Sparks of Light Torah Portion Pinchas

Contents

Lesson delivered during the Torah Portion of Chukas

"Who are the ones going"

[Pharaoh asks Moshe] "Who are the ones going [to the desert] (*מי ומי ההלכים*)" (Shmos 10:8)? [This equals the numerical value of] "lion (*אריה*) [*216*]; the lion of the Chariot. The Baal Haturim, everyone should learn the Baal Haturim on Torah Portion Shmos.[1] Now, there will be four Torah Portions; Beha'aloshecha, Shlach Lecha, Korach, Chukas. From Korach to Chukas is 38 and a half years. [Korach's sin was on the second year after the Jews left Egypt. Miriam's death, the loss of her well and Moshe's retrieving the well through hitting the rock is all discussed in the Torah Portion Chukas. This all occurred at the end of the forty years of the Jew's tarrying in the desert.] Thus 38 and a half [years] passed. And it [seemingly the Jew's tarrying in the desert] mitigated [harsh judgments from upon] the entire generation of the desert.

Everyone must live at least 400 years

Now we are mitigating everything. Every person must live 400 years; everyone who was present during Maariv must live 400 years. There is an indictment order [to live 400 years]! Boaz lived 400 years (Yalkut Shimoni Bereishis 47: 156). So, there are three opinions. Either each one of them [Boaz, Oved, Yishai, David's ancestors] lived 400 years. Or all together they [lived 400 years].[2] Boaz (*בועז*) equals the numerical value of 85.[3]

---

[1] The Baal Haturim explains that the numerical value of "Who are the ones going (*מי ומי ההלכים*)" equals the numerical value of "Calev and the son of Nun (*כלב ובן נון*)" [*216*]. Pharaoh alluded to Moshe that only Calev and Yehoshua, the son of Nun are destined to arrive to the Land of Israel; the rest of the Jews will perish in the desert.

[2] The Rav seemingly does not mention the third opinion.

[3] The Rav does not explain the relevance of his numerical value equaling 85.

Ruth was considered a lethal woman

[Immediately after Ruth's marrying Boaz, Boaz passed away]. Ruth, she was called a lethal woman [as the Rav will explain]. If [a woman married two men consecutively and the] two husbands die, she is called a lethal woman [and it is forbidden to marry her]. [Nevertheless, if she married a third man], she doesn't need to get divorced. However, if three die [and she married a fourth man], he must get divorced; this is Ruth.[4]

Only Ruth abided the Torah law of not taking more than two kernels

Now was the soul of Mashiach. [In the Haggadah, it] says Charoses (חרוסת); everything is "Chas Ruth (חס רות)."[5] "The harvest of barley" (Ruth 1:22); Ruth, she merited [to pick] only two barley [kernels]. [The Torah permits a pauper to take for himself two fallen kernels from the owner of the fields harvest. If more than two kernels fall while harvesting, the kernels belong to the owner of the field. However, the other paupers took even more than two kernels unlike Ruth. She was careful not to take more] than two wheat [kernels].

Moshe destroys all of the snakes

"Who are the ones going (מי ומי ההולכים)?" Together, this equals [the numerical value] of "lion (אריה);" the lion of the Chariot. "Moshe Yehoshua (משה יהשע)" equal the numerical value of "snake scorpion (נחש עקרב). The Megaleh Amukos (Torah Portion V'eschanan 80) [explains the relevance of the above-mentioned numerical value that] Moshe destroys all of the snakes.

A person is born with a snake

A person is born with a snake;[6] "Avigail, the daughter of Nachash (נחש) [which means snake]" (Shmuel 2:17,25). A person must marry the daughter of a snake.[7] [A man] asks her [his potential fiancé], who is your father? If [her father] is a snake, ok; if he's a donkey, that's not ok! "A double donkey" (Shoftim 15:16). Avraham called Eliezer a donkey and he danced for three days and three nights.

---

[4] See Chatam Sofer Even Ha'ezer 1:130 who explains that Ruth married Cilyon. Cilyon died and Machlon, Cilyon's brother performed *yibbum* (a brothers marrying his deceased brothers' wife) with her. Machlon then died as well. Afterwards Ruth married Boaz and Boaz died immediately the next day after the wedding.

[5] Charuses alludes to Ruth, who was the ancestor of David, the ancestor of Mashiach.

[6] Seemingly, the Rav is referring to that which ever since the Adam's sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, mankind now possesses the skin of snakes. A person must throughout his lifetime overcome the evil vices of the snake that attached itself to him.

[7] It is unclear to me what the Rav's intention is. In the Hebrew text of the Rav's lesson, it is explained that a person should marry a woman whose father only died due to the original snake who brought death to the world, not a person who dies because of his own sins. This explanation is seemingly based on the gemara in tractate Shabbos 55b that although the verse teaches that Avigail was the daughter of Nachash, she was actually the daughter of Yishai. Yishai is only referred to as Nachash which means snake because he only died due to the original snake who brought death to the world and not due to his own sins.

To dance after being called a donkey

[Reb Safra] left the donkey [for a lion], and the lion didn't eat it;[8] the donkey, this is the true service of G-d.[9] "Issachar is a strong-boned donkey; crouching among the sheepfolds." (Bereishis 49:14). A person's entire service of G-d is to be a donkey. A person comes to the world to be a donkey; until the end of his 120 years, to be a donkey. Eliezer after 120 [years of attending to Avraham, Avraham] calls him donkey! You were a donkey; you're left as a donkey; You're always a donkey! So, he [Eliezer] danced for three days and three nights. Yaakov was scared to tell Reuven, what did you do?! [Why did you move your fathers' bed from Bilah's tent and place it in Leah's?! /Reuven, you are] my first-born, my might and first fruit of my vigor; [You were destined to be] exceeding in rank and exceeding in honor" (Bereishis 49:3). [Why did Yaakov reprimand Reuven only shortly before Yaakov's passing?] Since he's going to go to Eisav. [Yaakov feared that after reprimanding Reuven, he will leave him and join Eisav.] But Eliezer, there is no fear [of reprimanding]. What's the problem? Avraham says that I'm a donkey? Thank G-d! he told me the truth! I was a donkey; I'm still a donkey. Therefore, Eliezer entered with his body into the Garden of Eden. The main thing is to enter with one's body into the Garden of Eden; to the chamber of Eliezer. After [Avraham's] calling him a "double donkey."[10]

---

[8] The gemara teaches in Tractate Bava Kama that Reb Safra was once traveling in a caravan along with other people. A lion came and guarded all of the caravans possessions from wild beasts and demons. To sustain the lion, the people of the caravan gave him every night a donkey. Upon Reb safra's turn to give the lion a donkey, the lion did not eat the donkey.

[9] See footnote on the end of the paragraph for a possible explanation of the importance of being like a donkey.

[10] In the beginning of the paragraph, the Rav seems to refer to the quality of a donkey as a desirable quality. Nevertheless, in the duration of the paragraph, the Rav explains that being called a donkey is supremely insulting. And had it not been for Eliezer's strong character, he would have possibly fallen and left Avraham. Perhaps, based on the verse's referral to Issaschar as a "strong boned-donkey," we can reconcile this contradiction. Perhaps, although Avraham insulted Eliezer via the derogatory meaning of a donkey, hidden within his insult was a compliment which explains why Avraham was not scared to reprimand him. You are a strong-boned donkey i.e. you have a steadfast character and you are not swayed away by insults. The Rav then contrasts Eliezer to Reuven who did not have the desirable quality of a "strong-boned" donkey like Eliezer.