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PARSHA

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Parshas Ki Sissa ✍️ Rabbi Dovid Rifkind

Lesson of "pure-im"

Though our Pesach preparations compel us to quickly consume our *mishloach manos*, the material gifts of Purim, the spiritual gifts of Purim can be enjoyed the entire month of Adar and throughout the year. A vital lesson of the Purim story is actually based on a reference to Mordechai HaTzaddik which Chazal discovered in this week's *parshah* of *Ki Sisa*.

The Gemara (*Chullin* 139b) asks "*Mordechai min haTorah minayin?*" - "Where is there a reference to Mordechai in the Torah?" The Gemara answers that we find Mordechai referenced in this week's *parshah*. One of the *mitzvos* in this *parshah* is the *mitzvah* of *Shemen Hamishchah*, the special anointing oil which was used to consecrate both the Kohanim and the vessels of the *Mishkan*. One of the spices used in the *Shemen Hamishchah* was called *mor d'ror* (pure myrrh), which the Targum Onkelos translates as *mira dachya*. Thus, according to the Gemara, the words *mor d'ror* when mentioned in *Shemos* 30:23 are actually a reference to Mordechai HaTzaddik.

R' Shimon Schwab distinguishes between the very different meanings of the words *mor d'ror* and *mira dachya*, enabling us to understand the connection between Mordechai HaTzaddik and the *mor d'ror*, as well as the relationship between the Hebrew *mor d'ror* and the Aramaic *mira dachya*. *D'ror* is generally used as a term of **freedom**, as in *Vayikra* 25:10: "*ukarasam d'ror b'chol ha'aretz*" "and you shall proclaim freedom throughout the land." The Aramaic term *dachya* is generally translated as **'purity'** or **'flawlessness.'** Were it not for the Targum Onkelos, we would assume that *mor d'ror* refers to myrrh, which grows freely in many kinds of environments. The Aramaic *mira dachya* tells us that the Torah is concerned with the **purity** of the *mor d'ror*.

The story of Purim is not actually a story of *geulah*. As the Gemara informs us (*Megillah* 14a), even after the *nes* of Purim, the Jews were still servants of Achashveirosh. Rather, the events of Purim and Mordechai's lesson teach us that the secret to Bnei Yisroel's survival in *galus* is the preservation of their pure, undiluted Yiddishkeit.

The Maharal notes that Haman himself understood this lesson. His declaration to Achashveirosh (*Esther* 3:8): "*Yeshno am echad mefuzar umeforad bein ha'amim.*" "There is one nation scattered and dispersed **among the people.**" is revealing. Haman obviously realized that as long as Klal Yisroel acted as an "*am livadad yishkon*" (*Bamidbar* 23:9), he and Achashveirosh would have no power over them. Only when the Jews began to behave as though they were "*bein ha'amim*" would Haman's evil plan succeed.

Throughout history, Bnei Yisroel have often concluded erroneously: "If only we were more like the people around us, anti-Semitism would cease to exist." Indeed, in Mordechai HaTzaddik's generation, the Jews' attendance at Achashveirosh's party was to their detriment rather than their benefit; their error nearly caused their downfall. The lesson of the *mor d'ror/mira dachya* is that the secret of being *d'ror*, able to survive as a nation in any surrounding, is *dachya*, by refusing to compromise on our standards of Yiddishkeit.

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HALACHA ENCOUNTERS

Brochos Priorities

Rabbi Ephraim Friedman

If one has before him two or more food items which he wishes to partake of, all of which require the same brocha, one of the items should be selected over which to recite the brocha and exempt all the others. The following criteria should be used to determine which item the brocha should be recited over.

- 1) If amongst the items there is one which is from the seven species for which Eretz Yisroel is praised, the brocha should be recited over that. The seven species are wheat, barley, olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates.
- 2) If two or more of the items are from the seven species, the brocha should be recited over the one which is earliest in the list, according to the order presented above.
- 3) If none are from the seven species (or if you have two dates etc.) the brocha should be recited over an item which is whole.
- 4) If none are from the seven species and all (or none) are whole, the brocha should be recited over the item which you generally enjoy the most from the items before you. If you generally enjoy them all equally, the brocha should be recited over the type you are most interested in eating currently.

Examples

If you are eating a portion of spaghetti and a portion of cooked rice, the brocha “borei minei mezonos” should be recited over the spaghetti since it is made from wheat, one of the seven species.

Similarly, if you are eating a portion of spaghetti and a bowl of cooked barley, borei minei mezonos should be recited over the spaghetti since wheat precedes barley on the list of the seven species.

If you are eating puffed wheat (for which the brocha is “borei pri hoadama”) and vegetable salad, borei pri hoadama should be recited over the puffed wheat.

If you are eating dates, figs and cherries, recite “borei pri hoeitz” over the dates.

In all of the above cases your personal taste preference is not a factor, nor is the status of the food items, whether whole or cut.

If you are eating an apple, a pear, and a peach, recite the brocha over the one which is whole. If two or more of them are whole recite the brocha over the whole one you generally enjoy best. If you generally have no preference, recite the brocha over the one you are most interested in eating at the time.

If you are eating two containers of yogurt, each a different flavor, recite “shehakol n’hiyeh bidvaro” over the one you enjoy more.

NOTE: Whenever reciting a brocha rishona it is proper to have specific intent for the brocha to cover all foods before you which require that particular brocha. Even better is to have intent that the brocha should cover any food which requires that brocha – whether before you currently or not – which you will eat, until you recite a brocha achrona. If you did not have any of this in mind, as long as you recited the brocha over the correct item (as per the rules above) all other items before you on the

table which require that brocha are automatically included. Items which were not before you at the time will sometimes require a separate brocha. If you recited the brocha over the “wrong” item (i.e. you did not follow the above rules) even items before you at the time will in some instances not be exempted by your original brocha. It is not practical to explain all the pertinent details within this short article. One can avoid uncertainty by remembering to specifically include all other foods of that brocha with each brocha rishona he recites.

Foods of Different Brochos

If one is eating two or more food items which require different brochos (outside of a bread meal), he should recite brochos over the food in the following order:

- 1) borei minei mezonos
- 2) borei pri hagafen
- 3) borei pri hoeitz
- 4) borei pri hoadama
- 5) shehakol n’hiyeh bidvaro

Even if the food with the “higher” brocha is not from the seven species (e.g. cooked rice which required borei minei mezonos) and the food with the “lower” brocha is (e.g. grapes which require borei pri hoeitz), the higher brocha should be recited first. Furthermore, even if the food with the higher brocha is not whole or not your preference while the food with the lower brocha does possess one of those qualities, the higher brocha still has precedence. In short, the criteria used to determine which food to recite the brocha over when reciting one brocha over two or more foods, are not relevant in determining which brocha to recite first when reciting more than one brocha.

An important exception to this is the following. Although we have learned that borei pri hoeitz is a higher brocha than borei pri hoadama, the distance between these two brochos is not as significant as the distance between any other two brochos. Consequently, borei pri hoeitz will not always precede borei pri hoadama. The criteria used above when dealing with two foods of the same brocha will, in certain cases, be relevant here, as follows. When you have before you a borei pri hoeitz item and a borei pri hoadama item, if the hoadama item is something you generally prefer over this hoeitz item, and now as well you are more interested in the hoadama item, a brocha should be recited over the hoadama item first. This halacha is true even if the hoeitz item is from the seven species and the hoadama item is not. If, however, both items are equal in your eyes from a taste perspective, but the hoadama item is from the seven species (e.g. puffed wheat) and the hoeitz item is later on the list of the seven species or not on the list at all, here, too, one should recite the hoadama first. (You will note that although the taste preference factor and the seven species factor are relevant here, they rank in different order than when dealing with two foods of the same brocha.) With regard to any other two brochos (e.g. mezonos and hoeitz, hoadama and shehakol, etc.) neither your personal preference nor the inclusion or exclusion of the item from the seven species is relevant. Rather, the higher brocha should always be recited before the lower brocha.

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