בס"ד

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Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

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This issue is dedicated by Esther and Craig Guttmann and Family for the yahrtzeit of Clara Berglas בריינדל בת ישעיהו ז"ל

This issue is dedicated by Helen & David Wm. Brown & Family, and Golda Brown & Harry Krakowsky & Family, for the yahrtzeit of David and Golda's father, Al G. Brown אליהו גדליה בן ירוחם פישל ז"ל

The Philosophical Man of Faith

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

At the beginning of our parshah, Yitro gives Moshe practical advice: instead of singlehandedly judging the people, Moshe should appoint additional judges, who will bear with him the weight of the people. Failing to do so, Yitro warns, would cause both Moshe and his newly freed nation to collapse.

Many of our commentators have been puzzled as to why such a simple and self-evident move was not made by Moshe himself. [See especially *Akeidat Yitzchak* and Don Isaac Abarbanel, in whose footsteps we follow here.] Certainly, the system Moshe saw in his youth in Pharaoh's palace included judges and overseers! No less difficult is the fact that while from our parshah it seems that Moshe implemented Yitro's advice, in Devarim 1:9-17 the story of the judges' appointment is retold by Moshe without any reference to his father-in-law. Was the system of judges not Yitro's brainchild?

In order to better understand Yitro's advice, we should first explore his background. The Torah's description of Yitro as "Midian's preist" (Shemot 2:16) may lead us to believe that he served a particular deity. However, our Sages have explained Yitro's declaration, "For Hashem is greater than all gods" (Shemot 18:11), to mean that he "did not leave a single idol in the world that he did not worship." (Mechilta ad loc.) A second midrash takes another step in this direction, explaining the harassment of Yitro's daughters by the shepherds as a response to Yitro's betrayal of his ancestral faith. (Shemot Rabbah 1:32) As my rabbi and teacher, Rabbi Moshe Lichtenstein wrote in his book *Moses: Envoy of G-d, Envoy of His People*' (p. 20), "Yitro is an ardent seeker of metaphysical truth who totally isolates himself from action or involvement within the world of history." He disengaged from life among his peers, preferring to focus on and delve into the spiritual side of human life.

Our Sages drove this point home by casting Yitro as one of the three advisors whom Pharaoh consulted when he chose to enslave the Jews: Bilaam supported, Iyov remained silent and Yitro ran off to the desert. Yitro's flight "stems from an inability or unwillingness to take a stand and face up to evil... It is not that he doesn't care – but simply that he has given up." (ibid.)

Yitro, then, believes in the separation of spirituality – or religion – from politics. Spirituality is best served in the desert, where one can be completely dedicated to seeking the one, true G-d. Further, since man could never come to any ultimate and definitive conclusions in this unending spiritual journey, it would be utterly dangerous to impose one's beliefs and moral predispositions in the political realm. Commentators debate whether Yitro fully converted; see *Or Hachaim* to Bamidbar 10:30. Some wonder how, if he did indeed convert, his descendants could have lived among Israel's worst enemies – the Amalekites. (Shemuel I 15:6) But the answer seems to flow from what we saw here: Yitro may had had a philosophical conversion, but not a national one. Thus, his offspring could identify themselves as believers in Hashem and be on good terms with the Israelites, but still live among the Amalekites.

We can now have a better appreciation of Yitro's advice to Moshe. While Moshe saw the nation reaching out to him for judgment as a "demand for G-d," and judging as an exercise in hearing the word of G-d through His laws and commandments (Shemot 18:15-16), Yitro saw it as a futile attempt to convey a too-delicate spiritual message to the vulgar masses – an attempt that must end with the withering of both Moshe and the people. (ibid. 18:18). Instead, Yitro believed that Moshe should dedicate himself to the spiritual endeavor, and let others judge the mundane events of life according to secular, practical wisdom.

Moshe accepted Yitro's suggestion, but with one important caveat: the judges were appointed only after the Torah was given, as described in Devarim 1. That way, they were able to judge according to the lofty ideals brought down from Sinai by Moshe, and so to fulfil the vision which Yitro could not accommodate: a whole national polity led by the Divine.

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Journey Through Tanach: Shemuel I, Chapter 15

Ezer Diena

This chapter opens with Shemuel reminding Shaul to be careful to listen to Hashem. As noted by Rashi (15:1), this is because Shaul previously failed by not waiting for the correct time to bring his pre-war sacrifices. (Chapter 13)

Shemuel commands Shaul to wipe out Amalek entirely. Shaul wages war against Amalek, defeating them soundly, and capturing King Agag of the Amalekites alive. However, Shaul and the nation pity Agag, as well as the sheep, lambs, and "all that was good", and do not destroy them.

Following this, G-d sends Shemuel to Shaul to inform him that he has failed in his mission, and that G-d is going to remove him from his throne. The ensuing discussion consists of Shaul repeatedly insisting that he has fulfilled G-d's command, and that the nation had only spared some animals to be brought as sacrifices, whereas Shemuel responds that G-d is not interested in such sacrifices. G-d had commanded that the entire nation of Amalek, and all the spoils of battle, be destroyed. Shemuel continues by telling Shaul that G-d has "rejected you from being king."

Shaul then attempts some form of repentance, which Shemuel rejects. As Shemuel turns to leave, one of them rips the other's garment. [See Rashi to 15:27.] Shemuel explains that just as the garment has been ripped, so too, Hashem has ripped away the kingdom from Shaul for what he has done. Shaul eventually returns to worship Hashem, seemingly with Shemuel. However, we are later told that Shemuel did not see Shaul again until the day of his death, and that G-d did not accept Shaul's repentance.

Shemuel then kills Agag in Gilgal.

Insight

In a shiur at Yeshivat Torat Moshe, Rabbi Michel Shurkin questioned Shaul's response to Shemuel. If we had just failed in our mission towards G-d, would we also continually insist that we had fulfilled Hashem's directive?

Rabbi Shurkin suggested that in fact, G-d's command here had two parts: (1) To defeat Amalek, and (2) To destroy the spoils from the battle. Shaul fulfilled the first part, and failed only in the second part. Therefore, when Shemuel rebuked Shaul, it was for using the spoils (15:19) and for bringing sacrifices from them (15:22). Shemuel did not tell Shaul that he had failed to defeat Amalek; indeed, even after the first rebuke, Shaul responded that he had destroyed Amalek as commanded. (15:20)

Why, then, did Shemuel need to kill Agag? Before killing Agag, Shemuel told him that just as his sword had made women childless, so shall his mother be made childless. This, explains Rabbi Shurkin, was the reason for killing Agag – not as part of destroying Amalek, but as punishment for being a murderer.

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Holy Land Halachah: Purim in Ramot

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Minchat Shlomo 2:57, Halichot Shlomo Purim 20

Question: The Sanhedria neighbourhood sits at the northwest edge of Jerusalem. Ramot Alon and Ramot Bet are just a couple of kilometers away, across the junction of Highway 50 and Highway 1. Should these areas be considered part of Jerusalem, to celebrate Purim on the 15th of Adar?

Esther 9:19 informs us that "open" cities celebrate Purim on the 14th of Adar. The Talmud (Megilah 2b-3b) explains that cities which were walled in the time when the Jews entered Israel under Yehoshua celebrate Purim on the 15th of Adar, even if the wall is no longer present. However, in the absence of a wall, what are the limits of the city?

Rabbi Avraham Yeshayah Karelitz (Chazon Ish Moed 151) argued that we define the limits for Purim as we do for the *techum Shabbat* boundary for travel on Shabbat, ending the city where we encounter a meaningful gap. Based on this, Ramot is not part of the city. [Rabbi Etan Schnall, writing in Yeshiva University's 2011 Purim To Go, described a plan to build huts in order to join Ramot with Jerusalem for this purpose, but this writer is not aware that this has actually been done.]

A second view contends that a city includes all areas that are in its "domain". This may be defined by the *eruv* boundary that merges the properties within it. Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (Shevut Yitzchak, Purim pg. 62) proposed this definition, which would make Ramot part of Jerusalem. However, many authorities disagree; one reason for their opposition is that an *eruv* can include remote populations which never interact, and should not be viewed as one community. Also, Ramot maintains its own *eruv*, in addition to being part of the larger, Jerusalem *eruv*; wouldn't their local *eruv* remove them from consideration as part of Jerusalem's domain? [See Yabia Omer 7:Orach Chaim 58:5 for more.]

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach also noted a third approach: a "city" includes areas with a shared identity, such as where their municipal services are under one administration. Thus Ramot, which pays taxes as part of Jerusalem and receives city services with it, would be part of Jerusalem. Therefore, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ruled that Ramot should celebrate Purim on the 15th of Adar.

Separate from Rabbi Auerbach's arguments, some halachic authorities contend that Ramot should observe Purim on the 15th of Adar for another reason. The Talmud concludes that Purim is observed on the 15th of Adar in areas that are adjacent to qualifying walled cities, and in areas that are *nireh* - seen - with the walled city. (Megilah 3b) *Nireh* may apply to Ramot, depending on what "seen" means. According to Rabbi Asher Weiss "seen" means that an outside observer, standing far away, could see both the walled city and the external area, or that the external area is perceived, psychologically, as part of the walled city. He contends that both could apply to Ramot. (http://bit.ly/37f0Cs3)

For more on this topic, download "Purim in Ramot" at https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/873793/.

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Biography
Rabbi Moshe Stern
Rabbi Alex Hecht

Adapted from a column by Rabbi Netanel Javasky

Rabbi Moshe Stern, the Debreciner Rav, was born in Neuhaizal, Slovakia in 1914. His father, Rabbi Avraham Stern, was the Rabbi of the town. Rabbi Moshe left the town to study in Pressburg, in the yeshiva headed by Rabbi Akiva Sofer, a great-grandson of the Chatam Sofer. He would later marry a great-granddaughter of the Chatam Sofer. After his marriage, Rabbi Stern moved to Debrecen, Hungary's second largest city, where he was appointed as a judge in their rabbinical court, and served as a leading halachic authority. During World War II, the city was almost entirely destroyed.

After the war, Rabbi Stern was invited to be the Rabbi of Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he stayed for a year. Afterward, he moved to New York and established a community there.

In addition to his role as halachic authority and author of responsa, Rabbi Stern was involved in all aspects of the rabbinate, including kashrut supervision, arranging *gittin*, teaching regular classes, delivering sermons, and serving in a pastoral role. He was known for his sensitivity, and would frequently refer questioners to other halachic authorities who may have ruled leniently on a matter for which he personally ruled stringently.

Rabbi Stern published an 8-volume work of responsa, *Shut Be'er Moshe*, in which he addressed contemporary halachic issues, in addition to giving support to old, lesser-known customs. He also published a short work where he discussed numerous questions involving the interface of electricity and halachah. In his responsa, he frequently summarized his final ruling before presenting his analysis. [An example of this can be seen in the accompanying translation.] His responsa are cited by many contemporary authorities.

Rabbi Stern was ideologically conservative. For example, he ruled that one may not have a television in one's home, and that one who owns a television may not lead davening. (Be'er Moshe 4:143)

Rabbi Stern is reported to have refused to repaint or fix up his house, saying, "There's no need to bother. We will soon live in a new home in Jerusalem with Mashiach." Rabbi Stern passed away on 2 Av 5757 (1997).

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Torah and Translation
Of Meat, Milk and an Accidental Blessing
Rabbi Moshe Stern, Be'er Moshe 4:24
Translated by Rabbi Alex Hecht

נשאלתי: שכח ובירך על חלב ברכת שהכל נהי' בתוך שש שעות אחר אכילת בשר, מה יעשה, ישתה קצת שלא תהי' ברכתו ברכה לבטלה, או לא ישתה.

I was asked about one who forgot and recited the "*shehakol*" blessing for milk within six hours after eating meat: What should he do? [Should he] drink a small amount [of milk], so that his blessing will not have been vain, or should he not drink?

השבתי ישתה קצת שלא תהי' ברכתו ברכה לבטלה...

I replied that he should drink a small amount so that his blessing will not have been in vain...

מקור הלכה זו שלא לאכול גבינה אחר בשר הוא בש"ס...בעא מיניה רב אסי מרבי יוחנן כמה ישהה בין בשר לגבינה (משמע שאכל בשר ורוצה לאכול גבינה) א"ל ולא כלום ופריך הש"ס איני, והא אמר רב חסדא אכל בשר אסור לאכול גבינה, (משום דבשר מוציא שומן והוא נדבק בפה ומאריך בטעמו)... ומסקינן דמסעודה לסעודה יש להמתין והוא שש שעות...

The source for this law prohibiting cheese after meat is found in the Talmud... Rav Asi asked Rabbi Yochanan, "How long must one wait between meat and cheese (meaning, one who ate meat and wants to eat cheese)?" [Rabbi Yochanan] said to him, "No time at all." The Talmud asks, "Is this so? But Rav Chisda said that one who ate meat is forbidden to eat cheese (because meat exudes fat, which sticks to the mouth, and its taste lingers)!"... The Talmud (Chullin 105a) concludes that one must wait "from one meal to the next," which is six hours.

הדבר פשוט דגם למנהגינו שאנו נוהגים להמתין שש שעות אחר בשר ואפילו אחר עוף, אם שכח ובירך על גבינה אחר שעה לאכילת בשר יאכל כחצי זית גבינה או ישתה מעט חלב כדי שלא תהי' הברכה ברכה לבטלה גם אם לא יברך ברכה אחרונה.

[In light of the opinion of many early authorities who only require a shorter waiting period between meat and milk], it is obvious that according to our custom to wait six hours after meat, and even after poultry - if one forgot and recited a blessing on cheese after one hour from eating meat, he should eat half of an olive's volume of cheese, or drink a small amount of milk, in order to avoid reciting a blessing in vain, even if it is not [enough to warrant the recitation of] a blessing afterwards.

ויותר היה נראה לי לומר שיאכל כזית גבינה או רביעית חלב ויברך גם ברכה אחרונה כדת וכדין. רק אין בכחי לחלוק על פסקי הריקאנטי האחרונים (סי' ט"ו) שדן על השאלה כעין שאלתינו, אם אחד שכח ובירך ברכת שהכל על בשר בימים שאסור לאכול בשר לפי מנהגינו - מיום א' דחדש אב ועד ט' באב - ופסק שיאכל מעט מזעיר ולא התיר לאכול כזית בשר כדי שיברך גם ברכה אחרונה, כמו כן בנידון שלנו...

Also, I think that one *should* eat an olive's size of cheese or a *revi'it* of milk, and also recite a blessing afterwards, in full fulfillment of the law. Only, I am unable to dispute the ruling of Recanti (Chapter 15), who ruled on a question similar to ours: if one forgot, and recited the "*shehakol*" blessing over meat during days on which we are accustomed not to eat meat – from Rosh Chodesh Av until Tishah b'Av – and he ruled that he should eat a tiny amount, and he did not permit eating an olive's amount of meat in order to say a blessing afterwards, so too in our case...

אבל אפשר לחלק דמאחר שבשאלתינו הרבה מגדולי רבותינו הראשונים מתירין לכתחלה לאכול מיני חלב אחר שעה אחת לאחר אכילת בשר, טוב יותר שיאכל כזית גבינה או ישתה רביעית חלב ויברך ברכה אחרונה...

However, it is possible to distinguish [between the two cases], for regarding our question, many early authorities permitted [outright] eating dairy after one hour of eating meat, [and therefore in our case], it would be preferable to eat an olive's size of cheese or drink a *revi'it* of milk, and recite a blessing afterward...

Weekly Highlights: Feb. 15 — Feb. 21 / 20 Shevat — 26 Shevat

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
Daily				
Mon-Thu 8:00 AM	Netanel Klein	Gemara Moed Katan	Clanton Park	***Men***
שבת Feb. 14-15				
Fri. pre-minchah	Ezer Diena	Yitro and Amalek	BAYT	***Parshah & Kugel***
8:40 AM	Ezer Diena	Laws of Honouring Parents	BAYT	***Pre-Shacharit***
10:30 AM	R' Alex Hecht	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	***After Hashkamah***
Pre-minchah	Ezer Diena	Daf Yomi	BAYT	***Rabbi's Classroom***
After minchah	Ezer Diena	Reading Megilah Early?	BAYT	***Simcha Suite***
Motz. 7:15 PM	R' Sammy Bergman	Parent-Child Learning	Shaarei Shomayim	
Sun. Feb. 16				
8:15 AM	R' Reuven Taragin	Getting Children to Identify with Their Parents	Yeshivat Or Chaim	
9:15 AM	R' Sammy Bergman	Chagigah/Chasidut/Chevra	Shaarei Shomayim	***Teens***
9:15 AM	Netanel Klein	Meat after Milk, Part 2	Adas Israel	***Hamilton***
Mon. Feb. 17	**Family Day**			
9:15 AM Breakfast **9:40 AM Learning** **10:30 AM Shiur**	**R' Mordechai Torczyner**	***Yarchei Kallah*** **The Penalty for Breaking Verbal Agreements**	**Yeshivat Or Chaim**	***Please RSVP at*** *www.torontotorah.com/yk* *or info@torontotorah.com*
Tue. Feb. 18				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Yeshayah Chap. 33-35	Shaarei Shomayim	
7:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim Chap. 10-11	129 Theodore Pl.	***Men***
Wed. Feb. 19				
6:00 AM	Ezer Diena	Gemara Succah	BAYT	***WW Room 2, Men***
10:00 AM	**R' Mordechai Torczyner**	**Kosher Kops 3 of 4: Police Brutality?**	**Beth Emeth**	***RSVP at*** *torontotorah.com/police*
7:00 PM	R' Alex Hecht	Stories from the Talmud	Shaarei Tefillah	
7:30 PM	R' Sammy Bergman	Ancient Texts, Modern Dilemmas	Shaarei Shomayim	
7:30 PM	Ezer Diena	Learn to Read Esther #10	BAYT Boardroom	***12-part series***
Thu. Feb. 20				
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Shemuel, Chap. 15	49 Michael Ct.	***Women***
8:30 PM	Ezer Diena	Gemara Beitzah	ediena@torontotorah.com	***Men, Advanced***
8:30 PM	R' Jeff Turtel	Tzurba meiRabbanan	Shomrai Shabbos	***Men***
Fri. Feb. 21				
10:30 AM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Bava Metzia: Perek 6	Yeshivat Or Chaim	***Advanced***

<u>For University Men, at Yeshivat Or Chaim</u>
10:00 AM Sunday, R' Aaron Greenberg, Gemara Shabbat
11:00 AM Sunday, Beit Midrash Rotation: R' Sammy Bergman, Is Comedy Kosher?
8:30 AM Wednesday, Ezer Diena, Mishlei 8:30 AM Friday, R' Mordechai Torczyner, Parshah

<u>For University Women</u>
7:00-9:00 PM Tuesdays at BAYT, Open Beit Midrash
8:30 PM Thursdays at Shaarei Shomayim, R' Sammy Bergman, In-Depth Gemara: Laws of Shabbat

<u>Seder Boker for Men with Rabbi Moshe Yeres, at Yeshivat Or Chaim</u>
10:00 AM to Noon, Wed Masechet Taanit, Orot haTeshuvah of Rabbi Kook, Pninei Halachah
10:00 AM to Noon, Tue/Thu Parshanut on the Parshah, Sefer Shemuel, Pninei Halachah