

KASHRUT BULLETIN # 3

WHOEVER GUARD HIS MOUTH AND HIS TONGUE, GUARDS
AS WELL HIS SOUL FROM SUFFERING (Mishle 21:23)

There is no sin so severe as forbidden foods, since entire Jewish communities were lost and turned to evil ways because of eating treifos and neveilos.

(Divrei Chayim-Yoreh Deah)

Are the problems with the Kashrut of meat a new phenomenon? Are problems in the field of Shechita new?

Whoever is accustomed to reading the works of the poskim, knows how much they were upset about the situation in the fields of shechitah and bedikah, and how much they complained about the profligacy of their generation and its pitfalls, until it is obvious that, with all their extreme caution and watchfulness, they were extremely afraid of inadvertently sinning in the field of shechitah. For this reason, every generation enacted safeguards. Nevertheless, they continually warned the people to appoint mashgichim to supervise closely and to bear the responsibility for the public's observance thorough investigations, and then, perhaps they would be safe from pitfalls.

Whoever is accustomed to reading the responsa and other books of the outstanding poskim, whose ruling we follow, is familiar with the fact that virtually every volume of responsa writes about some problem or scandal in the field of shechitah in the author's time.

In these books we find that there were many quarrels between the shoctim and the members of the communities, also between the shoctim and the rabbis. In some instances these quarrels caused rifts between friends, and many times new communities were formed as a result of these quarrels. Also, rabbis often left their positions when his friends neglected to support them in their conflict with the shochet, or the rabbis were compelled to proclaim the meat non-kosher. Also, many times, the congregants refused to pay the rabbi or the shochet his salary and his family went hungry.

Here's are two small examples:

Rabbi Isaac Lampronti ztk'l (Italy, 1679-1756) wrote: "In the city of Ferrara we stood up to be counted in the great Yeshivah and decided to forbid and to hold guilty any shochet who would accept greater compensation for animals declared kosher than for those declared terefah. We did not succeed, however, because of those powerful persons who listen not to the word of the Lord and who, do not bow their shoulders to the yoke of the commandments of our G-d. (Pachad Yitzchak)

Rabbi Shlomo Kluger ztk'l (1783- 1869) wrote, "We may not treat the failings of shohatim lightly. In earlier generations, when most of the world was G-d-fearing and truth-seeking, a rabbi might have been lenient with a slaughterer in a responsum or in a reprimand. A shohet then might have transgressed because of a desire to make a livelihood, but his conscience still troubled him; the thought of breaking the laws of Shehitah appalled him. He knew too that were he to transgress a second time no man would stand up for him. Not so now. The earth is sinful, may the good G-d forgive. Every shohet now is like the most lax among the most lax. When he is called to account he calls upon his family, his friends, and the people who love falsehood, and they come to his aid; they rush eagerly to strengthen the hand of deceit. Therefore we must exercise the greatest care in our time to see that we select shohetim who are more pious than those before us, and for the slightest infraction to drive them out of their calling. According to the older writings one was permitted to eat meat slaughtered by a thief. Now it is universally recognized that a thief is to be suspected of violating any law in the Torah. (Tov Taam Va Daat)

It occurred also that great rabbis differed when a conflict broke out between the congregation and the shochet, or between the rabbi and the shochet, and great confusion ensued. See below. Many times, a chillul Hashem came about when some of the litigants took their case before the dignitaries of the city, who decided whether the meat was kosher or not, thereby causing a chillul Hashem. Woe to such a disgrace! And much more, in instances when the shochet was a cantor as well, and had many friends supporting him. In some cases, the shochet-cantor refused to obey the rabbi, viz. if he felt that he had the majority on his side.

From these occurrences we see how far the forces of evil go to influence particularly those engaged in this profession and to blind

everyone's eyes, so that on the surface everything appears to be going according to the law, while in fact, the person with a keen vision discerns many scandals behind the scenes.

Further research reveals that even in Talmudic times, we were not immune to such scandals. For example, we find in Yerushalmi Terumos (8:3): Once there was a butcher in Sepphoris who caused the people to eat carcasses [Nevelot] and treifos. Once he drank wine on Friday and fell off the roof and died. Dogs came and licked his blood. The people consulted Rabbi Chanina for the proper procedure to follow. He replied, "The Torah writes: 'And meat torn in a field you shall not eat; you shall cast it to the dogs.' This rascal was robbing the dogs and feeding the treifos to Jews. Therefore, do not chase the dogs away; they are eating their due."

See Glosses on Rosh, Hullin ch. 7:16, where the decision is stated (according to the above quotation) that if one sells treifos as kosher meat and dies before repenting, no one may participate in his burial, and even if the dogs are licking his blood and eating his flesh, they may not be driven away. -

EXCERPTS FROM THE SEFER SHEVET MUSSAR CHAPTER 36

THE SHOCHATIM KILL THE ANIMALS WITHOUT MERCY LIKE A MURDERER WOULD

And now my son, listen to what the Shochatim do: They grab the knife with an elevated hand, and they stand next to the animal in an arrogant posture, and the animal is paralyzed and cries and gives its life, because there is no strength in her, and that tyrant [The Shochet] does not focus on the movements of the animal [In order to cut with the knife in the precise spot] but he focuses instead on the women and the townsfolk when he says: "Look what a great Rabbi I am, I am like SAMA-EL in that I also take souls" And when he sees the portions he receives he is happy and his wife receives them with joy and brags about it around the neighborhood and she says: "Look at our high level and the great level of the Rabbi SAMA-EL. In this fashion they will live and prolong their days, unless their actions bring them to be slaughtered as well."

EVEN RABBENU HA KADOSH SUFFERED FOR HE SHOWED NO MERCY TO A CALF

For come and see how great was the level of Rabbenu ha Kaddosh (Rabbi Yehuda ha Nassi) and when he didn't show compassion to that calf (Baba Metzia 85a) and he said to the calf: "For this you were created" He was then made to suffer great tribulations and His Torah did not protect him from this.

**DO YOU KNOW WHO THE SHOCHATIM WHO
SLAUGHTER THE ANIMALS THAT YOU EAT MEAT
FROM ARE? DO YOU IF THEY ARE G-D FEARING?
WOULD YOU TRUST THEM WITH YOUR MONEY?
NO? THEN WHY DO YOU TRUST THEM WITH YOUR
SOULS AND THAT OF YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN?
WHY DO YOU TRUST THEM WITH YOUR SHARE IN
THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME?**

**NOWADAYS YOU ALSO NEED TO TRUST THE
OWNER OF THE FACTORY WHERE THE ANIMALS
ARE SLAUGHTERED AND YOU ALSO NEED TO
TRUST THE BUTCHER WHO SELLS THE MEAT TO
YOU**

**ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO RELY
ON THESE PEOPLE?**

THE MOST UPRIGHT BUTCHER IS A PARTNER OF AMALEK

See further the last chapter of Kiddushin (82a): "The most upright butcher is a partner of Amalek." Rashi explains that many cases of questionable kashrut come to his hand, and in trying to save money, declares them kosher, and - sell them as such. We can see to what extent the Rabbis evaluate the pitfalls resulting from the butchers, that they did not hesitate to use the sharpest epithet when referring to them. The expression, "partner of Amalek," is, by far, the sharpest epithet used in the Talmud. One's hair can stand on end when one thinks about how far this matter extends. For a question of doubtful kashrut the Rabbis called him such a name, and not only a usual butcher, but "the most upright butcher " so that no one can be

confident in himself and say that since he appointed a reliable butcher, no pitfalls can result from him, and it is accepted that a Torah scholar does not allow any pitfall to result from his doings, especially if the butcher is really learned, since the Rabbis say that a Torah scholar will commit a minor infraction in order to prevent an ignorant person from committing a major infraction.

The Cause of Increasing Daily Catastrophes

We read in Sefer Imrei Tzaddikim, (Divrei Geonim p 5): Where the shochet is honest, the shechitah is good and Elijah the prophet is in town. But, if the shochet feeds the people neveilos and trefos, he causes the Angel of Death to come to town [And Jews suffer tragic deaths, G-d save us]

From the aforementioned books we see that all catastrophes that befall us today are caused by shoachim who feed Nevelot (see also Shabbos 33b, Or Hachaim Shmini 11:43, Warnings of Mahartza, Mikdash Melech, Zivchei Shelamim, Darchei Teshuvah 60:5).

In the story of Purim we are told that Haman (A descendant of Amalek) got the strength to issue the decree to annihilate all Jews from the fact that Jews sinned when they enjoyed forbidden foods in the banquet of Achashverosh. I am sure that the reason there are shechitah gezeros (Jews being slaughtered by the Goyim) in our times is because we did not keep our eyes on the shoachim as we should. (Tiyul bapardes, concerning shechitah, by Shamlauer Rav)

*AN IGNORANT PERSON IS FORBIDDEN FOR HIM TO
EAT MEAT (PESACHIM 49b)*

WHO CAN CONTRADICT THE WORDS OF THE PELE YOETZ?

It is extremely difficult to find meat that is kosher according to all views. I, therefore, derive much pleasure from the pious that are careful not to eat meat. (Pele Yoetz, teref).

Whoever wishes to avoid all risks, should be smart to eat only fowl (poultry) and not bovine meats - because the pitfalls are all too common and numerous with them. [And for eating the forbidden fat of bovine meat we become liable to the punishment of karet and this punishment does not apply to the consumption of poultry] (Shulchan Hatahor, Rabbi Aaron Roth o.b.m. (author of Shomer Emunim, Tohoras Hakodesh, etc)

ARE YOU REALLY WILLING TO RISK YOUR LIFE BY CONSUMING FOODS THAT ARE NOT KOSHER ACCORDING TO ALL OPINIONS, AND ARE BASED ON ALL POSSIBLE LENIENCIES IN KASHRUT LAWS USED BY THOSE WHO MANUFACTURE THEM? DID YOU KNOW THAT THE RABBIS OF THE EREV RAV ARE IMMERSSED IN THE BUSINESS OF ISSUING KASHRUT CERTIFICATES TO ALL KINDS OF FOODS? DO YOU KNOW THAT A LOT OF MONEY AND CORRUPTION EXISTS IN THE FIELD OF KASHRUT? PURE AND SIMPLE JEWS HAVE FALLEN PREY TOO MANY TIMES TO THE WRONGDOINGS OF THE EREV RAV! SAVE YOUR SOULS AND WATCH WHAT YOU EAT SO THAT YOUR EMUNA IN HASHEM WILL BE LEFT PURE AND NOT BE CONFUSED BY FOOLISH NOTIONS THAT ARE TOO PREVALENT IN OUR TIMES. MAY HASHEM GIVE US THE STRENGTH TO AVOID ALL THE DAMAGE THAT THE RABBANIM OF THE EREV RAV TRY TO INFLICT ON THE JEWISH PEOPLE, AMEN