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HEMDAT YAMIM

Parashat HaShavua

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Exiting Destroyers

Harav Yosef Carmel

[Ed. Note – It is always hard to translate p'sukim upon which there is a dispute about its meaning, but we will start with the simplest literal translation.]

In this week's *haftara*, we find the *pasuk*: "Your sons hurried (*miharu banayich*); your spoilers and destroyers have left you" (Yeshaya 49:17). Classical commentators struggled with the meaning of both parts of the *pasuk* and with the connection between the sections. We will cite several and, as is our practice, also make our own suggestion.

Rashi explains the beginning of the *pasuk* positively, as a prophecy of consolation that the exile will end soon, as sons will be quick to return. We then have to explain the end of the *pasuk* as the Ibn Ezra and Rashi's student, Mahari Kra, do, that the return will be possible because our enemies who destroyed the Land (i.e., the Babylonians) were leaving it.

In contrast, Mahari MiTrani explains that it is not talking about the speed of the sons, but it is a derogatory reference to their hastiness to sin. Thus, the sons are the same sinful people to whom the second part of the *pasuk* refers to as "your destroyers."

The Radak and Abarbanel explain the *pasuk* positively, but in a different way. The destroyers will cease to be bad people, as they will repent, which will pave the way for the nation to merit redemption.

We can suggest a different approach, based on a broader look at the whole *haftara* [which we will have to ask our readers to look up or take our word about the context]. The section is discussing the miracle of the ingathering of exiles and the rebuilding of the Land, events that we have merited seeing in the last couple of generations.

In the Torah portion on *tochecha* (rebuke/warning), the people are foretold: "I will make the Land desolate; and your enemies who inhabit it will experience desolation" (Vayikra 26:32). This was good news for the nation, as until Bnei Yisrael started returning to the Land, there was desolation and almost no one lived there.

Let us suggest an explanation for our *pasuk* as follows, based on the above background. Bnei Yisrael are called to return quickly to their Land, which will be possible because the enemies had not succeeded in remaining there. They left, as the Torah had promised that when it would be time for the sons to return, the Land would be sparsely populated (see Sifra, Bechukotai 2:6).

The *drash* of our *pasuk* is that our biggest destroyers come from our own midst. May we pray that this never be the case, as destruction from within is the hardest to fix.

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Ask the Rabbi

by Rav Daniel Mann

How Many Eggs Should be Boiled Together?

Question: When making hardboiled eggs, may one cook one or two eggs or must there be at least three? Also, does it make a difference if there is an even or odd number?

Answer: There are sources and traditions about boiling at least three eggs together. While at first glance the practice flies in the face of halachic logic, the laws of blood spots in eggs are unique, as we will see.

A blood spot in an egg can be the beginning of an embryo, in which case the egg is forbidden, while there is a *machloket* if it is based on Torah law or Rabbinic law (see Tosafot, Chulin 64b; Beit Yosef, Yoreh Deah 66). If the blood comes from the hen, the blood is forbidden (Rabbinically), but the egg is permitted and can be eaten after the blood is removed (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 66:2-3). *Poskim* provide physical signs of when it is more likely that the blood belongs to one category or the other, but after the egg is handled, it can be difficult to recognize these signs.

We assume that in a case where only the blood is forbidden, there will be 60:1 ratio of permitted material to forbidden to nullify (*bitul*) the blood (see Darchei Teshuva 66:40). However, if the whole egg is forbidden, *bitul* requires 60 times more permitted material in the pot against the volume of the egg, and three eggs will not help too much.

There are times that *bitul* takes place by means of a simple majority. When the minority forbidden food and the majority permitted food are of the same type (*min b'mino*) and they are "combined" *yavesh b'yavesh* (separate solid items that are intermingled only in that the identity of the forbidden food is not known), all the pieces are permitted (Shulchan Aruch, YD 109:1). However, this will not help for two kosher and one non-kosher eggs being boiled together because boiling causes their tastes to mix, making a ratio of 60:1 necessary for *bitul* (ibid. 2).

Rather, the logic of having three eggs is based on the following Rama (YD 66:4). The Shulchan Aruch (ad loc.) discusses cases of opened raw eggs that have been mixed together and blood was found, and he rules how much has to be thrown out in each case. The Rama adds that this is only when the signs of the blood indicate that the entire egg is forbidden. However, if there is a doubt whether the whole egg is forbidden, we "permit the mixture, since in any case, one [forbidden egg] is *bateil* in two [permitted eggs]." The Taz (ad loc. 5) explains that even though in *lach b'lach* (physical mixtures, like the contents of eggs mixed together) a 60:1 ratio is needed for *bitul*, the Rama is more lenient for an egg with a blood spot. The reason is that he holds that the egg is at worst forbidden Rabbinically, and when the type of blood spot is questionable, we do not forbid the mixture when a majority of it is permitted. This leans on the fact that the requirement of 60:1 for *lach b'lach* of *min b'mino* is itself only a Rabbinic law (a majority suffices by Torah law).

The Yad Yehuda (66:7) explains the practice in question as follows. With two eggs boiling, there is not a permitted majority for *bitul* if one has a blood spot, and the taste coming from the forbidden egg would render the other egg not kosher. The water in the pot does not help because it is of a different food type. Therefore, three eggs will help you if you find a blood spot after peeling the boiled eggs. The more eggs, the better the chance of a majority, and odd numbers help slightly statistically. The number of eggs is thus not required but suggested.

Almost all egg producers separate roosters and hens, rendering the chances of a blood spot coming from an embryo and forbidding the entire egg very small. Igrot Moshe (Yoreh Deah 1:36) says that since eggs are cheap, we should, as a *chumra*, throw out the egg for any blood spot. However, he says that we need not throw out another egg cooked with it or require *hagala* for the pot in which a blood-spotted egg was boiled. While some continue the old practice of using three eggs (see Teshuvot V'hanhagot II:384), this is not halachically called for.



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The Impact of Hearing Evil

(condensed from Ein Ayah, Shabbat 2:235)

Gemara: Rav Chisda said: Whoever pollutes his mouth has *gehinom* deepened for him, as the *pasuk* says: “A deep pit [for one whose] mouth [spoke] foreign things” (Mishlei 22:14). Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: Even if he hears [improper speech] and is silent, as the *pasuk* continues: “He who angered Hashem will fall there.”

Ein Ayah: A person’s spirit is so weak and his animalistic imagination is so strong that just hearing something bad and lowly can be a catalyst to lower his spiritual purity. It can make him enslaved to impure situations and lower him from one low point to another. The only way to prevent this impact is to take on the evil that hearing threatens to impose upon him by reacting strongly with a fierce protest which emanates from the power of sanctity of the divine spirit that knows its proper place and value. However, as long as he allows the hearing to leave its mark through his silence, the power of imagination, which pushes to increase its impact even against the will of the one who received the stimulus, will eventually succeed. Then, the one who hears can reach the same level as the one who speaks, as the *pasuk* says that even the latter will fall into the pit deepened for the speaker.

Internal and External Afflictions

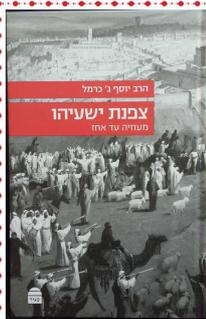
(condensed from Ein Ayah, Shabbat 2:236)

Gemara: Rabbi Oshaya said: “Whoever dedicates himself to sin, a variety of physical ailments will afflict him, as the *pasuk* says: “Wounds are for one who gives of himself for evil” (Mishlei 20:30; ed. note – this is not the simplest reading of the *pasuk*, but it seems to be the way the *gemara* takes it in this context). Not only that, but he is punished with *hadrokan* (a certain gastronomical disease), as the *pasuk* continues: “... and plagues of the chambers of the abdomen.” Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: *hadrokan* is a sign of sin.

Ein Ayah: A destructive approach which robs a person of his splendor through lowliness harms a person and society in two ways. It lowers the level of society to the point that horrible symptoms of corruption are readily seen within it. This affects justice, peace, and generosity, which exist only when people have not been soiled by lowliness.

Besides the obvious negative impact, the loss of sanctity and morality and the inability to grasp truth and lofty ideas is a terrible tragedy. These are internal matters that are usually immediately recognizable within society, but eventually it is bound to be evident, for without knowledge of Hashem, the lowliness of bad characteristics will certainly try to take over and proliferate.

Therefore, one who is dedicated to sin will be afflicted by noticeable external wounds and also will be affected by the internal *hadrokan*. When society does not initially see the external indications and it seems to be running smoothly, it is because of people’s shortsightedness. The one whose eyes penetrate the façade will be able to discern even the signs of internal problems. That is what is meant by “*hadrokan* is a sign of sin,” as its existence is a sign that the external manifestations will not take long to surface. This is part of a greater rule that small deteriorations, which are not initially noticeable, will still have a lasting internal impact, which will later show its strength publicly. Fortunate is he who avoids such things.



Tzofnat Yeshayahu- Rabbi Yosef Carmel

The Prophet Yeshayahu performed in one of the most stormy and dramatic periods of the Israeli nation's life, a period of anticipation for the Messiah that was broken by a terrible earthquake, and also caused a spiritual and political upheaval. The light at the end of the tunnel shone again only in the days of Chizkiyah.

"Tzofnat Yeshayahu – from Uziya to Ahaz" introduces us to three kings who stood at this crossroad in our nation's history: Uziya, a king who sought God but was stricken with leprosy because of his sin; Yotam, the most righteous king in the history of our people; And Ahaz, the king who knew God but did not believe in His providence.

In his commentary on the prophecies of Yeshayahu, Rabbi Yosef Carmel, Head of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit rabbinical court and a disciple of Rabbi Shaul Israeli zt"l, clings to the words of Hazal, our sages, and to the commentaries of the Rishonim, the great Jewish scholars of the middle ages, and offers a fascinating way to study Tanach. This reading attempts to explain the Divine Plan in this difficult period and to clarify fundamental issues in faith. Tzofnat Yeshayahu reveals to the reader the meaning of the prophecies in the context of the prophet's generation and their relevance to our generation.

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P'ninat Mishpat

Blemished Sofa

(based on ruling 74004 of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit Rabbinical Courts)

Case: The plaintiff (=pl) bought adjoining sofas from the defendant (=def) for 4,650 shekels. They asked for armrests, which needed to be added to the standard model on display. The sofa arrived without the armrests, and also with wooden rather than plastic legs, as pl had been promised. Def wanted to solve the complaint by giving a discount and afterward offered to make the necessary changes, but pl wanted to back out of the purchase. In an interim ruling, *beit din* said that pl should allow def to fix the sofa within 21 days (based on Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 232:5, that a seller should have the opportunity to fix the sales item rather than have the sale undone). After def returned the sofa, pl was unhappy with several things. 1) The stitching in one place is unaesthetic. 2) The shade and texture where a change was made do not match the rest of the sofa. 3) The armrests were attached in a manner that the sofas no longer adjoin nicely. 4) Def had promised to switch the legs according to pl's request; pl requested metal legs, and def provided plastic. [*Beit din visited pl's home (in the presence of all the parties) to make determinations.*]

Ruling: The stitching is indeed imperfect in one area. Regarding the difference in fabric, the differences in texture and shade are slight. Def's claim that it is the identical product, just that there can be slight differences based on different production lines from the same producer, is logical. The differences are only noticeable for one whose is looking for them and from close range. There is indeed a small separation when one tries to connect the sofas. Regarding the legs, def explained to pl that the metal does not fit in well with the sofa, and therefore it is hard or impossible to find metal legs that are appropriate for this sofa (pl accepted this explanation).

The main question is whether the imperfections justify a cancellation of the sale. The rule is that blemishes must be such that average people in one's place would agree that cancellation of the sale is called for (Shulchan Aruch, CM 232:6). It does not make a difference if a certain buyer is more particular than others. In *beit din's* view, the imperfections are minor, and general society would not think it justifies cancellation of the sale.

However, there is a concept that when an object that is bought is not of as high quality as that which was promised, the buyer is due a partial refund (Rama. CM 233:1). It would have been beneficial to have an expert determine how much of a refund is called for, but making the sides pay the price of such an expert is not justified regarding the relatively small amount of money in question. *Beit din's* arbitration agreement allows for *beit din* to make such estimates, and the decision in this case is that 650 shekel should be refunded. The costs of the hearing are to be shared because both sides were somewhat uncooperative each with the other, which ultimately created a situation where outside intervention was necessary.

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