yom Kippur* the *bracha* on the candle is recited only under certain circumstances. The *bracha* may only be recited on a fire that was lit before *Yom Kippur* began [such as a *yahrtzeit* candle or a pilot light (*IG"M O.C.* 4:122) or on a candle lit from these sources (*A.H.* 624:3)]. If no such fire is available, the *bracha* is omitted (*S.A.* 624:4, *A.H. seif* 2). The rationale for this is that unlike *Motzai Shabbos* when we recite this *bracha* to commemorate the creation of fire, on *Motzai Yom Kippur* this reason does not apply. The only reason for this *bracha* would be that since it was forbidden to light a fire on *Yom Kippur* we recite a *bracha* on fire after *Yom Kippur* to show the novelty of something forbidden becoming permitted. Consequently, a *bracha* may only be recited on fire that was burning throughout *Yom Kippur* and was in fact forbidden (*M.B.* 624:7). Based on this reasoning, it would seem to follow that when *Motzai Yom Kippur* falls out on *Motzai Shabbos*, a *bracha* may be recited on a new fire like any other *Motzai Shabbos*. However, many *poskim* say that even in this case the custom is to recite the *bracha* on a fire that was lit before *Yom Kippur* (*M.B.* and *A.H.* *ibid.*). If no such fire is available, the *bracha* may still be recited over a new fire (*A.H. seif* 6). In such a case, it is preferable that the flame be lit from another fire (e.g. a candle that was lit from a match as opposed to reciting the *bracha* directly on two matches) in order to resemble an old fire (*M.B.* *ibid.*).

Although on *Motzai Shabbos* one need not exert himself to find fire, on *Motzai Yom Kippur* one is required to try and obtain a proper flame (*S.A.* 298:1). The reason for this is that on *Motzai Yom Kippur* the *bracha* on the candle is similar to a "mini *Havdalah*", because it separates between forbidden and permissible use of fire (*M.B. s.k.* 1).

Rabbi Niehaus learns full-time at the kollel.