

Nechama Goldman Barash

Yom Hashoah 2017

The Righteous Were Never Happy and You Seek to Be Happy

Vayikra Rabba Parsha 20

תהלים פרק עה (ה) אִמְרַתִּי לְהוֹלִלִים אֶל־תְּהַלְלוּ לְרַשְׁעִים אֶל־תִּרְיֹמוּ קוֹרְנִי:

Vayikra Rabba 20:2

"After the death of the two sons of Aaron."

R. Levi opened his discourse by citing:

"I say unto the arrogant (*la-hollelim*): Deal not arrogantly" (*Tehillim* 75:5).

"*La-hollelim*" means "to those who create confusion," those whose hearts are full of evil intrigues.

R. Levi used to call them "woe-makers" because they bring woe into the world.

"And to the wicked: Lift not up the horn" (*Tehillim*, *ibid.*).

The Holy One, blessed be He, said to the wicked: "The righteous were never happy in this world of Mine, and you seek to be happy!"

Adam was never happy in this world of Mine, and you seek to be happy!

Resh Lakish, in the name of R. Shimon the son of Menasya, said: The apple of Adam's heel outshone the globe of the sun; how much more so the brightness of his face!

Nor need you wonder - In the ordinary way, if a person makes serving trays, one for himself and one for his household, whose will he make more beautiful? Not his own?

Similarly, Adam was created for the service of the Holy One, blessed be He, and the globe of the sun for the service of mankind.

R. Levi said in the name of R. Chama the son of Chanina:

The Holy One, blessed be He, fitted up for him thirteen canopies in the Garden of Eden, as it says, "You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering - the cornelian, the topaz, and the emerald, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the carbuncle, and the smaragd, and gold; the workmanship of your settings and of your sockets was in you. In the day that you were created, they were prepared" (*Yechezkel* 28:13).

R. Shimon ben Lakish said there were eleven canopies, and our Rabbis say there were ten.

And they are not in disagreement.

The authority who reckons them as thirteen makes the expression. "Every precious stone was your covering" represent three.

The authority who reckons them as eleven makes these words represent one, while the authority who reckons them as ten does not make these words represent even one

And after all this glory, he is told: "For dust you are, and unto dust shall you return" (*Bereishit* 3:19)!

Abraham was not happy in this world of Mine, and you seek to be happy!

A son was born to him when he was a hundred years old,

and in the end the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: "Take now your son... and offer him... for a burnt-offering" (*Bereishit* 22:2)!

Avraham went a distance of three days' journey.

After three days, he perceived a cloud resting on the top of a mountain.

Said he to Yitzchak: "My son, do you see what I see?" "Yes," he answered him. "What do you see?" he inquired. He told him: "I see a cloud resting on the top of the mountain."

He said to Yishmael and Eliezer: "Do you see anything?" "No," they answered him. Said he to them: "Since you perceive nothing and this donkey perceives nothing, 'Abide you here with (*im*) the ass'" (*ibid.*, 22:5). By

the expression "*im* the ass," he implied that they were a people (*am*) resembling the ass. He took Yitzchak his son and led him up mountains and down hills. He took him up on one of the mountains, built an altar, arranged the wood, prepared the altar pile, and took the knife to slay him. Had not an angel from heaven called him, Isaac would have already been slain. There is proof that this is so, for Isaac returned to his mother and she said to him: "Where have you been, my son?" Said he to her: "My father took me and led me up mountains and down hills," etc. "Alas," she said, "for the son of a hapless woman! Had it not been for the angel you would by now have been slain!" "Yes," he said to her. Thereupon, she uttered six cries, corresponding to the six blasts. It has been said: She had scarcely finished speaking when she died. Hence it is written, "And Avraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her" (*ibid.*, 23:2). Where did he come from? R. Judah son of R. Simon said: He came from Mount Moriah. Now Abraham harbored doubts in his heart and thought: Perhaps, heaven forefend, some disqualifying blemish has been found in him and his offering had not been accepted. A heavenly voice went forth and said to him: "Go your way, eat your bread with joy...for God has already accepted your works" (*Kohelet* 9:7). **Israel** did not enjoy happiness in this world of Mine, as may be inferred from the fact that it does not say: "Israel rejoiced in his Maker," but "shall rejoice" (*Tehillim* 149:2), as much as to say: They are destined to rejoice in the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, in the Time to Come. **The Holy One, blessed be He**, if the expression be permitted, did not enjoy happiness in this world of His, as may be inferred from the fact that it does not say, "The Lord rejoiced in His works" but, "The Lord will rejoice" (*ibid.*, 104:31), as much as to say: The Holy One, blessed be He, will in the Time to Come rejoice in the works of the righteous. **Elisheva the daughter of Amminadav** did not enjoy happiness in the world. True, she witnessed five crowns [attained by her relatives] in one day: her brother-in-law was a king, her brother was a prince, her husband was High Priest, her two sons were both Deputy High Priests, her grandson Phinehas was a Priest anointed for war. But when her sons entered to offer incense and were burnt, her joy was changed to mourning. Thus it is written, "**After the death of the two sons of Aaron.**"

Vayikra Rabba 20:3

R. Abba ben Kahana opened his discourse by citing: "I said of laughter: It is mingled" (*Kohelet* 2:2). If the laughter is mixed, of what benefit is the rejoicing? A story is told of one of the dignitaries of Kabul^[1] who gave his son away in marriage. On the fourth day he invited guests to his house. When they had eaten and drunk and made their hearts merry, he said to his son: "Go up and bring us a barrel from the upper chamber." When he went up, a serpent bit him and he died.

He [the father] waited for him to come down,
and as he did not come down, he said:
"I will go up and see what is the matter with my son."
He went up and found that he had been bitten by a serpent
and was dead, lying among the barrels.
He waited until the guests had finished their meal and said to them:
"My masters! Not to bless my son with the bridegroom's blessing have you come, but pronounce over him
rather the mourner's blessing!
Have you not come to bring my son under the bridal canopy?
Come, carry him to his grave!"
R. Zakkai of Kabul concluded [the funeral oration] for him:
"I said of laughter: It is mingled."

Vayikra Rabbah 20:5-12

20:5

R. Acha and R. Ze'ira opened their discourse with the text: "At this also my heart trembles, *ve-yitar* out of its place" (Job. 37:1).

What is the meaning of *ve-yitar*? 'It leaped'; as you read, "Wherewith to leap (*le-natter*) upon the earth" (Lev. 11:21).

The Holy One Blessed be He said: Shall the sons of Aharon not be even like his rod which entered dry and came out full of sap?

The wicked Titus entered the interior of the Holy of Holies with his sword drawn in his hand. He cut into the curtain and his sword came out full of blood. He entered in peace and departed in peace, yet the sons of Aharon came in to offer incense and came out burnt, as is borne out by the text,

"After the death of the two sons of Aharon when they drew near before the Lord and died!"

ה

ר' אחא ור' זעירא פתח (איוב לז) אף לזאת יחרד לבי ויתר ממקומו מהו ויתר? יקפץ כד"א (ויקרא יא) לנתר בהן על הארץ

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לא יהיו בניו של אהרן דומין למטהו שנכנס יבש ויצא לח טיטוס הרשע נכנס לבית קדשי הקדשים והרבו שלופה בידו גידר את הפרוכת ויצאת הרבו מלאה דם נכנס בשלום ויצא בשלום ובניו של אהרן נכנסו להקריב ויצאו שרופים הה"ד אחרי מות שני בני אהרן .

20:9

R. Mani of She'av, R. Joshua of Sikhnin, and R.

Yochanan in the name of R. Levi said:

The sons of Aharon died for four things, in connection with each of which death is mentioned.

Because they had drunk wine, and in connection with this death is mentioned, as it says,

"Drink no wine nor strong drink... that you die not" (Lev. 10:9).

Because [while officiating] they lacked the prescribed number of garments, and in connection with this death is mentioned, as it says, "And they shall be upon Aharon, and upon his sons... that they bear no iniquity and die" (Ex. 28:43).

What did they lack?

ט

ר' מני דשאב ורבי יהושע דסכנין ור' יוחנן בשם ר' לוי אמרו בשביל ד' דברים מתו בני אהרן ובכולן כתיב בהם מיתה על שהיו שתויי יין וכתיב בו מיתה שנאמר (ויקרא י) יין ושכר אל תשת

ועל ידי שהיו מחוסרי בגדים וכתיב בו מיתה שנאמר (שמות כח) והיו על אהרן ועל בניו ומה היו חסרין ?

מעיל שכתוב בו מיתה שנאמר (שם /שמות כ"ח/) והיה על אהרן לשרת

וע"י שנכנסו בלא רחיצת ידים ורגלים שנאמר (שם /שמות/ ל) ורחצו ידיהם ורגליהם ולא ימותו וכתיב בבאם אל אהל מועד ירחצו מים

וע"י שלא היו להם בנים וכתיב בו מיתה הה"ד (במדבר ג) וימת נדב ואביהוא

אבא חנין אומר ע"י שלא היה להם נשים דכתיב וכפר בעדו

<p>The robe, in connection with which death is mentioned, as it says, “And it shall be upon Aharon to minister... that he die not” (ib. 35).</p> <p>Because they entered the Sanctuary without washing hands and feet; for it says, “So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not” (ib. 30:21), and it also says, “When they go into the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they die not” (ib. 20).</p> <p>Because they had no children, and in connection with this death is mentioned. Thus it is written, “And Nadav and Avihu died... and they had no children” (Num. 3:4).</p> <p>Finally, Abba Chanin adds one more sin: Abba Chanin says it was because they had no wives, for it is written, “And [he shall] make atonement for himself, and for his house” (Lev. 16:6), and ‘his house’ signifies his wife.</p>	<p>ובעד ביתו ביתו זו אשתו.</p>
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<p>12</p> <p>R. Abba b. Avina enquired: For what reason was the section recording the death of Miriam placed in close proximity to that dealing with the ashes of the Red Heifer? Simply this, to teach that as the ashes of the Heifer effect atonement, so the death of the righteous effects atonement.</p> <p>R. Yudan asked: For what reason was the death of Aharon recorded in close proximity to the breaking of the Tablets? Simply this, to teach that Aharon's death was as grievous to the Holy One, blessed be He, as the breaking of the Tablets.</p> <p>R. Chiyya b. Abba stated: The sons of Aharon died on the first of Nisan. Why then is their death mentioned in connection with the Day of Atonement? It must be to teach that as the Day of Atonement effects atonement, so the death of the righteous effects atonement.</p> <p>Whence do we know that the Day of Atonement effects atonement? From the fact that it says, “For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you” (Lev. 16:30).</p> <p>And whence that the death of the righteous effects atonement? From the fact that it is written, “And they buried the bones of Saul and Yonatan his son (II Sam. 21:14), and it is also written, “After that God was entreated for the land” (ib.)</p>	<p>יב</p> <p>א"ר אבא בר אבינא מפני מה נסמכה פרשת מיתת מרים לאפר פרה אלא מלמד שכשם שאפר הפרה מכפר כך מיתת הצדיקים מכפרת</p> <p>א"ר יודן מפני מה נסמכה מיתת אהרן לשבירת לוחות אלא מלמד שהיה קשה לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא מיתתו של אהרן כשבירת לוחות</p> <p>א"ר חייא בר אבא בא' בניסן מתו בניו של אהרן ולמה מזכיר מיתתו ביום הכפורים אלא מלמד שכשם שיום הכפורים מכפר כך מיתתו של צדיקים מכפרת</p> <p>ומנין שיום הכפורים מכפר שנאמר (ויקרא טז) כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר אתכם</p> <p>ומנין שמיתתו של צדיקים מכפרת דכתיב (שמואל ב כא) ויקברו את עצמות שאול וכתוב ויעתר אלהים לארץ אחרי כן</p>
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