

## פרשת נח

It all began a week ago, Erev Shabbos B'reishis, with a witticism. A relative had prepared olives to ripen in a mason-jar weeks earlier and given them to us. Someone in the family finally got up the nerve to taste one of those olives and it was far from pleasant. 'Oooy. Very bitter', was the unhappy comment. I responded, 'that's next week's Parsha'.

So, it is now 'next week' and maybe the reader has figured out what I had in mind. If not, here is the explanation.

When Noach sent out the dove for the second time, it did not return empty-handed (or more accurately 'empty-mouthed').

We read (B'reishis Perek 8/P'sukim 10-11):

וַיִּחַל עוֹד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים אַחֲרָיִם וַיִּסָּף שֶׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה מִן הַתֵּבָה: וַתָּבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה לְעֵת  
עָרֵב וְהָיָה עָלֶיהָ זַיִת טָרֵף בְּפִיהָ וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ כִּי קָלוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ:

Noach waited an additional other seven days and he continued sending the dove from the ark. The dove came to Noach at evening time and behold a leaf of an olive tree was snatched in its mouth and Noach knew that the waters had eased from the land.

Rashi writes:

טרף - חטף ומדרש אגדה לשון מזון, ודרשו בפיה, לשון מאמר, אמרה יהיו מזונותי  
מרורין כזית בידו של הקדוש ברוך הוא ולא מתוקין כדבש בידי בשר ודם:

*Toraf* – [means] snatched.

Midrash Aggadah explains that *toraf* refers to food<sup>1</sup> and the Midrash interprets the word 'in its mouth' as an expression of speaking. [That is the

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<sup>1</sup> Certainly the *p'shat* that Rashi gave initially is more in keeping with the common usage of the term טרף. Famously we find that term used with the impression that Yosef was killed by a wild animal, as we read in Parshas Vayeshev (B'reishis Perek 37/ Posuk 33):

וַיִּכְרָה וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתָנִית בְּנֵי חַיָּה הָעֵה אֶכְלָתָהּ: טָרֵף טָרֵף יוֹסֵף:

Yaakov recognized the coat and he said, 'It is the coat of my son; a wild animal has eaten him; Yosef has been certainly torn away.'

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The word *treif*, which is used to refer to all sorts of non-kosher food, derives its name from the verse in Parshas Mishpotim (Sh'mos Perek 22/Posuk 12):

אם טרף יטרף יבאָהוּ עַד הַטְּרֵפָה לֹא יִשְׁלַם:

If the animal [being watched by the *shomer*] was torn apart, he can bring a witness and he will not pay for the torn-apart animal.

Rashi writes there:

אם טרף יטרף - על ידי חיה רעה:

*If it is torn-apart* – by a wild animal.

Nonetheless, the word טרף can mean food. Thus we read in Tehillim (Perek 111/Posuk 5):

טֵרֵף נָתַן לַיהוָה יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ:

Hashem gives food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever.

Rashi writes:

טרף נתן - מזון:

*Teref* – food.

Malbim explains why *teref*, which means grabbing/snatching/tearing apart refers to 'food' in the context of this verse and the one that follows:

כַּח מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ לְתַתּ לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם:

The power of His deeds He told to His people in order to give them an inheritance of the nations.

Malbim writes:

טרף הנפלאות שעשה לאבותינו היה תכליתם לתת להם את ארץ כנען, ששם ימצאו מזונותיהם בריוח ויוכלו לעסוק בתורה, וזה טרף נתן ליראיו, קרא מזון זה בשם טרף, שהושאל מן מזון האריה שהוא חי על ידי מה שטורף חיות הקטנות ממנו, כן נתן להם מזונם על ידי שאכלו את העמים, כמו שכתוב (דברים ז/ז) ואכלת את כל העמים אשר ה' א...ל'קיך נותן לך, שכמו שהצומח מזון להחי והחי מזון להמדבר, כן הכונו עובדי גלולים להיות מזון לאשר עלו למדרגה נעלה ונשא ממינם, ומבאר שזה היה על ידי שיזכר לעולם בריתו, שהוא הברית שכרת עם האבות לתת להם את ארץ ישראל, והמאמרים מקבילים, יזכר לעולם בריתו, לתת להם נחלת גוים.

*Teref* – the wonders that Hashem did for our fathers had as their purpose to give them the Land of Canaan – there they would find their food with ease and could be involved in Torah study. That is the meaning of 'He gave *teref* to those who fear Him'.

The verse refers to food as *teref*. *Teref* is a term borrowed from the food of the lion who lives by that which it tears apart animals that are smaller than it. In that way, G-d gives Israel its food because they consume the other nations.

dove said], 'Let my food be bitter as an olive [but] in the Hand of G-d and not sweet like honey from the hand of man.

So that was my witty response – the bitter olive belongs to Parshas Noach.

But, once we came to this week's Parsha, I wanted to investigate the idea that is propagated by this explanation of Rashi.

*Maharsha* to Masseches Sanhedrin (108 b), the source of this *Aggadata* that Rashi brings, reminds us that in Birkas HaMazon we express a similar wish.

He writes:

והענין מבואר כמו שכתוב המצפה לשלחן חבירו חיייו אינם חיים ואנו מבקשים בברכת המזון ונא אל תצריכנו ה' א...ל'קיננו לא לידי מתנת בשר ודם וכו' כי אם לידך המלאה וכו' וסיים שלא נבוש ולא נכלם וכו'

This matter is explained by "One who anticipates the [food] from someone else's table has no life. And so we request in *Birkas HaMazon* 'Please, Hashem our G-d, do not make us needy for the gifts of people...only from Your full Hand'. And the conclusion is 'so that we will not be shamed or embarrassed'.

I think that it is fascinating to attend to the reason that Birkas HaMazon is the locus of our request of not being dependent upon others. We are urged to remember that all sustenance comes from G-d and there is an implied admonishment not to forget that it is Hashem Who provides for us.

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This is as how it is written, 'You shall devour the nations that Hashem your G-d gives to you.'

Just like vegetation is the food for the living animal and the living animal is food for people, so did Hashem prepare the idolatrous nations to be the food for those who rose to an ascendant level and raised themselves above their species.

That occurred because 'He will always remember His covenant'. That is the covenant that He made with the Patriarchs to give them Eretz Yisroel. The verses here are parallel. 'He will forever remember His covenant in order to give Israel the inheritance of the nations.

The fascination is that we also are commanded to protect *ourselves* from shame and embarrassment. *We* are also the focus. *We* are also in the spotlight of this prayer. *We* should want to save ourselves from shame and embarrassment.

Doesn't that seem like such a simple idea? Who would want to be shamed? Who would want to be embarrassed? Isn't it obvious that any thinking person would do their best to avoid such an unpleasant situation?

But, if it is so obvious, why was it necessary for *Anshei K'nesses HaGedolah* to author this text? Won't everyone be looking out for their welfare and be interested in maintaining their pride?

Additionally, there are Halachic ramifications to this principle of avoiding gifts.

We read a statement of Chazal (Masseches Shabbos 118 a) that seems, prior to investigating its meaning, to be quite unique.

רבי עקיבא...אמר: עשה שבתך חול, ואל תצטרך לבריות.

Rabi Akiva said, 'Make your Shabbos like the weekday and do not make yourself need [assistance] from people.'

We read in Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim Siman 242 (s'if 1):

אפילו מי שצריך לאחרים, אם יש לו מעט משלו צריך לזרז עצמו לכבד את השבת;  
ולא אמרו: עשה שבתך חול ואל תצטרך לבריות, אלא למי שהשעה דחוקה לו ביותר;  
על כן צריך לצמצם בשאר ימים כדי לכבד השבת.

Even one who needs [the assistance] of others, if he has a little of his own, he must push himself to honor Shabbos. That which the Chachamim said, "Make your Shabbos like the weekday and do not make yourself need [assistance] from people' applies only for one who has very hard times. Therefore a person should limit himself during the rest of the week so that he has with what to honor Shabbos.

Biur Halachah (d.h. *v'lo omru*) explains what we might have thought to be the interpretation of the seemingly problematic phrase of *make your Shabbos like the weekday* and what in fact it does mean.

היינו דמתחלה קא סלקא דעתן דמה שאמרו עשה שבתך חול מיירי באנשים שאינם דחוקים כל כך ואפילו הכי הזהירו שלא יפזר על עונג שבת כדי שלא יבוא על ידי זה

לבסוף להצטרך לבריות...ולזה ביאר ואמר דהתם מיירי למי שהשעה דחוקה לו ביותר היינו שאין מגיע לו מממונו כי אם שתי סעודות על שבת ולזה אמרו דמוטב שיעשה שבתו חול כדי שלא יצטרך לבריות אבל בענינו שיש לו מעט משלו לפזר על שבת צריך לענג שבת במה שיש לו ויבטח בה' שיתן לו אחרים עבור זה דהוצאת שבתות ויום טוב הוא חוץ ממזונות הקצובין לו לאדם מראש השנה וכמו שאחז"ל:

That is, originally we might have thought that when Chazal said, 'make your Shabbos like a weekday' they were speaking about people who were not so hard-pressed and even to them they said, 'be careful to limit your spending and don't spend extra money on special things for Shabbos so that the end result may be that you will need assistance from others.'

[In order to refute such an assumption] Shulchan Aruch explains and says that the instance where we are told to 'make Shabbos like the weekday' is for someone who is so hard-pressed that he only can afford two meals on Shabbos [not the required three]. In such a case, Chazal said that it is better to make Shabbos like a weekday [with only two meals instead of three] so that he won't need assistance from others.

But in a case where he has somewhat to spend for Shabbos enjoyment, he must make the Shabbos enjoyable with what he has [and not limit his spending] and depend upon G-d that He will give him other monies for this purpose because the expenditures for Shabbos and Yom Tov are not included in the funds that are decided for a person on Rosh Hashanah – like Chazal taught<sup>2</sup>.

That is, despite the fact that there is a Mitzvah of *Oneg Shabbos*<sup>3</sup> - making the Shabbos pleasant, there are times when it is preferable to forego the *Oneg Shabbos* and avoid dependency upon others<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> We read in Masseches Beitza (16 a):

כל מזונותיו של אדם קצובים לו מראש השנה ועד יום הכפורים, חוץ מהוצאת שבתות והוצאת יום טוב, והוצאת בניו לתלמוד תורה. שאם פחת - פוחתין לו, ואם הוסיף - מוסיפין לו..

All food that a person will have during the year of is set from Rosh Hashanah through Yom HaKippurim, except for his expense for Shabbos, Yom Tov, and for expenditures to teach his children Torah. In those instances, if he lowers his expenses, they lower his heavenly gift and if he adds, they add to him.

<sup>3</sup> We read in Sefer Yeshaya (Perek 58/Posuk 13):

But, the fact is, that we may see ourselves spending above our means – but not for

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אם תשיב משבת רגלך עשות חפצך ביום קדשי וקראת לשבת ענג לקדוש ה' מכבד וכבדתו מעשות  
דרכך ממצוא חפצך ודבר דבר:

If you retract your leg on Shabbos from doing your desires on My holy day and you will call Shabbos to be *Oneg*-pleasurable and to the holy of G-d [you will call] honorable and you will honor it from doing your own ways and from seeking your desire and speaking your word.

Rambam writes in Hilchos Shabbos (Perek 30/Halachah 1):

ארבעה דברים נאמרו בשבת שנים מן התורה ושנים מדברי סופרים והן מפורשין על ידי הנביאים,  
שבתורה זכור ושמור, ושנתפרשו על ידי הנביאים כבוד ועונג שנאמר וקראת לשבת עונג ולקדוש  
ה' מכובד.

Four things were said regarding Shabbos; two are from the Torah and two are from the *Sofrim* and they are explained in the *Novi*.

The two in the Torah are *Zochor* and *Shomor*. Those that are explained by the *Novi* are *K'vod Shabbos* –Honoring it and *Oneg Shabbos* –making it pleasant as it says, ‘you will call Shabbos to be *Oneg*-pleasurable and to the holy of G-d [you will call] honorable’.

He continues there in Halachah 7:

איזה הוא עונג זה שאמרו חכמים שצריך לתקן תבשיל שמן ביותר ומשקה מבושם לשבת הכל לפי  
ממונו של אדם, וכל המרבה בהוצאת שבת ובתיקון מאכלים רבים וטובים הרי זה משובח, ואם אין  
ידו משגת אפילו לא עשה אלא שלק וכיוצא בו משום כבוד שבת הרי זה עונג שבת, ואינו חייב להצר  
לעצמו ולשאול מאחרים כדי להרבות במאכל בשבת, אמרו חכמים הראשונים עשה שבתך חול ואל  
תצטרך לבריות.

What is *Oneg*? That is what the Chachamim said that one must prepare a very rich cooked dish and a very tasty drink for Shabbos – all according to the person’s financial means. One who spends more for Shabbos and for making multiple and good foods – he is praiseworthy. If he cannot afford much – then even if he makes a simple cooked food to honor Shabbos – that is considered *Oneg Shabbos* and he does not have to put himself in straits to borrow money from others in order to have extra food on Shabbos. The early Chachamim said: ‘Make your Shabbos like the weekday and do not make yourself need [assistance] from people.’

<sup>4</sup> In that case, the ‘weekday-like’ Shabbos would have only two meals and not the three that are required.

Two meals a day were the standard fare in the eyes of *Chazal* and thus Shabbos was enhanced with the Third Meal.

It should be emphasized that if the poor individual does not have funds for two meals for Shabbos and then he seeks *Tzeddakah*, he can ask for funds or supplies

the reason that we are to be praised for our religious dedication in making Shabbos an *Oneg* but for reasons that may be extraneous to *Oneg Shabbos* and *K'vod Shabbos*. Perhaps we want to make an impression upon others or perhaps we have some other type of need that is not Divinely-focused and we find that we have overextended ourselves inappropriately.

Divine promise of special assistance when celebrating Shabbos is only when Shabbos is the focus.

We must ask ourselves: Do we really identify with the prayer of the dove that we will be satisfied with that which is bitter rather than taking handouts?

Let us learn another Halachah, this time regarding davening Shacharis. Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim teaches us at the very beginning of *Hilchos Tefila* (Siman 89/s'if 3):

אסור לו להתעסק בצרכיו...עד שיתפלל תפלת שמונה עשרה...ולא לאכול ולא לשתות, אבל מים מותר לשתות קודם תפלה, בין בחול ובין בשבת ויום טוב...

It is forbidden for a person to be involved with his personal matters until he davens the Sh'moneh Esrei [of Shacharis]. He is not to eat and not to drink; but it is permissible to drink water before davening, whether during the week or on Shabbos or Yom Tov.

Mishnah Brurah (s'if koton 21) explains the prohibition of eating and drinking:

ולא לאכול - והעובר על זה אמרו חז"ל שעליו אמר הכתוב (מלכים א יד/ט<sup>5</sup>) ואותי השלכת אחר גוך אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לאחר שאכל ושתה ונתגאה קבל עליו מלכות

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for three meals. Once he turns to the *Chessed* committee and makes himself dependent, that dependency can encompass the entire *Oneg* and *Kavod* Shabbos.

<sup>5</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַתַּרְע לַעֲשׂוֹת מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לְפָנֶיךָ וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּעֲשֶׂה לָּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וּמַסְכּוֹת לְהַכְעִיסַנִּי וְאֹתֵי הַשְּׁלֶכֶת אַחֲרַי גֹּוֹךְ:

You, Yerov'om, have done more evil that all that were you before you; you went and made for yourself other gods and molten images to anger Me; and Me- you have cast aside in back of you.

Metzudos Dovid explains:

מכל אשר היו לפניך - רמז בזה לשלמה ולרחבעם:

שמים וגם הסמיכו דבריהם על הפסוק (ויקרא יט/כו<sup>6</sup>) לא תאכלו על הדם לא תאכלו קודם שתתפללו על דמכם ואפילו טעימה בעלמא אסור:

*And not to eat* - Regarding one who violates this prohibition Chazal said this verse refers to him: 'You have thrown Me in back of you [and out of sight]'. HaKodosh Boruch said, 'After you have eaten and drunk and have become arrogant<sup>7</sup>, only then you will accept the yoke of heaven?'

Chazal also associated their words with the verse, 'Do not eat upon blood' to mean, 'Do not eat before praying for our blood'. Even a 'little taste' is prohibited.

How do we understand the arrogance that is implied here? Mishnah Brurah (s'if koton 22) explains:

מים מותר - דלא שייך בהו גאווה ודוקא בלא צוקער אבל עם צוקער אסור וכל שכן משקה שכר (שקורין ביער) ודאי אסור. וטיי"א וקאפ"ע מותר לשתותו קודם תפלה כדי שיוכל לכיין דעתו ולהתפלל ובפרט בהמקומות שרגילין בהם ואין מתיישב הדעת בלתם וכל זה בלא צוקער ובלא חלב והעולם נוהגין להקל לשתות עם צוקער ואפשר דכוונת האחרונים וכן הרדב"ז שכתב דעם צוקער אין לך גאווה גדולה מזו קודם התפלה רק אם נותן הצוקער בתוך הטיי"א למתקו דזהו אסור קודם התפלה אבל אם לוקח מעט צוק"ר בפיו בעת השתייה ובלתי זה אין יכול לשתות הטיי"א אין זה בכלל גאווה. היוצא מדברינו דבנתינת הצוקע"ר בתוך הטיי"א או לאכול מעט מיני תרגימא בעת השתייה כדי שלא

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*More than all who were before you* – this was a hint referring to Shlomo and Rechavam.

אחרי גוך - כהמשליך דבר מה לאחוריו לבל יראהו:

*After your back* – When someone casts some aside in back of him so that it should not be seen.

<sup>6</sup> The entire verse reads:

לא תאכלו על הדם לא תנחשו ולא תעונו:

Do not eat on the blood; do not do sorcery and other wizardry.

<sup>7</sup> The word גוך, meaning 'your back' could also be read as meaning גאוך, your arrogance. Since the non-vocalized letter *alef* is often omitted from words, this is not an interpretation that seems far removed from the original intent of the verse.

Furthermore, it is appropriate to attribute arrogance to Yerovom ben Novot.



לשתות הטיי"א וקאפ"ע אליבא ריקנא אין שום צד להקל בזה קודם התפלה  
אם לא מי שיש לו חלישת הלב והוא צריך זה לרפואה.

*Water is permitted* – arrogance is not related to [drinking] water. But that is only when there is no sugar in the water. But with sugar it is forbidden. And certainly the alcoholic drink that is called beer is certainly forbidden.

And tea and coffee are permitted to be drunk before davening in order that a person can have *kavanah* and daven. This is specifically so for those places where people are accustomed to drink them and their minds aren't settled without them. But this is only when they are drunk without sugar and milk. But in fact, many people are lenient and drink them with sugar.

Perhaps the intent of the Radbaz, who wrote that drinking with sugar is the greatest arrogance when imbibed before davening, was regarding putting the sugar *in* the tea to sweeten it – and that is what is forbidden before davening. But to take some sugar in one's mouth while drinking, and without it one cannot drink the tea – that isn't arrogance.

In summary – putting sugar in tea or eating some nosh while drinking the tea so as not to drink the tea or coffee on an empty stomach has no way to be permitted prior to davening – except for someone with a weak heart who requires such for medicinal purposes.

Undoubtedly, those who learn this Halachah for the first time are stunned. Most people who drink coffee, and in some countries tea, *always* add sugar and milk to their drink<sup>8</sup>, not to mention a piece of cake on Shabbos morning.

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<sup>8</sup> See Pischei Teshuvos to this siman in Shulchan Aruch, footnote 213 that teaches that many contemporary Gedolim, including Maran Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, the Steipler and Rav Ovadia Yosef Zecher Tzaddikim Libracha, write that eating habits have changed and that it is not arrogant to add sugar and milk to coffee and tea and is allowed *Ichatchila*.

Some of the aforementioned wrote that nowadays taking a sugar cube between one's teeth while drinking the coffee or tea would be considered arrogant!

In the context of this Halachah, the bitterness that the dove was willing to accept seems all the more proper and appropriate.

But, we need to examine the verse of the dove once more and investigate an aspect of it that we did not view previously.

We read:

וּתְבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה לְעֵת עֶרֶב וְהָיָה עָלֶיהָ זֵית טָרֶף בְּפִיהָ וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ כִּי קָלוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ:

The dove came to Noach at evening time and behold a leaf of an olive tree was snatched in its mouth and Noach knew that the waters had eased from the land.

Why does the Torah mention the time of day that the dove returned to the Ark and to Noach? What difference does it make?

Our Meforshim have raised the question by suggesting various explanations.

Radak writes:

וּתְבֵא לְעֵת עֶרֶב - בּוּ בַיּוֹם שֶׁבָּה אֵלָיו לְעֵת עֶרֶב:

*It came at evening time* – On the same day it returned to him, towards evening.

That is, the land was still wet and therefore when nightfall arrived the dove had to return to the Ark.

On the other hand, Chizukuni writes:

וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ כִּי קָלוּ הַמַּיִם עַל שֶׁהָתָה לְבָא עַד הָעֶרֶב

Noach knew that the water had subsided because the dove didn't return until the evening.

That is, Radak saw the evening return as indicating that the dove stayed outside until it was no longer able.

On the other hand, Chizkuni sees the evening as the indication by which Noach knew that the water had subsided.

Kli Yokor sees the dove's behavior as having a very practical nature. We read:

ותבוא אליו היונה לעת ערב וגו'. מה איכפת לנו בזה אם בערב היא באה ובבוקר היא שבה או להיפך, וכפי הנראה שהביאה אליו עלה זית להוציא מהם אורה אשר לעת ערב דוקא צריכין אליו, כי למאן דאמר צוהר היינו חלון, קשה בלילה מה יאיר לו, על כן פירש בחזקוני צוהר לשון יצהר שהיה מדליק שמן בתיבה בלילה וביום נכנס האור דרך חלון התיבה כמו שאמר ויפתח נח את חלון התיבה אשר עשה. וראיה לדברי אלה מה שמסיק במדרש תנחומא (ה) ובילקוט פרשת תצוה (שע"ה) על פסוק (שיר השירים ד/א<sup>9</sup>) עיניך יונים מה היונה הביאה אורה לעולם כך אתם הביאו שמן זית והדליקו נרות לפניו כשהיה נח בתיבה מה כתיב ותבא אליו היונה לעת ערב והנה עלה זית וכו'. וקשה מנא ליה לבעל מדרש זה שהיונה הביאה אורה לעולם ואיך למד זה מפסוק והנה עלה זית טרף בפיה. אלא ודאי שלמד זה ממה שנאמר לעת ערב כאמור:

*The dove came to him at evening-time - Why would we care whether it would come in the evening or returned in the morning<sup>10</sup> or vice-versa?*

But, it appears that the dove brought an olive-leaf to produce light in the night when it is specifically then that they need it. Because according to the opinion that the *tzohar* was a window<sup>11</sup> – it would have been difficult at night - what would provide them with light?

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<sup>9</sup> The entire verse reads:

הִנֵּה יָפָה כַּעֲיִתִי הִנֵּה יָפָה עֵינֶיךָ יוֹנִים מִבַּעַד לְצַמְתְּךָ שַׁעֲרֶךָ כְּעֵדֵר הָעֵזִים שֶׁגָּלְשׁוּ מֵהַר גִּלְעָד:  
Behold you are beautiful My companion, behold you are beautiful your eyes are like doves peering through your braids; your hair is like the herd of goats that slide down from Mt. Gil'ad.

<sup>10</sup> This phrase is borrowed from Megillas Esther (Perek 2/Posuk 17).

<sup>11</sup> We read in this week's Parshas Noach (Perek 6/Posuk 16):

צָהַר תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתִּבָּה וְאֵל אִמָּה תְּכַלְנָה מִלְּמַעְלָה וּפְתָח הַתִּבָּה בְּצַדָּהּ תַּשִּׂים תַּחְתִּיִּם שְׁנַיִם וּשְׁלֹשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה:  
תַּעֲשֶׂה:

You shall make a *tzohar* for the Ark, you shall complete it to an *amah*-breadth above and an opening for the Ark you shall place on its side; bottom, second and third levels you shall make it.

Rashi writes:

צָהַר - יש אומרים חלון, ויש אומרים אבן טובה המאירה להם:  
*Tzohar* – some say it was a window and some say it was a precious stone that gave them light.

It is precisely for that reason that Chizkuni explained that the term *tzohar* is derived from *yitzhar*<sup>12</sup> – oil. And, according to Chizkuni, the *tzohar* means to light an oil lamp at night; in the daytime light would enter through the window of the Ark [and the *tzohar* provide illumination in the evening]. [And the *tzohar* was distinct from the window] as it says, ‘Noach opened the window of the Ark that he made’.

And a proof for my words is found in the Midrash Tanchuma and in the Yalkut in Parshas Tetzaveh regarding the verse, ‘Your eyes are like doves’. The Midrash writes:

‘Just like the dove brought light to the world so you, Israel, bring olive oil and light the Menorah before Him.’ Because when Noach was in the Ark, the dove brought an olive leaf to him.

The Midrash is difficult. How did the author of this Midrash know that the dove brought light to the world and how did he learn it from the verse that the dove had an olive leaf torn off in its mouth? But, certainly, he learned it from the fact that the verse said, ‘towards evening time’.

However, we can view the combination of the olive-leaf and the evening time from a different standpoint and can be better able to appreciate that the dove prayed that its sustenance should come from G-d, even if that sustenance would be bitter.

Rabi Yehuda Halevi writes in *Kuzari* (Maamar III/5) regarding the *chosid*:

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<sup>12</sup> See for example D’vorim Perek 11/Posuk 14):

וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר אֶרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאֶסְפֹּת דְגָנְךָ וְתִירְשֶׁךָ וְיִצְהַרְךָ;  
I Hashem will give rain in your land at its time, early rain and late rain, and you will gather your grain, your wine and your oil.

Mizrachi writes in his comment to Rashi in Sefer B’midbar (Perek 5/Posuk15):

וְיִצְהַר הוּא מְגֵזֶרֶת צוֹהַר בְּרֵאשִׁית (ו/טז) וְצֹהַרִים (יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ טז/ג).  
The word *yitzhar* in this verse from the same source as *Tzohar* in Parshas Noach and *Tzo’ho’ra’im* – ‘noon’ in Yeshaya.

That which is referred to as *Tzohar* refers to that which shines. At noon, the sun shines with a particularly powerful force.

Certainly the word *tzohar* is related to *Zohar*. *Zohar* means that which ‘shines’.

...ולא יבטא בתפילתו על דרך המנהג והטבע...אלא עם כל מלה מחשבה וכונה בה,  
ותהיה העת ההיא לב זמנו ופריו, ויהיו שאר עתותיו כדרכים המגיעים אל העת ההיא,  
יתאוה קרבתו שבו מתדמה ברוחניים ויתרחק מהבהמיים, ויהיה פרי יומו ולילו השלש  
עתות ההם של תפלה...

The *chosid* will not express himself in his prayer by habit or by its natural flow. Rather, with each and every word there is thought and *kavanah*-intent and concentration. The time of prayer will be the heart of his time and his most fruitful time. The rest of his times will be like paths that lead to that time [of prayer]. He will desire that closeness in which he is far more spiritual and distances himself from animal-like qualities. The fruits of his day and night will be those three times of prayer.

Shacharis, Mincha and Arvis – each of those times have a special meaning and a special and unique emphasis and the accomplishments that a *chosid* seeks throughout the day are found in those times that are so central to his existence.

לעת ערב – towards evening time. That is when the dove returned with the prayer symbolized by the olive leaf.

What is the meaning of prayer לעת ערב, towards evening-time, at Mincha and Arvis?

In his Siddur commentary, Rav Yaakov Emdem writes 'at sundown...when the veil of darkness is spread over nature and over Man all creatures place their fate in the Hand of G-d.'

And thus we read in Tehillim (Perek 92/Posuk 3):

להגיד בבקר חסדך ואמונתך בלילות:

To tell Your kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness in the nights.

Daytime is a period of light. It symbolizes a sense of seeing the Hand of G-d when we are able to identify His kindness. It is a time of revelation; we see and appreciate the Divine Providence from which we benefit.

But when we turn towards evening, as twilight overcomes the daylight and as darkness creeps in partially and then fully, we are no longer able to see; revelation, it seems, has ceased.

In such a situation, from where do we derive our strength? We know that our trust in HaKodosh Boruch Hu is not misplaced. Our faith supports us.

One may think that the above is a *mussar* statement only, but that is not so. It has clear Halachic implications.

Thus we learn in Masseches B'rachos (12 a):

אמר רבה בר חיננא סבא משמיה דרב: כל שלא אמר אמת ויציב שחרית ואמת ואמונה ערבית - לא יצא ידי חובתו, שנאמר: להגיד בבקר חסדך ואמונתך בלילות.

The elder Rabba bar Chinana said in the name of Rav: One who does not recite *Emes V'yatziv* during the morning prayers and/or does not recite *Emes Ve'emunah* in the evening prayers has not fulfilled his obligation. As it says, 'To tell Your kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness in the nights.'

Following the recitation of Krias Shema morning and evening, we recite *Birkas HaGeula* – the blessing of redemption:

ברוך אתה ה' גאל ישראל

Blessed are You, Hashem, He Who has redeemed Israel.

Both in the morning and in the evening the blessing is preceded by paragraphs that describe G-d's redemption.

In the morning, the paragraph begins with the words *אמת ויציב* – it is true and it is steadfast.

In the evening, the paragraph begins with the words *אמת ואמונה* – it is true and it is a matter of faith.

Rashi explains:

שנאמר להגיד בבקר חסדך - וברכת אמת ויציב כולה על חסד שעשה עם אבותינו היא, שהוציאם ממצרים ובקע להם הים והעבירם, וברכת אמת ואמונה מדבר בה אף על העתידות, שאנו מצפים שיקיים לנו הבטחתו ואמונתו לגאלנו מיד מלכים ומיד עריצים ולשום נפשנו בחיים, ולהדריכנו על במות אויבינו, כל אלה הנסים התדירים תמיד.

*To tell Your kindness in the morning* – the blessing of *Emes V'yatziv* only discusses the kindness that G-d did for our forebears [in the past]. He took them out of Egypt and He split the sea and crossed them over.

The blessing of *Emes Ve'emunah*, in addition, speaks about the future – that we anticipate that Hashem will fulfill His promise and that our faith is that He will redeem us from the hand of the kings and from the hand of the tyrants and give us life and lead us to walk over the high places of our enemies. And all of the ongoing miracles forever.

The dove returned to the Ark at night. It had no place to rest other than in that ship that housed all of humanity and all life for the past many months.

All that the dove could find was a leaf of the olive tree –not even the fruit. And the finding was bitter. It was bitter because the olive is bitter – but at least the olive fruit gives sustenance. The dove's prey was bitter and without sustenance because it was only a leaf.

But the dove did not discard the olive leaf. It preserved it because, rather than seeing hopelessness and desolation that night, it proclaimed *אמת ואמונה*. There is truth in G-d's Word and we believe it completely.

Things may be bitter at times, and the life of all that was left alive at the time of the *Mabul* could not have been pleasant in the Ark. At that time, despite the rescue from destruction, the ongoing Hand of G-d and His Providence might have seemed to be bitter.

We do not seek bitter leaves from HaKodosh Boruch Hu. We seek sweetness and pleasantness. We seek the fulfillment of the verse in Mishlei (Perek 3/Posuk 17):

דַּרְכֵיהָ דַּרְכֵי נַעַם וְכָל נְתִיבֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:

Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all of its paths are peaceful.

But, in the meantime, until we reach the fulfillment of that hope, we will not be led astray by false promises of a sweet life by those who deceive and cannot fulfill.

We remember the verses in Tehillim (Perek 118/P'sukim 8-9 and Perek 146/P'sukim 3-4):

טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּה' מִבֶּטֶחַ בְּאָדָם: טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּה' מִבֶּטֶחַ בַּגְּדִיבִים:

It is better to take refuge in Hashem than [to take refuge]in Man. It is better to take refuge in Hashem than trusting in those who purport to be generous.

אַל תִּבְטְחוּ בַּנְדִּיבִים בְּכֵן אָדָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה: תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשׁוּב לְאֲדָמְתּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא  
אֲבָדוּ עֲשָׂתֵנְתִּיו:

Do not trust in those who purport to be generous, in man who is not able to bring salvation. His spirit will leave him and he will return to the ground; on that day all of his thoughts are lost.

When we refrain from sweets before davening we are expressing the very thoughts that the dove expressed. We trust in G-d; not in ourselves or in others. If we are to have the 'sweet life' which we desire, we know it can only come from Him Yisborach.

If we do not refrain, we are trusting in ourselves, saying that we are capable of providing the 'sweet life' on our own. That attitude is the arrogance that the Halachah forbids us at the start of our day if we truly wish to reaffirm and reinstitute our relationship with the Ribbono Shel Olom.

May we soon merit to taste the sweetness and pleasantness of the Geula Shleima.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock