

# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF KASHRUTH

*Volume 2*

## **Cholov Akkum** and **Infant Formulas**



By

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New York 5740

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# ***Encyclopedia of Kashruth***

Volume 2

## **Cholov Akkum Infant Formulas**

***Concerning the stringency of the prohibition of Cholov Akkum fed to 80% of all Jewish children, even by the most Orthodox.***

This book is an anthology of quotations from the books of the **poskim**, the halachic authorities whom we follow - also alarming incidents taken from reliable sources, things that have occurred to infants who have not sinned, yet through incidents in which they ate prohibited food, later turned away from Judaism - and many more stories, instructions, and advice in all areas of kashruth of Jewish homes.

In addition, we cite statements of physicians concerning the vast difference between the health of breast-fed children and those fed prepared formulas, who are much more vulnerable to all kinds of ailments and diseases, in contrast to breast-fed children who are not, and who are healthy to their old age.



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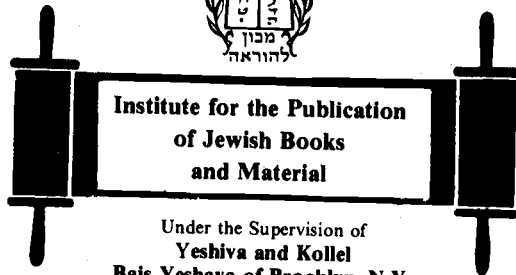
*by*

**Rabbi Shalom Y. Gross**

of Holmin

Author of Nefesh Yeshaya, Responsa Zivchei Tzedek, Minchas Yehudah, Oholei Yisroel, Dvar Moshe, Afias Hamatzos Hasholem, Achilas Matzos B'Yisroel, Kol Yaakov, Kedushas Yisroel, and many other works.

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משה פיינשטיין  
 ר"מ תפארת ירושלים  
 בנוא יארק

## Endorsments

בע"ה

הנה ראיתי כמה מהספרים שנחברו ע"י ידידי הרב הגאון מוהר"ר שלום יחא גראס שליט"א הרב דק"ק האלמין מברוקלין, ביניהם הספרים אכילת מצות בישראל ו' חלקים, אפיית המצות השלם ג"ח, שו"ת זבחי זבחי צדק, אהלי ישראל, דבר משה, מזוח שלום, מנחת יהודה, קדושת ישראל, נפש ישעי' ועוד, וכולם נכתבו באופן וצורה שראויה לבני תורה לעיין בהם, שהגאון המחבר שליט"א אסף וביאר בחריפות ובקיאיות נפלאה, ההלכות והשקפות ששייכים לכמה ענינים שהעולם, ר"ל, נכשלים בהם, ואף שלא שייך לי מחמת טרדת הזמן, אלא לעיין קצת בספרים, וממילא לא שייך לכתוב הסכמה לגבי החלטת הדינים, מ"מ כבר אחזק גברא, שיש לסמוך על הגאון המחבר שליט"א, שחיבר ספריו לכבוד השם ותורתו, וממילא אני מקוה, שכל שומרי התורה יעזרו להגאון המחבר שליט"א, שבאמת מצוה גדולה לחזקו ולתומכו בכל האפשרות.

וע"ז באתי על החתום לכבוד התורה ולומדיה,

ביום י"ח לחודש סיון תש"מ

נאום משה פיינשטיין

I have seen many of the Seforim authored by Rabbi Sholom Yehudah Gross שליט"א, Rabbi of Holmin, from Brooklyn, with whom I am well acquainted. Among them are the works entitled: *Achilath Matzoth B'Yisroel*, 7 vol.; *Afiath HaMatzoth Hashalem*, 3 vol.; *Responsa Zivchu Zivchei Tzedek*; *Oholei Yisroel*; *D'var Mosheh*; *Mezuzath Sholom*; *Minchath Yehudah*; and many others. They are all written in a manner and form worthy of the attention of Torah scholars. The author, a Gaon, has organized and explained each topic with extensive erudition and profound understanding. These Seforim document the laws and ideas concerning many areas of Halacha in which observance has, unfortunately, become lax. Shortage of time has denied me the possibility to properly review his works. I, therefore, am not in a position to endorse his legal decisions. However, this Gaon, the author, may be relied upon since he has already displayed his ability in this field, and has authored his works without any ulterior motives, only for the honor of G-d and His Torah. I, therefore, hope that all observant Jews will assist the learned author of these books, for it is a great Mitzvah to encourage him and support him as much as possible.

I, therefore, affix my signature in honor of the Torah and those who study it, on the eighteenth day of Sivan, 5740.

Moshe Feinstein

*In the author's previous works, among them Responsa Zivchei Zedek, Afiath Matzot, Achilas Matza B'Yisroel, Nefesh Yeshaya and Minchath Yehudah, letters of appreciation and support were printed from Geonim and Tzadikim of our generation, the authorities upon whom the House of Israel depends.*

**Rabbi Eliyahu Zlotnick - Zecher Tzaddik'bracho**

*Member of the Rabbinical court of the Ada HaChereydit in Jerusalem*

**Rabbi David HaLevi Yungreis - Zecher Tzaddik L'bracho**

*Member of the Rabbinical court of the Ada HaChereydit in Jerusalem*

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*A Rav and author of Seforim in London*

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*Rosh Yeshiva Mesifta Tifereth Jerusalem*

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*The head of the Rabbinical court of Debretzin*

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**Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam Shlita**

*The Bobover Rebbe*

**Rabbi Shmuel Yehuda Panet**

*The head of the Rabbinical court of Daash*

**Rabbi Shmuel Zaeve Miller**

*The head of the Rabbinical court of Arad*

We now present a responsum from Rabbi Moshe Stern שליט"א, chief rabbi of Debrycin, concerning *cholov akkum* and "Similac". This letter already appeared in my book, *Minchath Yehudah*.

You inquired as to the halachic status of the formula prepared from *cholov akkum*, know commercially as "Similac" and other similar formulae, given to infants who are not breastfed.

I reply categorically that there is no *heter* for the use of such formulae. If qualified physicians insist, however, that the infant is ill and must have such a formula, then, for the want of any alternative, one may give it, just as other sick people may eat prohibited foods if they must have that particular food.

One of the most inexcusable shortcomings of the Orthodox Jewish community today, is its failure to develop and produce a kosher formula. It is already over twenty years since our people have emigrated from Europe - that brand plucked from the fire of Hitler's crematoria - to settle in America. Yet, no kosher formula has been produced for the poor, unfortunate infants who for some reason, cannot derive their nourishment from their mothers' milk. On the other hand, thousands of dollars are squandered for all kinds of nonsense. We make weddings costing \$50,000. Lately, people celebrate bar-mitzvahs in fancy halls, spending \$10,000. Wedding gowns cost hundreds of dollars, and the women insist that they may be worn but once. G-d forbid that a woman should be seen at two weddings wearing the same gown! For every wedding, the poor husband, whether he likes it or not, has to spend astronomical sums of money to satisfy his wife's desires that she acquired from reading repulsive magazines (dirty, low

caliber, decadent, ugly and repugnant magazines). Yet, to our great dismay and disappointment, when it comes to save the future generations there is no money. There is no money for developing a kosher formula for the myriads of innocent infants. What will we answer on the day we are called to account for these children? When the rabbis and leaders of this generation are asked why they permitted the hearts of all these children to be clogged up with formulae derived from *cholov akkum*. How did you not shudder from the words of Rama, that this is harmful to the children in later years? What will the great rabbis of our generation answer, - those whose words are heeded, and who have the power to enforce their wishes - to the *bath-kol* that emanates from Mt. Horeb and announces, "Woe to the people for the neglect of Torah"? I.e. for the neglect of the Torah of the *Magen Avraham* (343:2), that even though the court is not obliged to prevent children from partaking of forbidden foods, such foods nevertheless, harm them spiritually.

I cannot conceal the fact that hundreds of young men virtually wept before me that they were compelled to feed their poor, innocent infant sons and daughters the spiritually contaminating formula known as "Similac". On countless occasions I preached from the pulpit and stormed about the neglect to take steps to save innocent infants from being fed a formula derived from *cholov akkum*, but my words went unheard and unheeded like a voice in the wilderness. I repeat my appeal to adopt this sadly neglected *mitzvah*, to prepare a formula from *cholov Yisroel* for those infants whose mothers are unable to nurse them, and to save the coming generation from spiritual decadence inherent in this transgression.

Again I wish to announce and emphasize that anyone who has the ways and means to initiate an action toward the development of a kosher formula, will be rewarded doubly

from Heaven, for who knows whether in the near future, his son or grandson may require it? If so, he will be directly benefiting himself, his family, and his contemporaries, and the merit of the public will be ascribed to him.

I have often wondered how it is possible that, although the number of children and youths engaged in learning Torah has far exceeded the number that used to learn in Europe, we do not achieve the expected results. According to the *Midrash (Koheleth Rabba 7)*, out of every thousand who enter the *cheder* to learn *chumash*, one becomes a rabbi able to decide matters of halachah. Yet, we see that out of ten thousand, not even one is capable of this. This can be attributed only to the fact that these children are fed formula from *cholov akkum*, which harms them spiritually in later life thus preventing them from realizing their full potential.

I testify before Heaven and earth that many times I tested children of ten years and over, and noticed that many of them had the potential to become great scholars. After several years, however, they declined, and their potentials never materialized. This, too, is definitely due to the sin of the community, as discussed before. I, then, found the words of the sainted **Chatham Sofer** in **Shemini**, on Lev. 11:43, 44:

אל תשקצו את נפשותיכם בכל השרץ השרץ, ולא תטמאו בהם  
ונטמתם בהם, אני.

**“You shall not make yourselves detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not defile yourselves with them...”**

The soul is a portion of the Almighty from above. It is, consequently, not susceptible to defilement by eating digestible foods, for how can a completely spiritual, ethereal being become contaminated from food? The body,

however can indeed become contaminated from such foods, and become clogged to the extent that it is unable to absorb the holy teachings of the Torah, since the brain becomes cloudy, and no holy words can enter an unclean place. But, if a person hallows himself, his soul becomes purified thereby, for it is a holy portion of the Almighty himself, and sanctity clings to sanctity. Therefore, Scripture states: **“You will not make your souls detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you will not become contaminated through them.”** I.e. the swarming things have no power to make you detestable and to contaminate your soul from above, but **“you will become unclean through them.”** I.e. you will become unclean and clogged through them, not the soul, **“For I am the L-rd your G-d”**, and the soul is My portion, therefore, **“you shall hallow yourselves and you shall be holy”**. If you hallow yourselves, you will be holy, for I am holy, and sanctity clings to sanctity, but **“you will not defile your souls.”** This matches very closely what we have said heretofore.

Now I will raise my voice to appeal to all my brethren, believers descended from believers, people holy from birth, stay no longer in the dark! Shout in the synagogues! Gather in the streets of Williamsburg and Boro Park, Flatbush and Bensonhurst, Monsey and New Square, Lakewood and Cleveland! Wherever you live, awaken and be strong! Do not rest until, with united forces, you succeed to rectify what has been neglected for over twenty years. I am confident that, with G-d's mercy and with the merit of the public, we will succeed.

Parashath R'eh, 5 731, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(Rabbi) Moshe Stern  
Chief Rabbi of Debrycin

## Introduction

May it be known that the foundation of Israel's sanctity and purity is their painstaking observance of the laws of kashruth. We find this stated explicitly in the Torah at the end of **Parshath Shemini** (Lev. 11:44)

והתקדשתם והייתם קדושים כי קדוש אני ולא תטמאו את נפשותיכם בכל השרץ השרץ על הארץ.

**For I am the L-rd your G-d, and you shall sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy; and you shall not defile your souls with any creeping thing that creeps on earth.**

Thus the Torah is very explicit, that by abstaining from forbidden foods we sanctify ourselves, and by laxity in this field, we, G-d forbid, defile our souls.

In order to rationalize the matter, we present an episode concerning Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, known as Rambam, or Maimonides. This episode is quoted in the books, **Tzofnath Paneach** and **Degel Machanay Ephraim (Parshath Ekev)**. These rabbis heard from the Baal Shem Tov o.b.m. that the people of a certain country sent a letter to the Rambam, asking him to prove to them from the Torah that the dead will come to life. The proofs mentioned in the Gemara were not sufficient for them, since they felt that all the verses quoted by the Gemara could be explained otherwise.

Rambam refused to reply to them, but delegated the task to his disciple, Rabbi Shmuel ibn Tibbon. The latter wrote as follows: "According to science, all food and drink are converted to blood. From the blood, it goes into the liver, and from the liver, the purest goes into the heart. From the heart, the best and most refined blood enters the brain, the seat of a person's intellect and life. One who is

cautious in the field of forbidden foods, is assured that his blood will be pure and clear, and he will have a pure heart. His brain will be pure enough to attain a pure spirit of life, which is the divinity of all the worlds, which keeps them all in existence. The more one watches himself and sanctifies his eating habits according to G-d's Torah, the more his intellect sanctifies all his two hundred forty-eight limbs. Likewise, if one is lax in this respect, his intellect becomes defiled and is regarded as dead, which is the highest degree of uncleanness. Thus the holy spirit of all the worlds leaves him, leaving him vulnerable to all sorts of false doctrines and ideas.

Therefore, the rabbis of the Talmud were extremely conscientious in their observance of these laws, so as not to defile themselves with food and wine of gentiles. Consequently, their intellect was brilliant, the holy spirit of the Almighty rested upon them, to enable them to explain every hidden meaning of the holy Torah. Since He and his Torah are one, a divine power rested upon them and the light of their souls joined these two components to form a three stranded cord, which will never be torn. These people (he addressed them euphemistically), however, are surely unclean. Consequently, their blood is unclean, and their hearts and brains have become clogged by dint of the forbidden and unclean foods. They, therefore, are inclined to believe in *apikorsus*, denial of the Torah teachings, and have been unable to accept the sweetness and pleasantness of our Sages' words, built on their divine intellect. Since they have become brazen and have left the faith, the destroyer will come upon them and will destroy them and theirs."

Not long afterwards, a powerful king invaded their country and put them to death, scattering all their

belongings. (This is a faithful translation of **Degel Machanay Ephraim**).

Who does not shudder upon reading this frightening account of how far laxity in observance of the laws of kashruth can pull one down? How frightful it is to read that if one is not conscientious in his observance of kashruth, he is vulnerable to the false doctrines of denial of the Torah and the words of the Sages! How frightful it is to read the faithful testimony of the Rambam and of the saintly disciples of the holy Baal Shem Tov! Unfortunately, now the breach in the observance of kashruth has become much more widespread than in years gone by. In years gone by, every Jew, even the unlearned ones, kept a very close watch over the food that entered their homes, since all foods were prepared at home. No one would dare purchase commercially prepared foods and rely on **hechsherim** and lenient rulings of all sorts. Ask your parents or grandparents who lived in Europe before the Holocaust, and they will tell you how scrupulous they were with the sanctity of foods in the European communities that have since been destroyed, that no one, not even the most unlearned, would eat or give his family to eat foods prepared outside his home, without his supervision over their preparation from beginning to end. Now, however, there are many who permit all kinds of products according to the most lenient rulings in halachah, and the most observant purchase all sorts of commercially produced foods, even those manufactured by non-Jews, as long as there is some kind of *hechsher* stamped on the container. It is irrelevant whose *hechsher* it is, as long as it says, "kosher" in Hebrew letters. As will be explained in this book, many of the *hechsherim* are given by rabbis who have no idea of the intricacies of food manufacturing. Consequently, they



inadvertently permit many products containing non-kosher ingredients. People should, therefore, avoid using all kinds of commercial products.

I know that I am not fit to stand among the great to admonish the public, and that many will say that I have ulterior motives, that I am writing for my own personal aggrandizement. I will, therefore, cite a parable stated in the book entitled, **Ohr Layesharim**, in the name of Reb Yoel Mocheeach o.b.m. It was customary in Europe for itinerant preachers to admonish the people. Many people had the erroneous idea that since these preachers were remunerated for their sermons, they were not sincere and meant only the money they would receive for preaching. Reb Yoel Mocheeach told them this parable. In a small town, where there were no stone houses, only frame houses with straw roofs, there lived a couple in an attic directly under a roof. One night, the woman retired, leaving her husband sitting at the table with a lighted candle. While the candle was still burning, the husband, too, went to bed. Upon seeing her husband coming into the bedroom, the wife scolded him harshly for leaving the candle burning and going to bed. She cried, "How can you go to bed and leave the candle burning? If just one spark falls from the candle, it can ignite the roof and burn up the whole house!" While she was talking, the town watchman came and announced a warning to the entire populace to be very careful with candles and fire so as not to cause a conflagration. The woman said to her husband, "Listen, the town watchman is warning everyone to be careful with candles and fire." He retorted, "You fool! Do you think that the town watchman really and sincerely means to warn us about fire? He is announcing merely because he is being paid for it. Were he paid to announce that we should burn down the town, he

would announce that too.” Consequently, the man paid no heed to the town watchman, and went back to bed, leaving the candle burning. What his wife had warned him against, indeed took place. The candle fell on the table and caused a tremendous fire, which consumed the vast majority of the town’s houses. The couple barely came out alive. Note how foolish this man was for believing that since the watchman received remuneration for his warning, he did not mean it sincerely, and consequently was guilty for allowing the entire town to become consumed by flames.

For this reason, I undertook to compile this anthology from Talmudic and Midrashic sources, as well as from selections from *rishonim*, Medieval rabbis, and books of *mussar*, religious ethics and admonition. The central theme of these selections is the emphasis on the caution required by our holy Torah in the field of forbidden foods. Perhaps my efforts will bear fruit, and some people of my caliber will be saved from falling into this trap. May our Sages’ promise, “Anyone who brings the public to meritorious deeds - no sin will come to his hands”, be fulfilled in my case, and may I, too be saved from eating any foods of dubious kashruth.

### Apology

1) Many people ask why I rant and rave so much about "Similac" when there are scores of other products of dubious kashruth, which we may not take into our mouths, yet they are found in many Jewish homes. Why, then, create such a furor particularly about such a product consumed only by infants.

2) The answer is that this one product is responsible for the greatest part of the deterioration of Judaism in America, in all areas: in areas of kashruth, in areas of modesty, as well as in character traits and courtesty and in the decreasing number of *talmidei chachomim* being produced by this generation. It even affects the material welfare of many families. Since the child is fed from his early youth with food of dubious kashruth, very little can be expected from him or her, whether in matters of Torah, modesty, kashruth, or fear of Heaven. Even a chicken that is fed completely with prohibited food becomes itself treife (*Yoreh Deah hilchos Treifos, Rama, Shelo, Ohr Hachaim, Reishis Chochmah*, etc.). Certainly, if a Jewish child is fed *treifos*, it is much worse.

3) We must, therefore, exert great effort to repair the breach and then to hope for help from the Almighty to effect an improvement in other fields of Judaism, e.g. modesty, kashruth, education of children....Don't forget! The decree promulgated by Haman to kill all the Jews, was a punishment for eating non-kosher foods (*Megillah 12*).

4) While writing these lines, a prominent rabbi called me up and told me a quotation from the well known *sefer, Imrei Shai*. The rabbis tell us that Haman is alluded to in the Torah, in the verse concerning Adam, when G-d asked him, "Did you eat from the tree of which I commanded you not

to eat?" The word "from" in Hebrew is **min**. Together with the **he** denoting the question, it is **hamin** the same letters as **Haman**. Now what connection does Haman have to Adam?

5) We see at times that a Jew loses completely his divine image, to the extent that he is ready to harm his own brother. How does a Jew sink to such corruption? Eating non-kosher food is responsible for this, since it clogs and obstructs the heart, as Rambam writes, that the food becomes blood, which flows to the heart. Since **treifos** clog up the heart, he literally becomes a Jewish "Haman", since he partook of food "of which I commanded you not to eat."

We see that eating non-kosher foods can bring to the worst.

6) Because of this, we say, "Cursed be Haman, who sought to destroy me," since he fed the Jews non-kosher foods, through which he was empowered to promulgate evil decrees upon them (*Megillah* 12).

7) Bach (*Orach Chaim* 670) expresses a similar idea. On Purim, the main reason for the decree was that the Jews partook of Ahasuerus' banquet. It was, therefore, decreed against the bodies that had derived pleasure from food and drink, and had rejoiced at a prohibited party, to be destroyed. When they repented and mortified their bodies, as Esther had ordered, "Go, assemble all the Jews, and do not eat or drink for three days", they were saved. Therefore, a holiday was proclaimed in which we rejoice as a remembrance of the miracle.

8) For this reason, we say, "Blessed be Mordechai the Jew", since, in his merit, the Jews were saved from Haman's decree by watching that they partake of no prohibited foods. He, therefore, sat at the palace gate to warn Esther not to defile herself with non-kosher food.

9) It was only through this, that the Jews were redeemed from their distress, and it was only because of this that Mordecahi was called "Yehudi" since he never put any non-kosher food in his mouth.

10) As a reward for eating only kosher food we will merit to be saved from all troubles, G-d forbid, and to experience the complete redemption in the very near future, Amen.

## CHAPTER 1

1. When Hashem instructed Isaiah the prophet to go forth and rebuke the Jewish people for their iniquities, He warned him that he would be insulted and even attacked. The prophet replied that, nonetheless, he was willing to undertake this mission, even at the threat of verbal and physical abuse. (Medrash Rabbah Parshas Tzav)
2. The biblical commandment of "Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, must be fulfilled regardless of personal considerations or worries of upsetting the "Status-quo, or the "Establishment". Therefore, I feel it my obligation to speak out, in the following chapters, regarding a matter in which a great part of the Torah-observant public is being led astray. In concordance with this viewpoint Rabenu Yaakov Emden wrote: In the concerns of Torah and faith one should not be intimidated even by an *angel* from speaking the truth.
3. In Shemos chapter 22, the Torah commands: "A holy nation shall you be unto Me." Rashi comments: If you (the children of Israel) are holy by abstaining from forbidden foods (neveilos and treifos) then you shall be my people, and if not, you shall not be mine! The Torah further states that "every neveiloh (carcass which died without shechita) shall be thrown to the dogs". Rashi explains this by stating that a Jew who eats neveilos and trefos lowers himself to the level of a dog!
4. It is most interesting to note that concerning no other

negative commandment does the Torah consider the transgressor as no longer being part of Hashem Yisborach's nation.

5. The Tosefos in the tractate of Chulin page 5a questions the Talmudic statement which reads "Hashem Yisborach protects the righteous from unknowing sin." Tosefos asks "How this is possible? Have we not seen many instances of a righteous man inadvertently committing a sin?" The answer, concludes the Tosefos is that the Talmudic statement is alluding to the sin of eating non-kosher food unknowingly! In the matters of kashruth, Hashem yisborach protects the righteous person from eating non-kosher foods accidentally. From the above paragraphs, we can begin to appreciate the fact that eating or drinking non-kosher food and drink is the most deplorable of all transgressions.

6. The Shulchan Orach, Yoreh Deah, chap. 81 states that an infant should not be nursed by a non-Jewess and that a nursing mother should be especially careful about eating only kosher foods during the nursing period. It is a well-known biological fact that the foods digested by the mother, after the various biological breakdowns, will be converted into blood. Blood is the lifeline to the entire body, carrying oxygen to its various organs. Should the food initially digested be non-kosher, the blood will be impure and will defile the entire body and thus cause the mother's milk to be impure as well.

7. The Talmud in tractate Shabbos page 105 describes the "strategy" of the Yetzer-Horah, the evil inclination of man. "He (the yetzer) works slowly, discreetly, telling man to commit small, insignificant sins, until such a point that the man no longer has the moral strength to withstand the

temptation. The yetzer then moves in with severe transgressions, such as eating treifos, desecration of the Sabbath, etc. until the man is spiritually bankrupt. At this point the yetzer has the ability to lead the man completely away from Torah observance. Since the mitzvah of kashruth is directly entwined with the physical as well as spiritual make-up the Jew's body, non-observance of this mitzvah will surely lead its transgressor to the denial of the existence of Hashem and even to conversion.

9. This last observation was testified to by the holy Rabbi Chaim of Zanz'el, who wrote in his work *Divrei Chaim* that entire kehilos were lost to Judaism as a result of eating forbidden foods.

10. In concluding this first chapter, I deem it necessary to point out that many questions have arisen of late in the area of kashruth. Many of the complications in the faithful observance of this mitzvah have been discussed in my previous book, *Nefesh Yeshaye*. This current work continues in that same style with the same theme. Touching especially on the subject of kosher milk and milk milked by non-Jews known as *cholov akum* and the importance of kashruth observance for children and infants.

## CHAPTER 2

1. Our sages wrote and preached extensively in opposition to the use of *cholov akum*, milk milked by a non-Jew without Jewish supervision. Many mothers, however are not aware that most of the major baby formulas currently on the market are made from *cholov akum*.



2. A number of years ago, a question was posed to one of the eldest and most respected rabbonim of New York. The question involved the use of commercially prepared baby formulas. The rov categorically denied its permissibility since it is manufactured from cholov akum, and could be substituted with a permissible formula. "How bright a future can such a child bear, whose entire physical and spiritual foundation has been built upon a "dovor osur" (a forbidden food)?" The Rabbi exclaimed. He then produced various Halachic proofs to back up his statements. The Rov then concluded by quoting the statement of the holy Baal Shem Tov that the decree against using cholov akum is one dating back to the giving of the Torah at Sinai!
3. There is a story told of the two chasidic Rebbes, Reb Shmelke of Nikolsberg and Reb Nochum of Tshernobil o.b.m. who were traveling together. Coming to a Jewish settlement close to nightfall, they found lodging in the home of a local Jew, who prepared their beds and served them tea with milk. The two tzadikim drank the tea without touching the milk. The host, observing this strange behaviour sensed that something was amiss and immediately inquired of his servants. They informed him that indeed, due to some mistake, that day none of the Jewish servants supervised the milking of the cow by the non-Jew. Thus, the milk was cholov akum, and the two Rebbes, sensing something was wrong, did not touch it.
4. Therefore, dear Jewish mothers, please do not spare the time or effort to make your own natural kosher formula free from cholov akum and harmful chemicals. This applies to mothers who, for some reason, are unable to nurse their children. However, mothers who are able to breast-feed their babies should by all means do so. Saving a child from

cholov akum is directly proportionate to saving him (or her) from the influence of the yetzer horah.

5. There are those who say that mother's milk is not beneficial to the child-**NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!** How dare one say that the food that has been developed and placed within the mother's breast by Hashem himself could possibly be harmful? What further proof is required than to look at the Torah gedolim and tzadikim that were produced in earlier generations when formulas were nonexistent.

6. In addition to these spiritual considerations, many leading doctors and professors have enthusiastically advocated the use of mothers' milk on the basis of sound nutritional values. (See chap. 7)

7. The Kaf Hachayim (commentary to Yoreh Deah) states that those of the opinion that breast-feeding is a hindrance to the infant are making a great mistake.

"It is forbidden to discontinue nursing a child during their first two years, except in a case where the mother is forced to (for health reasons etc.)".

8. Therefore, to insure the spiritual and physical health of your child, mother's milk should be used exclusively. As the child begins to eat solid foods, care should be given that only foods with no questionable ingredients should be used.

9. The sefer Nefesh Yeshaye, part 1 presents the opinions of the greatest Rabbis of this generation concerning the greivous sin of using cholov akum especially at the present time. Recent reports have established that the milk of mules and pigs have been mixed with that of cows to help preserve its freshness. Therefore, take nothing for granted!

### CHAPTER 3

To give the reader an understanding of the importance of cholov yisroel - milk and dairy products processed under the supervision of a Rabbinical authority as opposed to cholov akum - dairy produce with no such supervision, we present the following three stories. Hopefully, the reader will comprehend the underlying meaning in these tales: The necessity to guard oneself and his children from cholov akum as well as other forbidden foods.

#### 1. A tale from the Baal Shem Tov.

The holy Rabbi, Rav Chaim of Kossov told this story of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chasidus: There was once a woman who was childless, and would frequently come to the holy Baal Shem Tov for his blessing for children. Each time the woman would come, the Baal Shem Tov would remain silent and offer neither blessing nor consolation. The day came when the woman could no longer control her sorrow and grief and cried bitterly, begging the Baal Shem Tov to have pity on her and bless her with a child.

The Baal Shem Tov considered her for a long time and then informed the woman that she would indeed be blessed with a son in the coming year. He warned her, however, that she must bring the child to him as soon as the child reaches his second birthday, so that he will be able to bless him. The Baal Shem Tov's blessing was fulfilled and the woman gave birth to a baby boy nine months later.

After two years the woman returned to the Baal Shem Tov with her child as the Rabbi had instructed her. The holy Rabbi was overjoyed at seeing the child and kissed and hugged the boy. The Baal Shem Tov blessed the child and

sent him home with his mother. A short time after they arrived home, the child passed away. The women cried bitterly and would not allow herself to be consoled. When the mourning period was over, she traveled to the Baal Shem Tov to ask why her child, for whom she had prayed for many years was taken from her. The Baal Shem Tov comforted the women and then told her this story: "There was once a great king who was childless, and had no one to would inherit his vast possessions. He inquired of all his ministers what he could do about this. They answered the king that only the Jews could call upon G-d in the king's behalf. Thereupon, the king decreed that the Jews pray on his behalf that he be granted a son, and if he did not have a child within a year, all the Jews would be banished from his kingdom as a punishment.

The Jews in the kingdom assembled in their synagogues and cried out to G-d for help and fasted and repented. In heaven, the cries of the poor Jews were heard by G-d, and a soul which had never been on this world volunteered to enter the body of a baby which would be born to the king and queen so as to save the Jews from being banished. That year the queen gave birth to a baby boy and the evil decree was averted.

The child grew up and was both handsome and intelligent. The best teachers were engaged by the king to teach the young prince. The child quickly outgrew each teacher with his sharp mind and quick grasp, and one of the most prominent priests in the country was brought to the palace to be the prince's instructor. The priest had but one condition: Each day he must ascend to heaven to converse with G-d and could not be disturbed, even by the king or the prince. The king naturally agreed, and the priest began

educating the prince. The prince learned much from the priest, but was extremely curious, as to how the priest ascended to heaven. One day he decided to hide while the priest talked to G-d and see what it was like. Hiding behind the curtains, the prince watched as the priest donned Talis and Tefillin and proceeded to pray in the manner of the Jews. The prince confronted the startled priest and asked him what this was. The priest told the prince his secret. "I am really a Jew and have always been." "I was forced to accept your religion in my youth, but in my heart I have always remained a Jew. I have, however, always prayed and learned Torah in secret. I beg of you not to reveal my secret to anyone, because it will surely mean my death."

The prince agreed to keep the secret on the condition that the priest would teach him Torah and all the other books that are holy to the Jews. The priest agreed and they began to learn Tanach, Shulchan Oruch, Gemora, and other holy books. The prince (who possessed the pure and holy soul G-d had implanted within him) took very quickly to his new learning, and soon became proficient in them. The day came when the prince informed the priest of his intention of converting to Judaism. He asked the priest to give him a plan which would enable him to do this. The priest told him to ask his father to let him travel through the kingdom to acquaint himself with the people and their ways. The king agreed and the prince left the palace. The prince ran away to a far-off land and became a Jew. He lived out his life learning Torah and died at an old age as a great Tzaddik. After the prince died and his soul ascended to heaven, a great disturbance occurred. The angels wanted to lead him straight to heaven without any trial or gehenom. The angels in charge of the gates of heaven would not let him enter,

since the early years of his life were lived as a non-Jew. Since this was not his fault, however, it could not be an obstacle. But, the fact remained that he nursed the first two years of his life at the breast of a woman who was not Jewish. It was then decreed that this pure and holy soul should return to this world for two years and be nursed by a Jewish woman, in order to perfect itself. The Baal Shem Tov concluded his story to the woman saying:

“You were destined from heaven never to have children. Since this lofty and holy soul was required to nurse from a Jewish mother for two years, This great privilege was given to you. The soul of the child you lost was that of the prince. You should be happy you were given the honor of helping that holy soul enter Gan-Eden.”

The woman thanked the Baal Shem Tov and returned home comforted.

## II A tale of Rabbi Chaim of Zanz. z.t.l.

In the city of Sanz there was a large house located in the Jewish section. In the yard stood a few milch cows. Every morning, a Jew would come with his milk cans, into which the non-Jews would milk the cows while he watched. This milk he would sell to the townspeople. The holy Rabbi would many times remain awake learning the entire night and many of his disciples would also remain in the Bais-Hamedrash till the next morning. On their way home, the disciples would see the cows being milked and would take a drink from the fresh milk.

One morning one of the disciples passed by and saw a non-Jew milking the cows without any supervision. Understanding that this was a serious infraction of the law prohibiting cholov akum, the disciple quickly went to the

Bais Din to inform them. The Bais Din advised the disciple that he needed someone else, so that there would be two witnesses.

A few days later, the same thing occurred! The non-Jews were milking the cows without the Jew being there and without any supervision. This time the disciple called another disciple as a second witness and together they reported to the Bais Din. The Bais Din told the two disciples to go to the Rebbe and tell him the story. The Rebbe z.t.l. investigated the matter and found everything to be true. It was later discovered that many more milk-dealers were selling milk that had not been supervised. The Rebbe z.t.l. summoned all the milk-dealers, fined them heavily and made them promise never to do this again.

The Rebbe z.t.l. then told his disciples that his father-in-law, the Gaon of Leipzig had three traditions passed down generation to generation since Moshe Rabbeinu. One of them was that milk which was milked by a non-Jew without supervision is forbidden, not only because of the possibility of non-kosher milk (from an unclean animal) being mixed in, but at any time that a Jew did not supervise the milking. It is prohibited because of secret reasons not revealed by the Rabbis.

In Sanz lived a Jew named Reb Moshe Shmuel z.l. who never ate meat away from home, but only dairy foods. After hearing this story from the Rebbe z.t.l. he discontinued eating dairy away from home as well, and ate solely pareve foods.

### III A tale of the Rebbe, Reb Bunim of Peshischo.

The Rebbe Reb Bunim of Peshischo would tell this story of how a person who is cautious as regard forbidden foods, is protected by Hashem from deceptions in kashruth:

There was once a large fair where many merchants gathered to sell their merchandise and where many people came to buy whatever they needed.

In one inn sat a group of Jewish merchants discussing ways and means to increase their profits. In the middle of their discussion, the waiter came in and asked what they would like for lunch. One merchant ordered coffee with milk for all of them, but one insisted that he wanted his coffee black, without milk. The waiter brought in the cups of coffee as they had been ordered. As the merchants drank their coffee, they began to ridicule the one who had ordered the black coffee. One man asked him why he did not wish to drink milk. He answered that it may not be completely kosher. They all laughed at his "foolishness." They all saw the cows standing in the yard. How could the milk come from anything but the cows?

When the waiter came in to remove the empty glasses and heard the merchants laughing about the milk, he asked them if they had enjoyed the milk in their coffee. They asked the waiter why this coffee should taste any different from other coffee. The waiter answered them that he mixed MULE milk in with the coffee to give it a sweeter taste.

All the merchants who had drunk coffee with the mule milk became pale and sick. They immediately begged forgiveness from the righteous merchant who drank the coffee without milk and realized how a chosid who guards himself from all forbidden foods is helped by Hashem. On such a person the phrase from Tehilim applies: To the righteous shall befall no sin.



## CHAPTER 4

Questions and answers concerning kashruth observance.

*Q. Why is it that young children are required to observe kashruth as scrupulously as adults?*

A. Due to the fact that during the early, formative years of a child, the spiritual and physical foundation for the child's entire life is established, it is of utmost importance that this foundation not be built upon forbidden foods or drink.

*Q. Where is this documented in Jewish law?*

A. I. The Shulchan Orech, Orech Chayim Chap. 343 states that should a father see his child eating trefos, he is required by halacha to stop the child from this. If the father does not do this, the Beth-Din is required to reprimand him. This is true if the child took the food himself. If, however, the father gives the child trefos to eat, he is in direct transgression of a Biblical commandment.

2. The Ramoh writes in Yoreh Deah, Chap. 81, that according to halacha it is permissible for a Jewish child to be nursed by a non-Jewess, but it should, nevertheless, not be done. This is due to the fact that non-Jewish milk will spiritually clog and defile the heart and soul of a Jew. The Rashboh and Ritvah in commenting on the Gemorah in Tractate Yevamos p. 114 state that cholov akum brings about an evil and cruel nature in a child.

3. The Ramoh further states that a nursing mother should be careful not to eat any forbidden foods, since whatever digested by the mother will be passed along to the child through the milk. The Shach and Taz explain that if the nursing mother was required to eat a non-kosher food for health reasons, she should abstain from nursing immediately afterwards.

4. The Admur Rav Zvi Meilech of Dinov obm wrote in his sefer Agra Depirka, Chap. 126, in the name of Rav Mendel of Riminov that many children who have been trained in the ways of our holy religion, who pray and learn devotedly, later discontinue learning Torah, become estranged from Torah Judaism and become imbued with evil traits as a result of their parents not having been strict with them in their kashruth observance as young children.

5. The Or Hachayim in Parshas Shemini writes that those eating forbidden and defiled foods will eventually become themselves impure and defiled!

6. The holy Zohar (Shemos p. 125) teaches us that those who eat meat and dairy together (or without a waiting period) do not only defile their own souls but that of his children as well, since this sin has a lasting effect on later generations as well.

7. Rashi comments on that same verse in Parshas Shemini that causing a Jew to eat forbidden foods is tantamount to eating trefos oneself.

8. The "Sefer Yesod Veshoresh Hoavodah" states: "It would be proper for a man to throw himself on the ground, take dirt in his mouth, and let his tears flow as water, day and night, should he realize that he has not guarded himself from forbidden foods.

"The extreme punishment for this sin is worse than any other."

The holy Zohar explains this by saying that even sins which require capital punishment, the death of the transgressor atones. "This is not so with one who has eaten trefos. He has no absolution through death, nor share in the world to come, and he is punished for generations."

What more can be said or written? This last statement from the Zohar should be sufficient to make everyone understand the extreme gravity of using forbidden and questionable foods.

9. The Sefer Shulchan Hatohor brings in the name of the Arizal as having said that eating a non-kosher food was one of the causes of the downfall of Yochanon the Cohen Godol. "Yochanon fell from his lofty spiritual position due to not strictly observing the kashruth laws and sank until he became a Saducee."

10. The holy Zohar states in Vayikra, 41 that a Jew who has eaten trefos and nevelos will be judged in heaven as an abominable person.

"Most of the suffering the soul endures comes as a result of eating forbidden foods. The soul becomes attached to the forces of evil and it is covered by impurity until it no longer has any part of Hashem and his Torah. The soul loses the holiness it once possessed and the Torah and mitzvos performed will also be controlled by evil forces."

11. The Gaon Rav Hillel of Kolomey relates in his work Eis Lasos part 1-92 that the sin of eating forbidden foods is so harsh that aside from committing another transgression with every mouthful, an impurity is cast upon the soul, which adversely affects all of his actions, since, according to our sages, one sin leads to another. This sin of eating non-kosher will bring so many other sins that it will be nearly impossible for the transgressor to remain an observant Jew. There are many jews who do not observe the laws of kashruth at all, while some keep kosher homes but "let themselves go" while travelling or vacationing. Regardless of which, the sin is implanted deep within their souls, and

their end is a sad one. How can Hashem listen to their prayers and pleas? In a time of trouble they will call out to Hashem but will receive no response. Hashem can only say "You are not part of My people."

12. The Shalos Utshuvos Divre Chaim - Yoreh Deah 7 reads as follows:

Eating trefos and Neveilos is the most severe of transgressions, since it spiritually chokes the heart and soul of a Jew. Because of this sin many Jewish communities were entirely lost to Judaism."

This statement found expression most clearly in pre-World War II Germany, where assimilation was rampant. (Here, in America, thousand have been lost!)

13. The Rambam as quoted in various works states that:

"Those not scrupulous in abstaining from forbidden foods will have his thinking controlled by impurity and his end will be that of denying the existence of Hashem."

14. The Shloah writes:

"A Jew should stay away from food of doubtful kashruth ONE THOUSAND CUBITS since their terrible effect will last forever.

15. The sefer Derech Chasidim relates that a Jew who is exacting in his observance of kashruth is merited to have his Torah learning and prayers not interrupted by outside thoughts. On the other hand, one who is not careful about kashruth, is unable to learn Torah or pray without outside thoughts and considerations disturbing him.

16. The Chasam Sofer writes in Tores Moshe, Parshas Shmini that:

"As soon as a Jew eats trefos his soul leaves him and he becomes an evil person who is considered as dead even though still alive."

The Chasam Sofer states further that most of the atheism among Jews has come about through eating forbidden foods.

17. The Sefer Tefiloh Lemoshe relates that the eating of forbidden foods causes a Jew's soul to be bound up with an impurity which cannot be dispelled until his death or through consistent penitence and fasting.

18. The Sefer Ohr Tzadikim writes that a Jew who did not observe the laws of kashruth will have a terrible punishment awaiting him after his death.

19. The Sefas Emes in Parshas Shemini teaches us the following:

Through the eating of trefos and neveilos the soul becomes subservient to the body, so much so that it will become nearly impossible for the soul to strive towards holiness, since it must obey the commands of the body.

20. The Sefer Raishis Chochma as well as the Shloh write that Hashem is most vengeful against those who eat forbidden foods since this sin defiles both body and soul until his entire being becomes impure.

21. The Chofetz Chaim in Sefer Nidchei Israel Chap 29 states:

“As a result of every sin an evil angel is created. Imagine how many evil angels are created through the sin of eating trefos! Every mouthful produces another transgression and conversely another evil angel. These angels will accumulate to torment the sinner after his death, and will not leave him one moment rest.

Then this sinner will realize his foolishness. How much has he allowed his Yetzer Horah to control his life! How much has he ridiculed the religious and observant Jew,

while he himself has given way to his baser passions! What has he accomplished with his "cleverness" and foolish "wisdom"? At this point he will understand the true meaning of the word "regret".

22. Here are the words of the holy tzadik, the Satmar Rebbe of blessed memory as written in his Sefer Divrei Yoel in Vayikra pg. 240.

Look and see how grave is this sin (of eating trefos). How dark is the stain left upon the soul! Even if committed as a child, without intent, an evil nature will be implanted (as explained in the Teshuvos Harashba). This is further proven out by the conduct of Moshe Rabenu, who would not nurse from a non-Jewess, since the mouth which would speak to Hashem face to face would not allow itself to be defiled by something impure."

The Rebbe obm further correlates the eating of forbidden foods to social contact between gentiles and Jews.

"The meticulous observance of the kashruth laws will ensure the continuance of Torah-true Judaism."

23. The Talmud Yerushalmi, Chapter 2 Halacha 1, states that one of the reasons the Tanna, Acher, turned to evil ways was because his mother smelled trefa food cooking during her pregnancy. In reference to this, a commentator wrote that lactating women should be extremely careful about eating only kosher foods during nursing.

24. It is as grave a sin to cause another Jew to eat forbidden foods as eating them oneself, since this is a transgression of the negative commandment "Thou shalt not place a stumbling block." How much more so does this apply in the case of small children! It is the height of cruelty to submit innocent and defenseless children to the results non-kosher food and drink will have upon their souls.

25. From the contents of this chapter the grave mistake of feeding forbidden or questionable foods to children is readily understood. Even under the advice of a doctor, the child should not be given any non-kosher or questionable food without first consulting a competent, orthodox rov.

26. Hundreds of pages could be filled with the words of our great and holy Rabbis concerning the subject of kashruth and forbidden foods and its dire consequences. A small sampling has been presented above. In conclusion it is imperative to present these fiery words of the Mesilas Yeshorim (chap II.)

Whoever has even a little understanding will realize that forbidden foods are as spiritually dangerous as poison is physically dangerous!

Would a person even consider risking his life and eat a possibly poisonous food? The same holds true of trefos and neveilos. They are surely spiritual poison and can indeed destroy the spiritual existence of a Jew.

27. Now dear Jewish fathers and mothers, consider the heavy responsibility which lies upon your shoulders. It is the responsibility for the physical and spiritual well-being of your beloved children. How much time and strength go into their upbringing? How much heartbreak and tears are shed until we finally see yiddishe nachas from them? How then can we, with our own hands, fill them up with all kinds of poison? Make no mistake! The use of forbidden and questionable foods are definitely poison for their Jewish souls.

### III

*Q. Since it is so truly so serious a failing to give children and infants commercially prepared formulas and cholov akum,*

*why haven't the rabbinic leaders openly condemned their use? Why has the Torah-observant community continually used them for so many years?*

A. Many rabbinic leaders have in fact quite categorically denounced the use of these products. The Krasner rov obm. wrote against the use of cholov akum in his sefer Kavanas halev-Yoreh deah chap. 49 and insisted that even in the case of a sick child, a rov must first be consulted before using them.

Unfortunately, many rabbis who advocate the use of cholov yisroel, unfortunately do not realize that this practice should extend to children as well.

The Torah observant community as a whole has not been educated sufficiently to the fact that children are no less obligated than adults to observe the laws of kashruth. Due to this lack of knowledge, they continue in this mistake. Had they been acquainted with the facts, they surely would not disregard this important mitzvah.

#### IV

*Q. How can a mother who has fed formula and cholov akum to her children rectify her mistake?*

A. According to our holy seforim, one way to repent for this sin is to try to persuade others not to commit this same transgression, and of course, not to do it again themselves.

#### VI

*Q. Is the husband and father responsible for safeguarding the kashruth standards in his home or is it sufficient to rely on the wife and family?*

A. The husband and father is most definitely responsible to oversee and supervise the kashruth of his home, even more so than the wife and children. The Oir-Hachaim in parshas



Bereishis states that the sin of Adam was caused by his dependence upon Eve, since he did not know that he was eating from the tree of knowledge, and trusted Eve implicitly. Imagine how Eve, who was created free from all sin, and should have been able to be trusted, still gave Adam the forbidden fruit and thus caused their downfall! His excuse that he had trusted Eve was not accepted by Hashem.

Now the question must be asked:

When a man will stand in front of the heavenly tribunal accused of eating forbidden foods and feeding them to his children, will the excuse be acceptable? **CERTAINLY NOT!**

## VII

*Q. What can be done in the case of a wife who does not appreciate the importance of protecting the children from forbidden and questionable foods?*

A. The husband is required to do all within his power to explain to his wife the seriousness involved in the question of the children's kashruth observance. A basic education in the laws of kashruth and cholov yisroel and the dire consequences of their abuse will make a deep impression. Any true daughter of Israel, after being explained these facts, would surely not be willing to subject her children to non-kosher foods and drinks.

## CHAPTER 5

Advantages of mother's milk (from Seforim)

1. "The best nourishment available for any infant is mother's milk." (*Sefer Shvilei Hoemuna*)

2. "It is plain to see that children who have been breast-fed are generally healthier and stronger." (*Sefer Zechira*)
3. "Parents who wish to take precautions against childhood diseases and other illnesses, should use mothers milk exclusively for their children." (*Tzedoh Laderech*).
4. "A nursing mother who continues breast feeding her son as long as possible will be rewarded with a son that will learn Torah successfully and in good health." (*Divrei Chachomim*)

### NOTES FROM A NURSING MOTHER

by *Phyllis Fein*

In her third month of breast-feeding my youngest daughter, Justine, eagerly relishing her midmorning snack, suddenly pulled away from the nipple. Fixing her eyes on mine, she broke out in a pink-gummed, knowing grin. Then, without missing a beat, back she went to nursing. Such priceless communications are the essence of breast feeding.

Women who breast-feed tend to idealize or flag-wave because they are sometimes made to feel like freaks in our society. Considering some of the reactions I met with when I breast-fed, I can readily understand this. Personally, I prefer breast feeding to Bottle feeding, but it is not my intention to proselytize. The decision to nurse is a personal one, for nursing entails much more than getting milk from a container into a baby. Each mother should be comfortable and secure with her choice.

Why, in this age of easy-to-fix formulas and throwaway bottles, does one cling to the "old-fashioned" (*some say "primitive"*) way of nourishing a baby? When asked, I can

rattle off health benefits backed up by medical research: breast-fed babies have fewer serious digestive upsets (such as diarrhea, colic and constipation), fewer skin disorders (such as eczema and diaper rash), fewer allergies and viral infections.

Hormone production associated with lactation speeds up the mothers's uterine contractions, returning her body to normal faster and lessening the chances of uterine hemorrhaging. Also, breast cancer is significantly lower among women who breast-feed than among those who do not. But the reason I breast-feed is hardly altruistic. Simply, I am lazy.

Breast feeding entails no sterilizing, scrubbing, scheduling, measuring, shopping, buying, preparing. There is no stumbling out of bed in the middle of the night to heat a bottle. Hallelujah!

A common complaint-that you are "tied to" a baby when you nurse-is true to a degree. Most women who nurse don't stray too far from their babies, at least in the beginning. However, I know several mothers who nurse their babies in the morning, put in a full day's work - their babies provided for by supplementary feedings - and reach home in time for the evening feeding.

The first attempt at nursing may be particularly tense for new mothers. It was for me. I had read Karey Pryor's excellent book *Nursing Your Baby*. I knew that successful nursing depends upon maintaining a milk supply directly proportional to the baby's demands. A baby's suckling stimulates milk production more than anything else. Normally, when an infant sucks on the nipple the hormone oxytocin is released into the blood stream. Almost immediately this hormone causes the tiny muscles around

the milk sacs in the breast to contract and release the milk. This process, commonly known as the "letdown" reflex, is generally a mother's response to her baby's first cries of hunger. No matter how much milk is stored in the breasts, it goes nowhere unless the letdown reflex occurs, no matter how long or how hard the newborn sucks. The most common inhibitors of this reflex are anxiety, unwillingness, and fatigue.

Position is almost everything in breast feeding. For the first two days of nursing I was most comfortable lying on my side. If I wanted the baby to nurse at my left breast, I lay on my left side, shaping my body in a relaxed curve, with a pillow under my head and one or two more around my spine for support. I then held my baby with my left arm encircling her head. With my free hand supporting my left breast, I pressed it back from the nipple with my thumb and index finger, causing the nipple to protrude. This gave the baby a good place to grasp and also kept the breast away from her nose so that she could breathe easily.

When I brushed the baby's cheek lightly back and forth across the nipple, she naturally turned her head in that direction. When she opened her mouth I pulled her closer to me so that the nipple and some of the dark area around it (areola) were in her mouth (milk comes both from the nipple and from glands in the areola). After feeding her, I eased my finger into the baby's mouth to release the suction and to avoid her tugging at the nipple, which hurts.

Since relaxed nursing is a goal, I did not set a rigid schedule. I found a good rule was to start with about five minutes' nursing on each breast, then gradually increase to about ten minutes on the first side and as long as the baby wished on the second.

Even though the milk doesn't come in until the third to fifth day, early suckling provides the baby with colostrum, a yellowish fluid rich in immunity factors and easily digested. This early nursing also helps to prevent engorgement, a condition that occurs when the breasts are so full that the milk cannot flow.

If sore nipples develop, it does not mean nursing should be abandoned. Pain can be alleviated by taking analgesics such as aspirin before nursing, and offering the less tender breast first. A synthetic oxytocin nasal spray may be given to stimulate prompt letdown and milk flow. Nursing frequently in different positions is helpful. Cleaning the nipples with alcohol, soap, disinfectant or water is not recommended.

## CHAPTER 6

*from The New York Times, Wednesday, March 9, 1977*

### **BREAST-FEEDING MAY HELP AN INFANT TO A BETTER LIFE**

A recent survey by a formula manufacturer indicated that nearly two out of five American mothers now breast-feed their babies — double the percentage of 15 years ago. Breast-feeding has increased mostly among college-educated and well-to-do women, although the poor have the most to gain from raising their infants on mother's milk. The reasons for this new and growing vogue include maternal pride, emotional satisfaction, economics, convenience, wanting to give the baby what nature provided, not wanting to waste a "natural resource" and believing that breast milk is healthier for the baby. But few nursing mothers realize just how much of a better lease on life they may be giving their babies by feeding them breast milk.

Recent studies have shown that breast-fed babies tend to have considerably fewer serious illnesses than comparable infants who are bottle-fed, even after nursing ends. Research also suggests the possibility that mother's milk may benefit the baby's developing brain, help to prevent obesity and even protect against heart disease later in life.

Last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics urged physicians to encourage breast-feeding as a means of infant nutrition that "has not been improved on." It stands to reason that human milk would be far

better tailored to meet the growth requirements of a human infant than would milk from a cow or goat or any other source.

In fact, researchers said at a New York Academy of Sciences meeting last week, recent analyses of the constituents of human and cow's milk (the basis for most commercial formulas) point to important differences that could significantly affect the infant's growth patterns and susceptibility to infection.

Since a calf must become independent of its mother relatively early in life, it needs a high-protein food to quickly increase its body size and muscle mass. A human infant, who remains dependent on its mother much longer, has little need for muscles; rather, it needs a high-energy food and fatty acids to promote the development of the central nervous system and small amounts of protein to slowly increase body mass.

Dr. Gerald Gaull, a New York pediatrician and neurochemist, told the academy meeting, which was co-sponsored by the Human Lactation Center of Westport, Conn., that cow's milk has four times more protein than human milk. According to Dr. William A. Stini, anthropologist at the University of Arizona in Tucson, the high-protein content of cow's milk may start a child on the path to "over-nutrition," a tendency toward obesity and a large body size that would require a lifetime of high-protein foods.

In American culture, such foods are mostly high-fat animal proteins, and cow's milk during infancy may promote a life style conducive to heart disease, colon and breast cancer, Dr. Stini suggested. "Maximization of growth," he remarked, "should not be confused with optimization."

Cow's milk proteins are also quite different from the proteins in human milk, Dr. Gaull reported. Seventy percent of the protein in human milk is highly digestible whey protein, whereas cow's milk protein is 80 percent casein, which forms a hard curd in the acid stomach and is harder for the infant to digest.

In addition, Dr. Gaull said, cow's milk protein is very low in an amino acid called cystine, which newborns must have in their diet. And cow's milk is relatively high in another amino acid called phenylalanine, which the human newborn has a limited ability to metabolize, possibly leading to a toxic buildup of the acid. Human milk, on the other hand, has a lot of cystine and little phenylalanine.

Human milk also contains comparatively large amounts of the amino acid taurine, which the human infant can manufacture in only limited amounts. Studies still in progress suggest that taurine aids in the transmission of nerve messages and probably has an important role in brain development, Dr. Gaull said.

The fats in human milk are also different. Most are polyunsaturated fatty acids, rather than saturated animal fats (although when

commercial formulas are prepared from cow's milk, polyunsaturated vegetable oils are substituted for the animal fat).

Mother's milk also contains immunological substances — antibodies and sensitized white blood cells — that protect the infant against a wide range of infections and possibly also against the development of food allergies, Dr. Jane Pitt, Columbia University immunologist, reported. Mother's milk contains antibodies to virtually all the infant's own strains of infectious organisms, she said.

Dr. Allan S. Cunningham, a pediatrician from Coopetown, N.Y., found that breast-fed babies had only about a third as many serious illnesses as a comparable group of formula-fed babies during the first year of life. Even babies nursed as little as one month had some protection, his soon-to-be-published study showed.

Among the formula-fed babies, respiratory infections were 15 times more common, vomiting and diarrhea were two and a half times more common, and hospital admissions were nine times more common. And a British study found that crib death also occurred more frequently among bottle-fed babies.

The food a woman eats doesn't influence the nutritive value of her milk. The female body was "designed" to produce adequate nourishment for the infant, even if it is at the expense of the mother. Contrary to popular beliefs, there is no reason for her not to eat chocolate, rich foods or vegetables in the cabbage family while nursing.

However, drugs and other fat-soluble chemicals that enter the mother's body often appear in her milk. If she smokes, the baby will also get a dose of nicotine. Mother's milk also contains chemicals like DDT and PCBs, but no harm to breast-fed babies has been demonstrated from the levels typically found in American women.

Ninety-five percent of women are physically able to breast-feed successfully. Most of the problems that surround nursing are psychological, usually the result of anxiety or fear about the woman's ability to nurse, which in turn impairs that ability.

Although to facilitate nursing the infant should be placed on the breast soon after delivery, mothers of premature babies who spend weeks in an incubator, women who deliver by Caesarean section and women who for other reasons are separated from their infants for a time can still breast-feed successfully. Until nursing can begin, such women should hand-express their milk or use a breast pump to stimulate continued milk production. Even mothers who start with formula and then want to switch or who adopt babies can sometimes breast-feed successfully after lengthy preparation.

For those who seem to have less milk than their babies need, placing the infant on the breast whenever he is hungry (even as often as once every two hours) will help to stimulate an increased milk supply.

## CHAPTER 7

### *Kashruth Supervision and Certification*

1. It is with deep sorrow that I begin this chapter with the observation that kashruth, its supervision (hashgocha) and certifications (hechsheim) are shamefully neglected and looked at through apathetic eyes by a large segment of an otherwise observant community. Everyone has their own rationalizations, often relying blindly upon Rabbonim and their hechsherim, and consequently place themselves into serious doubt as to kashruth observance.
2. Dear Reader, please realize that kashruth certification is a most difficult undertaking, one fraught with trial and tribulation (nisyonos). Here in America, where the mass-production and assembly line process of food preparation is immensely complicated, the Rov giving the certification (Rav Hamachshir) must be more than a G-d fearing and scholarly Jew. He must be thoroughly conversant with the technical and mechanical workings of the factory under hashgocha.
3. Aside from understanding the workings of the factory, the Rov must also be fully acquainted with the contents of the product. Rarely today are any foods produced entirely in one plant. Various ingredients, flavoring, chemicals, etc. each requiring hashgocha in its own right, are brought into the plant to produce a final product. The Rav Hamachshir must keep a strict control on everything coming into the plant and every hechsher which is not his own.
4. Unfortunately the Rav must also be aware of the numerous ways the manufacturer can deceive him and use ingredients of a forbidden or questionable nature. This has been discussed extensively in the responsa of the past one hundred years, and has been a frequent occurrence here in America for many years.



5. The past few years have seen the process of modernization complicate the day-to-day workings of food-production facilities many times over. The Rav must have "a thousand eyes" to keep up with every aspect of the production. Even with a G-d fearing and dedicated Rav and the help of Hashem, the strength and facilities of those providing hashgocha must be expended to the fullest measure so as to assure the highest standards of kashruth.
6. The Rav, understandably, has neither the time, energy, nor opportunity, to personally be present in the plant from the beginning of production until its completion. Many Rabbonim visit the plants weekly, monthly, and sometimes even less frequently. This allows the manufacturer the possibility to add or delete whatever he wishes in the process of production.
7. The majority of kashruth certifications require a supervisor present at all times (a mashgiach temidi). This is especially so in the case of a plant where the possibility exists that the manufacturer will add questionable ingredients to improve his product. Under such conditions, it would not suffice for a Rov to come to the factory even three times a day. Such a plant requires a mashgiach present at all times during production, who is employed and paid by the Rov, not the manufacturer. In addition to this, it is incumbent upon the Rov to continually visit the plant so as to enforce the standards he has set.
8. There are instances when the Rav Hamachshir will not appoint a mashgiach temidi if the manufacturer is himself an orthodox, observant Jew and can be depended upon for kashruth control. Such a condition should not be tolerated under any circumstances and has been forbidden by halacha as well (see Shulcan Oruch-Yoreh Deah chap. 18, see also Tevuos Shor and Darchei Teshuva-chap. 18).

This was forcefully reiterated by the Satmar Rebbe obm at a Rabbinical conference a number of years ago in New York. In response to a Rov who had stated that a certain food manufacturer who is a well-known chosid and scholar did not require a mashgiach temidi in his plant, the Rebbe exclaimed:

“If I myself were a food manufacturer, I would also require a mashgiach temidi in my plant!

9. Even though a mashgiach temidi is present in a plant, There are many problems that arise, nonetheless. For example:

a. The mashgiach is usually employed and paid by the manufacturer, not the Rov, thus causing the mashgiach to think twice before criticizing or demanding anything kashruth related.

b. The mashgiach must be thoroughly conversant with all the halachos involved in his hashgocha, as well as the machinery and technical processes. He must also be alert to any and all attempts to cheat or deceive him by the manufacturer and workers.

10. The Levushei Mordechai teaches us the correct way of administering hashgocha:

“The mashgiach does not dare leave the work area even for a moment. He must be able to observe every area of the factory that is being utilized and all work being done. If the factory is too large to be seen all at once, additional mashgichim must be added.”

11. Unfortunately, such conditions do not currently exist. In the few plants where a mashgiach temidi is present, the manufacturer considers this a great sacrifice on his part. The mashgiach, costing him another paycheck, is deemed

an unnecessary expense. The manufacturer keeps the mashgiach only because he is required to do so by the Rav Hamachshir.

There are even plants where the boss will give work for the mashgiach to do to "earn his pay". I ask you, how valid can such a hashgocha be?

12. The Levushei Mordchai states further that a mashgiach must be an extreme Yerei Shomayim (G-d fearing). Today, this attribute is failing among many mashgichim, since a true Yerei Shomayim would not undertake so responsible a position and all its requirements (as previously explained.) Most G-d fearing Jews avoid such positions and are frightened at the thought of being responsible for the kashruth of thousands of Jews. The majority of mashgichim are not appointed to their positions because of the Yiras Shomayim or their Torah learning. They are chosen due to influence, knowing the right people, being a relative of the Rov or the manufacturer etc. Should the responsibility for the kashruth observance of thousand of Jews be placed upon such people?

13. The Levushei Mordechai also relates that the mashgiach must have the keys to the entire factory (including the freezers, storage areas, food bins, etc.), so that he might enter any part of the plant at will during working hours or at a time when production is not in process. (This is almost non-existent today.) Since most foods are produced departmentally, in various plants, a strict control must be maintained in all of them.

14. The Levushei Mordechai ends his statement by stating that:

"The certification of a mashgiach who is not constantly present is worthless."

The conclusion must then be drawn from the preceding paragraphs that the only truly kosher food with no doubts what-so-ever upon them are those prepared in the home.

15. The Sanzer Rov obm warned over one hundred years ago that it is improper to rely on hechsheirim even when certified by the most dependable Rabbonim. Rav Pinchos Halevi Horowitz wrote that the Jew who wishes to safeguard his soul from evil should further himself from any food or drink not prepared in his home.

In light of this, Rav Hillel of Kolomey wrote that any food vendor who is the manufacturer as well, is not reliable in any question of kashruth that might arise.

16. As previously mentioned, the overwhelming majority of observant Jews are completely dependent upon the Rabbonim and their hashgochos for the kashruth control on the food they eat. It is sad to say that many Rabbonim are in the kashruth business NOT to safeguard and preserve the standards of kashruth, but rather to collect the extravagant fees they charge. These Rabbonim visit their factories infrequently, and for various reasons do not exert the authority necessary to keep kashruth control. Some are intimidated by the manufacturer and/or by the thought they might lose the hashgocha and its fee if they are too exacting. Conversely, they do not examine and inquire into every aspect of kashruth conditions in the plant they are supervising. Should a serious halachic question arise, the Rov will seek any and all types of leniencies in the halacha so that he will find a way to permit the product in doubt and avoid a monetary loss for the manufacturer. This all comes about because the Rov is fearful to stand firm or criticize too much in questions of kashruth, for fear of being

replaced as Rav Hamachshir! He would rather allow thousands of Jews to eat questionable foods than lose his position.

17. Many Rabonim are engaged and paid large fees NOT for their strict hashgocha, but rather to “look the other way” and to refrain from being rigid and uncompromising in their supervision. The manufacturer will gladly pay the hashgocha fees, since this will increase the sales of his product, but only as long as the Rov does not interfere with the daily production schedules. Should a federal food inspector require a small change, an entire plant can be shut down. Should a Rov request that a correction be made for the sake of kashruth, he is ignored and even scolded for “interrupting production”.

18. Many instances have come to light where a package has carried the hechsher of a Rov, even though the Rov has passed away or has discontinued his supervision. It has even been proven that names of imaginary Rabbonim, who have never existed have been printed as a hechsher on packaging! All this to mislead an unknowing, unsuspecting public.

19. Another serious failing is found in the hashgachos of foods produced from multiple ingredients. The Rav Hamachshir on the final product has no way of controlling the kashruth of the many ingredients. At the very best, the Rav must rely on the various hashgochos of each ingredient. Unfortunately, many times the ingredients have no hashgocha at all, but are, nonetheless, added into the final food product bearing the hechsher of the Rav.

20. Many Jews, when asked their opinions, reply:

“What do I care? I’m not a Rov. It’s not my responsibility. The Rav Hamachshir will burn in hell, not me!”

This is not true! While the negligent Rav and/or mashgiach will indeed receive their just punishment, the Jews who have blindly trusted in them will likewise be held accountable. The Jew will be guilty of eating forbidden foods and not bothering to at least inquire into the kashruth control.

It is likewise insufficient to rely on the piety and Torah proficiency of the Rov since the requirements of a Rav Hamachshir are extensive (as explained earlier).

21. Many Jews pride themselves in eating foods termed "mehadrin min hamehadrin" meaning, no doubt whatsoever in regards to kashruth. Such a Jew is known as a medakdek - exacting in the performance of mitzvos.

Unfortunately, with rare exception, this is nearly impossible with any commercially prepared food. Even though many packages are stamped with various words or slogans proclaiming extreme levels of kashruth control, the Rav Hamachshir cannot possibly attest to anything more than the minimal certification of "kosher".

In concordance, I bring here the words of the Satmar Rebbe z.t.l. in a halachic reply on the topic of kashruth (as reprinted in sefer Nefesh Yeshaye p. 423).

"How can a Rov write on a food package the quality of his hashgocha? He can merely write that the product is kosher and nothing more. This is true since the supervision of a Beth Din (or Rov) must be conducted according to halocha and not on a mehadrin basis. For example, meat which might normally be ruled trefa, can be saved for kosher if the owner of the meat would incur a substantial monetary loss (hefsed meruba) should it become trefa. This is most definitely kosher, but far from "mehadrin." One who is medakdek (exacting) would surely not eat of this meat even though it carries the stamp of the Beth Din as

being kosher. This applies to most other food preparations as well. The Beth Din must decide according to halocha only, but a medakdek must stay away from such foods that have been declared kosher through lenient halachic decisions.”

The Rebbe z.t.l. further explains the need for giving such hashgochos:

“If not for the ability to rely on halachic leniencies, it would be nearly impossible to give any hashgochos at all! Those not medakdek in their kashruth observance will turn to eating forbidden foods. In reality, this should bear no issue for the medakdek since such hechsheirim are not intended for him but for those unable or unwilling to discipline themselves.”

**The Rebbe z.t.l.** in the same letter urges that such terms as kosher lemehadrin etc. not be used on food packaging so as not to mislead the true medakdek.

22. Today, especially when the best of hechsheirim are remiss due to the enormous difficulties involved (as set forth earlier in this chapter) and when the manufacturers are not to be trusted, a hechsher is not to be relied upon. Therefore, it is imperative for the medakdek to disregard these hechsherim, regardless of such exclamations of “mehadrim” or “machmirim” etc.

23. All foods prepared in the home (from as many raw materials as possible) are without doubt the most reliable food in respect to kashruth. Unfortunately, many families who indeed prepare their own foods, neglect their children in this regard. While the parents and older children will eat no commercially prepared foods, the younger children are permitted to eat cakes, candies, cookies etc. prepared outside the home. Even in yeshivos the children receive

candies and other treats which have no dependable hechsher or none at all! It is with wonder that I see many "medakdekim" who are very strict about what they eat, but for some reason are lenient with their young children. They are given candies, vitamins, cereals and baby jars which are all doubtful at best.

24. There are many who rely on reading the ingredients printed on the package, imagining that they will be able to notice if any non-kosher ingredients are included therein. This is a most foolish assumption and cannot be depended upon under any circumstances. Some reasons are:

a. The foods are cooked, bakes, boiled, etc. in the same utensils as products containing non-kosher ingredients.

b. The government does not require any ingredient to be listed upon the package if it makes up less than a determined percentage of the product. Therefore, non-kosher ingredients can be included without being listed on the label.

c. Many manufacturers deceive the government (as well as the Rabbonim) and add non-listed ingredients, as has been proved many times.

25. A common mistake made by many is to imagine that the standards of kashruth in America are comparable to those in pre-World War II Europe. This misconception could be due to the fact that in Europe, any small divergence from halacha was immediately castigated and displayed publicly until it was corrected. Here in America, every improper action and scandal is covered up and silenced so as not to harm business.

In Europe, the Rov of each town or city had complete control of kashruth, shechita, butchers, wine, milk, cheese, etc. These were all under the Rov's strict supervision,



and commercially prepared foods were non-existent. The Rov, Beth Din, Mashgichim, etc. were not paid for their supervision, but these were considered as one of the functions of their communal offices and received their salaries from the communtiy (kehiloh).

Today, no such system exists. There is no centralized communal organizations to safeguard kashruth. Most people are not inclined to prepare their foods at home but rather rely on commercially prepared foods and their questionable hechsheirim. Few are those Jews interested enough to travel to distant food plants or slaughterhouses to observe the kashruth control. Mass production has destroyed any hopes of achieving a kashruth control comparable to the high standards of pre-war Europe. Products being produced by the tens of thousands cause Rabbonim to make extremely lenient decisions when a question of kashruth arises, so as to avoid incurring a financial loss. This would never have been tolerated in Europe.

26. Any Jew who wishes to be medakdek in his observance of the mitzvah of kashruth should refrain from eating anything outside of his own home. Restaurants, catering halls, etc. are notorious for their lack of kashruth control.

27. In concluding this chapter, I wish to relate a story about a hechsher give by one of the most revered Rabbonim of the past generation. From this story, the reader can understand how the hashgocha of even the greatest of Rabbonim can be filled with doubt.

“A young Rov arrived in Budapest during the second world war shortly before the holiday of Pesach. Seeing that hand-made Shmura matzoh was unattainable, he decided to visit the machine Shmura matzoh factory and ascertain

the quality of the hashgocha there. Seeing that the kashruth control left much to be desired, the young Rov immediately set off to the Rav Hamachshir. This Rav Hamachshir, being a devout and pious Jew, was appalled to hear of these sub-standard conditions in the matzoh factory and set off to see for himself the conditions. After a thorough examination of the matzoh factory, the Rav Hamachshir realized that the young Rov was indeed correct in his charges. The Rav Hamachshir instituted all the necessary changes, and appointed the young Rav to stay there as mashgiach. The young Rav was about to make his first suggestion to the owner of the matzoh bakery when the owner informed him:

“Rebbe-Don’t tell me how to bake matzohs. When it comes to learning torah you may be superior to me, but when it comes to baking matzohs - I’M THE BOSS!

## CHAPTER 8 Part 1

Preface: The following is a true story which occurred in the year 5596 (1836) in the time of the great and holy Gaon Rav Akiva Eger. Its importance and impact can be felt by young and old alike.

It was Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5596 in the town of Lomzshe, Poland. The entire town was dressed as if in expectation of the Sabbath and a holiday atmosphere pervaded the countryside. The houses were bedecked with festive decoration and the tables and beds were covered with the finest linens.

Strangely, however, the houses were deserted and the town had no sign of life. It was as if the townspeople have fled their homes for some reason. What could have happened?

On the outskirts of the town a large crowd had formed. All townspeople, men, women and children had gathered to show honor and respect to one of the greatest Rabbonim of the generation, Rav Akiva Eger, who had come to Lomzshe for a short visit.

Hundreds of people converged upon a small wagon drawn by four horses, attempting to get a glimpse of the great Gaon and say "Shalom Aleichem. Rebbe."

Inside the wagon sat a rather thin man wearing a black silk coat and a fur hat. His majestic eyes looked out upon the crowd with a shine that could only be produced by a man with so lofty a soul as Rav Akiva. He climbed down from the wagon stood upon a stone, and looked out with a warm smile upon the adoring assemblage. The crowd bowed with silent reverence, and one of the towns leaders called out "Baruch Haboh". Welcome, which was repeated by the multitude present.

Each and every resident of the town without exception, stood there with hearts pounding as the Gaon extended his hand to give "Shalom" to all the men of the town. The mothers, with their children on their arms, assumed positions along the road so that the Gaon might place his hands on their children's heads and bless them.

The townspeople had argued extensively about who would receive the privilege of hosting the Gaon during his stay in Lomzshe. It was finally decided to draw lots, but this became unnecessary when it was learned that the Rov had decided to stay in the home of a relative.

Who was this relative of the Gaon, who would have the great honor of having Rav Akiva grace his home with his presence? The leaders of the town asked the Gaon repeatedly but received no answer. When finally the Gaon

began to turn toward the home of his host, the town's leaders were stricken. The Rav was repairing to the home of a poor Jew - one of the lowliest of the town. The people were aghast. How could such a tzadik and Gaon lower himself to stay in such a non-respected home. The towns leaders tried to convince the Gaon time and again to stay away from the home of his poor relative, but all to no avail. Rav Akiva entered his relative's home over the protest of the town's leaders and people.

After Rav Akiva had settled down in his lodging, townspeople began streaming forth to the poor house located in the blacksmiths street. Day and night saw long lines of Jews from every walk of life waiting their turn to be ushered in the Rav. Scholars, businessmen, rabbis, laymen from Lomzshe and all neighboring towns and villages made their way to this holy and learned man.

Every type of request, question, and inquiry were set before Rav Akiva. People seeking blessing for health, livelihood, children and more were set before him. One woman, Etyl, the wife of the town's Rav, waited patiently in line as well. With a broken heart she was presented before the Gaon and told him her story.

"G-d has blessed me with seven sons. They are presently learning in yeshivos and are considered geniuses in Torah learning and give my husband and me much happiness. All but for one son, Moshe Noach. It seems that no matter how hard he tries he is unable to understand even one sentence of the Talmud. He has a good mind and has no problem learning other subjects, but when it comes to Torah learning, he struggles endlessly to no avail."

Rav Akiva listened attentively to all the woman had to say. Slowly and deliberately the Gaon began his reply.

“The Shulchan Oruch and its commentators write that even a young child should not eat any non-kosher food since trefos affect the very soul, causing an evil nature and spiritually clogging the heart and mind from Torah.”

“What! That’s impossible! cried Etyl.”

“I have never given my children any food which might be doubtful. My Moshe Noach has never tasted any forbidden foods!”

“I can see no other reason” continued Rav Akiva.

“In his childhood, he must have eaten some non-kosher food, unknowingly, and this has caused his inability to understand his lessons.”

“If this is true, Rebbe, what can we do now to help Moshe Noach? What is the cure for him?”

“The only hope for him is to learn Torah in poverty and want. He must learn day and night without the comforts of home and with G-d’s help he will be successful in learning”. The Gaon repeated this many times and the audience was at an end.

Etyl hurried home and told her husband. The Rov, Hersh Leib, all that had transpired.

“How is it possible for so pious and devout a woman such as you to allow a child to eat trefa food” asked Rav Hersh angrily.

“How can you suspect me of such a sin?” answered Etyl. “Have I ever once been neglectful in kashruth observance in our home? Maybe Moshe Noach ate outside the house once when he was younger and that food was not kosher.”

“That might be possible. We must investigate it thoroughly though.”

When Moshe Noach returned from yeshivah that evening his parents asked him if he had ever eaten outside of his home without their knowledge. Moshe Noach told his parents that he had always obeyed their instructions never to eat anything outside their own home. Rav Hersh would not let up and pressed Moshe Noach to remind himself, since Rav Akiva Eger would not say such words in vain. Moshe Noach spurred his memory until an occurrence that happened ten years previously popped into his mind.

“Father, I remember something that happened when I was five years old. I was returning from cheder one evening with another boy. It was during Chanukah, and a wedding party was taking place at the inn. As we passed the inn, a member of the wedding party came out and invited us in. He gave us a bowl of soup and a piece of chicken. I was cold and hungry, so I ate, forgetting that it is forbidden for me to eat outside our home.”

Rav Hersh now understood what Rav Akiva Eger had alluded to. But still, the innkeeper was known as a G-d fearing and honest Jew. How could it be that trefa food was served in his inn? Rav Hersh decided to visit the innkeeper and investigate the matter. Rav Hersh approached the innkeeper and asked him if he might remember a wedding party which had taken place on Chanukah, ten years ago. The innkeeper laughed and said that thousand of weddings had taken place in his inn. How could he remember one specific wedding so long ago? Still Rav Hersh persisted and the innkeeper took him to the cellar to search through the old records. Sure enough, the second day of Chanukah, 5586 the wedding of Yekusiel Halpert had taken place.

The Rav set off immediately to the home of this Yekusiel Halpert. Yekusiel, a blacksmith by trade, was a boorish type with little manners.

“What brings the Rav to my humble home” asked Yekusiel with a smile.

Rav Hersh asked Yekusiel for the details of his wedding which took place ten years before.

Yekusiel told the Rav that he had divorced his first wife thirty years ago. After living alone for twenty years he remarried ten years ago to his present wife. Yekusiel told the Rav all the details of the wedding, who performed the ceremony, who slaughtered the chickens for the meal, etc.

After obtaining this information, Rav Hersh made his way to the home of the shochet who slaughtered the chickens for Yekusiel’s wedding. The town’s shochet, who, for many years, served the community faithfully and devotedly, had recently retired due to old age. After welcoming Rav Hersh, the Rav immediately asked the shochet if he remembered slaughtering chickens for the wedding. The shochet turned white and began to tremble.

“How many times have I fasted and begged forgiveness for the slaughter of those chickens.”

Rav Hersh, growing frightened, asked the shochet,

“Was there a problem with the shechita? Were the chickens not kosher, G-d forbid?”

“No, no,” the shochet assured Rav Hersh.

“The shechita was kosher without doubt. Everything was absolutely kosher L’Mehadrin. There was a different problem involved.”

“What else could possibly have happened?” Rav Hersh then told the shochet of his problem with Moshe Noach, the words of Rav Akiva Eger and the rest of the story which led him to the shochet.

The shochet was moved by the sincerity of the Rav and also by the remarkable vision and understanding of Rav Akiva. The shochet then narrated the entire story to Rav Hersh.

“Thirty years ago, Yekusiel Halpert divorced his first wife in the town of Rovnoh. The Get (divorce document) was said to be invalid due to some halachic oversight. After heated arguments, many Rabbonim claimed that the Get was invalid and the couple were still, according to the halacha, man and wife! Yekusiel ignored these arguments and after a few years the question of the Get’s invalidity was all but forgotten.

“More than ten years ago, Yekusiel remarried. The Rav, who performed the ceremony knew nothing of the questionable Get. I, myself knew nothing of all this, and in the normal charge of my office, slaughtered the chickens required for the wedding meal.”

Here the old shochet broke down and cried. with a broken voice he agonized.

“Woe to these hands which will burn in hell for slaughtering those chickens!

Recovering himself, the shochet continued, “A few weeks after the wedding, I came across an old friend, who immediately began reprimanding me.

What’s happened to you? Have you sold yourself for money? Don’t you know that our holy Rebbe, Rav Shneur Zalmen of Liadi (obm) was among the first and foremost Rabbonim to declare Yekusiel Halpert’s Get invalid! How could you allow yourself to slaughter the chickens for the wedding meal of a man who takes a second wife when his first wife is alive!?”



“Upon hearing these words I promptly fainted. When I recovered I told my friend that I had no idea of all this. He took me to his home and laid before me a letter written by the holy tzadik of Liadi, the founder of the Chabad-Lubavitz School of Chasidus. Woe unto me that these hands were deceived into playing a part in so terrible a crime!”

Rav Hersh was satisfied. He had now solved the mystery of his son's learning disability. The shochet then took Rav Hersh to the house of the friend who had reprimanded him ten years ago, so as to show him the letter.

After a trip of five hours, in a pouring rain, the shochet and Rov descended from the carriage in front of the home they had sought. At the knock on the door, an elderly, impressive man with a long white beard opened the door. With a smile of recognition, the Jew welcomed his friend and the Rov into his home. After the two guests had warmed themselves, and had something warm to eat and drink the shochet told his friend of the circumstances that had brought them. After listening to the entire story, the Jew went silently to a locked drawer, took out a crumbling yellow paper, and set it carefully on the table. As if possessed, all three men stood with bated breath and read the words of the holy Rebbe written thirty years earlier.

The letter read:

“I have been extremely disturbed hearing that such an act could occur among Jews. That such a Get which is most definitely invalid according to halacha could be accepted as valid is unconscionable. Those involved in issuing the Get should have been informed that the woman in question was not generally referred to by her given name, but by a “nickname.” When the Get was written with the given name, it

became instantly invalid! Therefore, should either party wish to marry again, they will be committing a grave sin, since they are still legally (according to halacha) still married to one another. The Rabbonim should be advised against taking part in such a marriage. The shoctim as well should be warned against slaughtering any cattle or fowl for such a sinful wedding. If they do not adhere to my warnings, then shall that shechita be deemed as Neveiloh! (forbidden and non-kosher).”

(Ed. note. The original letter is contained in the responsa of the Rebbe-The Baal Hatanya-Yoreh Deah).

The two visitors, ending the letter, seeing the word neveiloh before them, began to cry uncontrollably. Tears flowed like water onto the age-worn yellowed paper before them. After a short period, the Rav made his way back to his home, leaving the shochet to spend the night in the home of his friend.

Arriving in Lomzshe, the Rav went immediately to the central Bais Medrash to pray the morning prayers with the earliest minyan, as was his custom. The Rav said his prayers with devotion, but unable to forget the events of the night before. The words of the Goan, Rav Akiva Eger, rang through his mind like a thousand bells, reminding him that the only hope for his son's success in Torah learning was for him to leave home and learn Torah in poverty and want.

Beginning the Shmonēh-Esreh (silent prayer) the Rav at once thanked Hashem for revealing to him the source of his son's problem through the wisdom of Rav Eger and at the same time tried to figure out how to apply the Gaon's advice. When Rav Hersh came to the prayer concerning the holy city of Jerusalem, he stood as if in a trance. Was this perhaps the answer to his prayer? Was this a sign from

heaven that he should send his son to Jerusalem? Everyone had heard of the great deprivation among the Torah scholars in Jerusalem. It must be so - it cannot be otherwise, decided the Rav and then continued in his devotions.

\* \* \*

That very same morning, Rav Hersh called his son, Moshe Noach into his study. Slowly and deliberately, the Rav began speaking.

"I know my son, that you have been diligent and steadfast in your attempt to acquire Torah knowledge. To my great distress, and yours, you have not succeeded, nor even acquired a foothold. Your mother, in her great love for you, went to Rav Akiva Eger and begged him to bless you. He replied that the only chance you will have is to leave home, and learn Torah in poverty and want."

Rav Hersh remained silent for a few moments, so as to observe the impact his words had made upon his son. Fighting back his tears, Rav Hersh continued:

"It is difficult, my child, very difficult indeed, to leave the comforts of one's home, especially at so tender an age. It is for the sake of the Torah and its learning that you must take staff in hand and wander to the land of Israel. Eretz Israel is the place where Heaven has decreed for you to change your life, change it for the better by the learning of Hashem's Torah. As hard as it is upon you, dear child, your leaving is many times more difficult for us, your loving parents, to accept, than it is for you. You know my son, as we already do, that only there in the holy land, will you accomplish the dream of every faithful Jew - that of becoming a Torah scholar and maybe, ever with G-d's help a leading rabbi."

Moshe Noach, realizing the meaning of his father's

words, broke down and cried. How could he, at the age of fifteen, leave his home and beloved family? He quickly realized, however, that to remain an ignoramus is worse yet, and informed his father that he would gladly accept this "exile" for the sake of Torah.

\* \* \*

In those days, there was a group of Jews, Torah scholars and wealthy businessmen, who were preparing to leave Europe and set out for Eretz Israel and settle there. Rav Hersh arranged for his son to travel with them and requested of one of the travelers to take special care of the boy, until such a time when the boy will be in the care of his family there. A few days later, the group left for E. Israel. After a tearful farewell from his family, Moshe Noach boarded the ship which would carry him and twenty nine other Jews to a new life in the Holy Land.

\* \* \*

After three months of travel, the ship entered the port-city of Jaffa in E. Israel. Following a three day rest, the Jewish travelers joined a caravan going up to Jerusalem. Rav Hersh had given his son a letter addressed to a close relative and had instructed Moshe Noach to guard the letter and to give it only to whom it was addressed. The letter was written to his cousin, Rav Yaakov Kopil Shapiroh and informed him of his son's arrival.

To my dear relative, the Goan and tzadik Rav Yakov Kopil Shlito.

Please accept my warmest greeting and blessings for both you and your family.

I beg of you to help me in my sorrow. The bearer of this letter is my youngest son, Moshe Noach, who has come to

Jerusalem so as to attain the knowledge of Torah under such conditions and according to the circumstances described in my previous letter. He has come dedicated and resolved to learn Torah in poverty and want, as instructed by the Gaon, Rav Akiva Eger. I beg of you again and again to watch over him and not to allow him to discontinue his studies, even for a short while. I therefore give over to you the soul of my beloved son. Treat him as your own child, let him eat of your bread and only at your table should he eat his meals. Teach him how to "learn", how to apply himself diligently to his studies and keep him away from any types of physical comforts and luxuries. As I wrote you previously, Jerusalem is the sole place on earth where he will be able to perfect himself and succeed in Torah. Please see that he shall sit and learn and Hashem will help him and open his heart to the wisdoms of our holy Torah. With my blessings and wishes for everything good for you.

Rav Hersh Leib Farber

\* \* \*

With Moshe Noach's arrival in Jerusalem, a new world opened before his eyes. Among his first impressions was that of the poverty that engulfed the Torah observant community of Jerusalem. His father's home was no palace, but it was certainly a world apart from what he has been introduced to in the holy city.

Moshe Noach thought back to the home of his parents in Lomzshe. The house's three large rooms had plastered walls and were painted in distinguished colors. Wooden bookcases lined the walls of one room, while the kitchen contained a well-built table and chairs and iron cabinets. All members of the family dressed in fine clothes, and the meals were never found short of food. Although his father

was never a wealthy man, the family never knew of want. They were an average middle-class family in the town of Lomzshe.

Here in Jerusalem, the difference was like day to night. Rav Yakov Kopil's home consisted of one and a half rooms with clay walls and no furniture to speak of. One long table, consisting of planks of wood and made by Rav Yakov himself filled the dark room. Around the table stood six low stools, a wedding present from his parents thirty years ago. The family's clothes did not hang in any closet, but on nails and hooks protruding from the wall. A small kerosene lamp lit up the small house at night with a pale light so that the study of Torah could continue into the night. A new article of clothing was nearly unheard of and for a child coming to the age of bar-mitzvah, the family would have to scrape and save for months prior so as to properly attire him. Food was even more scarce and many times the children would have to share an egg or go without milk for a week. Rav Yakov himself, ate merely a small piece of bread once a day, so as to be able to pronounce the grace after meals, and ate nothing more for the rest of the day.

At first, Moshe Noach was greatly disturbed at the thought of living in such poverty. He was sure that before long, he would have to return to his family. But slowly, after recovering from this initial shock, Moshe Noach began to see things which he had never seen before. The children had a gleam in their eyes. They shone with light of the holy Torah which they have studied the whole day and into the night. What's more, they shone with an inner happiness, which could not be expressed in words. All these children, boys, and men, who learned the holy Torah in the holy city of Jerusalem were a type of people Moshe Noach had never seen before.

His Rebbe and teacher, Rav Yakov Kopil was immersed in the study of Torah for fifteen hours a day. Moshe Noach saw him as his saviour, and had in a short time advanced far under his tutelage. In the three hours a day the two spent together, vast horizons unfolded before the eyes of Moshe Noach. He was truly becoming an outstanding scholar.

Three years had passed since Moshe Noach had first come to Jerusalem and the home of Rav Yakov. One day Rav Yakov sent Moshe Noach to the Rov of Jerusalem, Rav Shmuel Salant, to be tested in learning. After a lengthy examination, the Rav was strongly impressed.

One word led to another, and soon after Moshe Noach was engaged to be married to one of the most respected daughters of the city. Moshe Noach married and settled in the holy city of Jerusalem. Soon after his wedding, Moshe Noach sent the following letter to his parents in Lomzshe.

To my dear parents;

First, I must thank you for your decision to send me here to Jerusalem. I know how hard it was for you, but it is only here in Jerusalem, where all of your dreams came true. I have become a Torah scholar, thank G-d,. This learning will stay with me my entire life, here in Jerusalem, where my wife and I have decided to settle. Stay well and blessed all of your lives and have much "Nachas" from all of your children.

Your son, Moshe Noach.

\* \* \*

At about that time Rav Shmuel Salant traveled to Europe for the welfare of the Jewish settlement in Jerusalem. When he arrived in Lomzshe, he made a point of going first to the home of Moshe Noach's parents.

He told them of their son and said:

“A diamond, a jewel of a young man is your son in Jerusalem!”

### CHAPTER 8 part II

*Lessons to be learned from the proceeding story.*

1. In the preceding story we are shown the way a Torah-true household was conducted in previous generations. Members of the family would go themselves to the shochet as well as to the milking of the cows for milk and dairy needs. They would examine all green vegetables for bugs and worms as well as other fruits and vegetables.

Oil was never used for cooking. Fats were used with meat meals and butter for dairy. Wine was made at home, by hand. Cakes, Challas, and bread were baked at home and it was unheard of to buy such products on the street. Baby formulas and jars were non-existent. Therefore, it is not hard to understand that from such observant homes the great Gedolim and tzadikim came forth.

2. We see from this story that as well as keeping a strict control on all food in the home, the children were instructed never to eat outside of their own homes. Even the homes of relatives were off limits if they used commercially prepared foods.

It is understandable that the producers of commercially prepared foods are not concerned with the quality of kashruth in their products but rather in the quality of taste, appearance, etc. Since they must be able to produce it at the lowest possible price, the kashruth must suffer to accomodate the processing guidelines. This has been explained by the Avnei Nezer-Oreah Chayim, 472.



If we would be able to see and understand the process of food production we would surely abstain from using such products. The question must be asked as to the kashruth certification on the products. How can there be a question involved when a respectable Rov signs his name to a product? The answer is that even if the Rov would stand in the factory from the beginning to the end of production, he himself would not eat of such products! This is because the system of mass production involved in the manufacture of today's food products facilitate the use of many halachic leniencies by the Rav. Without these, production would many times be disrupted, causing large monetary losses to the manufacturer. This fact has been attested to by the holy Satmar Rebbe obm and has been written about by the Goan, the Debretzinner Rov in an open letter to the Madrid L'Kashrus.

Another pitfall is when people depend upon the manufacturer himself as being an observant Jew as so is trusted in questions regarding Kashruth as well. Some believe that since the manufacturer is a religious, philanthropic Jew he is unquestionably committed to Kashruth of his products as well. Unfortunately many cases have been proven to the contrary.

Here I present a true story which took place over forty years ago.

On the lower East Side, the most prestigious Jewish community in America at that time, where thousands of strictly observant Jews resided, was the scene of one of the most terrible swindles in the history of kashruth in America.

A large butcher store dealing in wholesale and retail meats, salamis and pastramis, was established in this lower

East Side and was owned and operated by one of the most religious and observant Jews of the community.

This Jew was a pillar of the Jewish community, a strictly Orthodox Jew with a long beard and a reputation as a "Machnis Orchim" and supporter of numerous charities. He was famous as a philanthropist, giving away large sums of money for the poor, lavishly spending in the support of Torah scholars and the poor of the Jewish kehillah. Due to this, the firm had an excellent reputation, and the certification of one of the most respectable Rabbonim living in New York City at the time, added to its reliability. Observant Jews did not want to eat from any other meat sellers, only from this religious butcher. Other butchers and meat-sellers did a fraction of the business that went on here.

Many Jews bought here because of the righteousness of the owner, while others bought there because they received the meat at half-price (as part of his charity). Many Jews received meat from the owner entirely free such as the rabbis, rosh yeshivas, melamdin etc.

Suddenly, one night the police made a startling discovery. Two large trailers were discovered unloading horse and camel meat into the butcher store of this religious Jew. New York in the 1930's was extremely strict about their meat and the punishment very harsh. An investigation was launched and revealed that this practice of taking in horse and camel meat had been going on for quite a few years.

The entire Jewish community of New York was in an uproar. Talk of this dastardly act did not cease in the synagogues, mikvahs, stores - whenever two Jews met! Even young children in yeshiva spoke with emotions of this cruel and inhuman swindle.

The children detested the thought that they had been fed non-kosher meat without their knowledge when their Rebbes had taught them that it is forbidden to use them.

Words cannot describe the intense feelings of betrayal and treason felt by the Jewish community.

In frustration, one Jew had exclaimed in the synagogue:

“We should catch that scoundrel and kill him.”

“This, of course, is not the Jewish way,” said a second Jew. “It is better to bring him into the synagogue, let each Jew take a turn and hit him with all his strength, and then spit in his face.”

Another declared that not only is the owner at fault, but the workers, mashgichim, and Rav Hamachshir are equally guilty for allowing such a condition to develop.

The owner (who had gone into hiding) was apprehended by the police, brought up on charges and sentenced to a prison term. He passed away in his cell, not long after. This story was reprinted in all local newspapers, and further commentary is unnecessary.

3. As evident from the words of Rebbe Akiva Eger the food which a person eats will affect his learning of Torah as well as his very soul. The mothers who wish their children to become Torah scholars, talmidei chachumim, geonim, rabbonim, etc. will cry and pray to Hashem so that it will come about. This, however, is not enough. The mothers, having the main influence on the children, must train them from their young years to refrain from tasting any food outside of their own homes, not to trust upon anyone other than their parents for the kashruth of the food they take into their mouths.

We can also learn a valuable lesson in the educational process of children. If we observe a child who has trouble understanding his lessons in Torah subjects, but has no problem with his secular studies, something is obviously amiss. The father will scold the child endlessly, and will often result in strict punishment to the child. The child is unable to understand why his parents are so upset. He is, after all, trying his best. The child's mother, protests the father's punishments but to no avail.

Now, dear reader, you can see from the preceding story how even once tasting a forbidden food had closed and blocked the mind of a Jewish child from understanding his learning. It is very possible that when commercially prepared foods are used in the home, it can also affect the learning process of the child. The father may ask:

“How can that be if I only bring into my home foods with a hechsher certification?”

Here, in the words of the Satmar Rebbe z.t.l. is the answer to this question:

“It is heartbreaking to see how here, in America, everything is a business. The main thing among businessmen is to turn out the highest profit possible and disregard kashruth in the process. This is evident from the hashguchos as well, since many rabbonim give their hechsheirim to products where the pitfalls are numerous. This catastrophe came about since the entire process of kashruth and hechsheirim have also become a business. Therefore, the reliability of the Rav Hamachshir is automatically in question.

In short, the Rebbe obm revealed that the manufacturers of the various food products have little or no regard

whatsoever for kashruth. Their only concern is to produce efficiently and economically, earning the largest profits possible. Since the kashruth of the product has also become a business, the dependability of the Rav Hamachshir is meaningless.

These few words of the Satmar Rebbe obm should be a lamp lighting the ways for kashruth observance in present times.

Finally, we can learn from the above story how we must guard ourselves and our children from not only a known non-kosher food, but even from a food that may possibly be kosher but due to strictness we will not use it.

In the story, Moshe Noach ate food which was perfectly kosher, but since the holy Rebbe R. Shneur Zalmen proclaimed it to be forbidden, it caused great harm to Moshe Noach's soul.

In the merit of the careful observance of the mitzvah of kashruth may Hashem help all our children to be enlightened in Torah and yiras shomayim, and may we all merit to see the Moshiach speedily in our days. Amen!

## CHAPTER 9

Washing the hands of children in the mornings.

(Ed note:) We have compiled here the sayings of a few seforim concerning the great necessity to wash the hands of children every morning, even small children, since they defile the food which they touch and this in turn is spiritually dangerous.

1. One should be very careful to see that even young children should wash their hands in the mornings, since it is possibly dangerous for them to eat the food they have

touched with unwashed hands. (Peri Megadim Sidur Derech Hachayim) If however, the child has already touched the food, it may still be used. (*Eliyahu Rabbah-Sidur Derech Hachayim*).

2. Every G-d fearing Jew should be strict upon himself and refrain from using a food which has been touched by unwashed hands. The Mekubalim write that when one eats a food prepared (or touched) by impure (non-washed) hands, he is in danger of falling into sin due to the impurity which is placed on that food, and will also spiritually hinder and obstruct his heart and the hearts of his children.

Some seforim write that the food can be cleansed if it is impure, by washing it three times. Just as the impurity of a person after sleeping can be cleaned by washing the hands three times, similarly can the food be made usable again. (*Chayey Adom rule 2. Tosefos Chayim 12*)

3) The hands of young children should be washed every morning, so that they should not defile everything they touch and the spirits of impurity will not rest upon them.

4) Another reason to wash the hands of young children is that not washing their hands is an imminent danger and a danger is worse than a prohibition. (*Mishlei Simon 4*)

5) It is most noteworthy to wash the hands of the baby from the time of his circumcision and on. (*Baal Hatanya*)

6) The custom of washing the hands of children every morning gives the person the ability to raise spiritually clean children who will grow up in a holy atmosphere. (*Ben Ish Chai Caf HaChayim Chap. 4 [22, also in Responsa Keren Le-David I]*)

7) The Shulchan Hatohar writes:

Even a child a day old should not eat without having his hands washed in the morning. He should also refrain from eating any food that an animal may have touched. The child should not drink water that was used for washing the hands and should not eat food touched by one who has not washed his hands.

8) The Sidur Rav Yaakov Emden writes that the women should be warned against allowing children to eat food with unwashed hands. From the day of a baby's circumcision, he should be stringent about this.

## CHAPTER 10

### Precautions for Pesach

1) If the problems of Kashruth here in America are complicated and laden with difficulties throughout the year, the holiday of Pesach brings with it a hundred fold more complexities and potential hazards.

Even a Jew who is not a Medakdek (exacting) in his Kashruth observance for the rest of the year, when Pesach comes, each and every Jew regardless of his level of observance becomes a Medakdek and seeks to observe even the most minute restrictions of the Halacha.

It is therefore amazing to see any Jew use any processed foods made even under strict supervision.

2) Remember, dear Readers, that the observance of the Halachos of Pesach bear a strong influence on the entire year for you and your children. In this vein the Arizal wrote that one who guards himself from even a drop of Chometz will be assured and protected from heaven from sinning throughout the whole year.

## CHAPTER 11

### An outcry for help

**Directed to the Rabbonim and to anyone else who has the power to influence the Jewish community to stay away from forbidden foods. They are the ones who are responsible for warning and alarming the people of the great danger. The entire Jewish nation's existence and survival is dependent upon this.**

#### I

Like the bugle's call, we sound our cry to alert the Rabbonim and influential individuals: "Please, have mercy and spare Jewish souls from becoming defiled with forbidden foods. The very basis for the continued existence of the Jewish people is dependent upon this." How distressing it is to see observant Jews buying just any product, without first ascertaining the identity of the rabbi giving its hechsher. Is he one of the renowned Rabbonim who are accepted as G-d fearing, or is he of the sort whose entire role is to provide the necessary legal loopholes to sanction otherwise questionable foods? People buy these questionable products and feed them to their children. Now, even if the children excel in their Torah studies, when they grow up, the forbidden foods they ate will influence them, as we have illustrated previously from the holy books. Also, as our wise men of blessed memory said in regard to the verse: "You shall become defiled with them," Do not read this: 'And you shall become defiled,' rather render it 'and you shall become congested.' For the eating of forbidden foods causes spiritual congestion, which eventually brings one to delinquency, may Heaven save us. Woe to us that this has occurred in our times that



observant Jews aren't sufficiently cautious with questionable foods to see if they bear a completely reliable Hechsher.

## II

A holy obligation lies upon our Rabbonim and influential individuals to warn the people, through their lectures, against defiling their souls with forbidden foods, and to warn against taking the slightest chance with anything questionable. This is the very foundation of the sanctity of the Jewish nation. Anyone who truly has a fear of G-d must protest bitterly to save his peers from falling prey to the prohibition of forbidden foods. We find this illustrated in the words of our Wise Men, of blessed memory, in Medrosh Yalkut (Shoftim 12):

“Anyone who finds it within his power to protest but doesn't, is responsible for all the blood spilled in the Jewish nation as is written in the Scriptures: “And you, O son of man, I have made you a prophet for the house of Israel, because you admonished the evil man you have saved your soul (Ez. 3:17-19)-- From here we derive that every Jew is responsible for his fellow-Jew. For example, if you ask, “Why were those seventy-two thousand killed in Givas Binyomin?” The members of the Sanhedrin which Moshe and Yehoshua and Pinchus left, should have girded their loins with ropes of iron, and lifted their clothes above their knees, and gone around to all the cities of Yisroel-- one day to Lochish, one day to Eglon, one day to Hebron, one day to Bais Eli, and one day to Yerushalaim. They should have taught them “the way of the land” for one year, two, three, four, and five, until the Jewish people became settled in their land, and the name of the Holy one,

blessed be He, became sanctified throughout the entire world that He created. However, they did not do this. Rather, once they entered the land, everyone ran to his own vineyard and olive grove and said, "Everything will be all right with me!" so as not to have to work hard. The Wise Men taught in the Mishnah: "Do less business and involve yourself with Torah. If you have been idle from Torah, there are many idlers opposite you. When they did disgraceful and improper things in Givas Binyomin, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, went forth to destroy the entire world, and seventy-two thousand fell. Who killed them? The Sanhedrin that Moshe and Yehoshua and Pinchus left."

**How do the rabbonim and influential individuals not tremble--and how can their hair not stand on end when they read this Yalkut? Because the Sanhedrin did not protest, seventy-two thousand were killed in Givas Binyomin. How much more so do we have to protest and alarm the people, however and whenever possible, to save them from forbidden foods, or even the chance of eating them.**

The reason for this Yalkut can be explained in accordance with a quotation from Dovor Be'Itch by the Chofetz Chaim, of blessed memory: One should also know that there is a great difference between a person who serves G-d and keeps his Mitzvos because he truly desires His service and Mitzvos, and a person who does everything only for the sake of receiving a reward in this world and the next. This is illustrated in the verse: "Praised is the G-d fearing man; he desires His Mitzvos extremely." We derive from this: "It is the Mitzvos that he seeks, not their reward ." Similarly, the verse: "And you shall return and see the difference between a righteous man and a wicked man;

between one who served G-d and one who did not serve Him," refers even to the one who fulfills G-d's Mitzvos but does so only for his own sake. We will see the distinction between them in the world to come, How then can one tell if his service is genuine, or if his intent is just for personal gain, to receive reward and escape punishment? The sign of this is that one who is truly G-d's servant desires that everyone should serve G-d and do His will, in order that His Glory may be magnified. **Also, if He sees people transgressing His will, He will feel extremely vexed and distressed.** Not so is one whose intent is only for his own personal gain. He doesn't care at all if other people transgress G-d's Mitzvos. He thinks that since he himself is careful not to break the laws of the Torah, and he won't be punished in Gehinom, that is enough. Therefore, he isn't at all concerned that others are desecrating His name. You should know, my brothers, that this, too, is self-evident. Anyone who says: "Why should I worry about others and help prevent them from falling prey to forbidden foods?" has shown a great indication that his entire service of G-d is only for his own sake. It is in order to bring benefit upon himself in this world or the next, not for G-d's glory. For, were he concerned with His honor, surely he would try his utmost to make sure that **not even a single person would commit any sort of sin.**

## IV

This matter which we have written about is actually stated in the Torah in the section of the reading of the Sh'ema: "And you shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart," etc. Our wise men, of blessed memory, explain this to mean: "And you shall love Him"-you shall make Him be beloved by the people. This is like a king's faithful friend, who tries to make him beloved of all his subjects, that they should all be faithful to his service with a true heart. The concluding part of the verse: "With all your hear etc." This expresses the same thought, namely, that one must try with all his heart and all his soul. "With all your soul." means to make Him beloved by the people so that they should not obey their evil desires. "And with all your possessions" means that one should not try to save money when Heavenly honor is in question, when His service can thus be strengthened in the world.

This idea is exactly what is in the Sifrie: "And you shall love Hashem your G-d - You shall make Him beloved by the people like Abraham your forefather, about whom it is written: 'The soul that he made in Choron.' It is well known that Abraham our forefather was very great in the trait of kindness, and thus he brought the people under the fold of the divine presence (Shechina). As it is written: "He (Abraham) planted an orchard in Beersheba, and he called in the name of Hashem there, the G-d of the world," As it says in the Medrosch, by means of the orchard, Hashem gained esteem among all the people, "And you shall love Hashem your G-d " etc.

It is also well-known that when each person accepted upon himself the fulfillment of the Torah, at the time of receiving the Torah, not only did he accept it, upon

himself, but rather, he obligated himself for whenever it is within his power to strengthen the Torah observance of others, as well. **At that time, all Jews were made responsible for each other.** This thought is really the very meaning of the conclusion of the Torah in the section of Netzovim: "All concealed matters are for Hashem our G-d, but the revealed ones are for us and our children, forever, to do all the matters of this Torah," and as Rashi explains, "This means that they were made responsible for one another."

## V

It is for this very reason that the law dictates that every Jew can serve to fulfill someone else's Mitzvoh even though he himself has already performed that Mitzvoh (e.g. Kiddush) .

If someone else is missing the Mitzvoh it is as if he himself is missing it also. This is illustrated in the Rosh in tractate Brochos, chapter three. This law also applies in the case of preventing someone from violating a negative command. Therefore also, in Yoreh Deah, section 303 , the law is decided that if one sees that someone else is wearing Shatnes, even according to the opinion of the Rosh (brought in the Ramoh) who holds that he doesn't have to remove it from him in the street, because of respect, nevertheless, when that person comes home, the one who saw him must stop him from breaking the law of Shatnes. See also Yoreh Dayeh 373 in the Ramoh and in the Shach. This is also true in regard to a Torah scholar; although he doesn't have to testify when it is beneath his dignity, if, by doing so, he can stop someone from transgressing a law, he must testify. It says in tractate Shavuos (30b) "If he does not stop him from transgressing

a prohibition when he could have done so, he will be punished too." So we see in Vayikro Rabboh: "Yisroel is like scattered sheep. Just as the habit of sheep is that when one is struck in one of its limbs they all feel it (this means that if sheep flock together, and when one is stricken in a foot and must stop, they all stop), so also is Yisroel, when one sins they all are punished.

Rabbi Shimon Ben Yochai taught: "This is analogous to a group of people who were sitting in a boat. One of them took a drill and began to bore in his place. His friends said to him: 'Why are you doing this?'. He replied: 'Why does it bother you? Am I not boring in my place?' They answered him: 'Because you are sinking the ship.'" This also applies to our subject. If we won't take concern to admonish our brothers, by which we can save them from the negative comments that are involved with the eating of every mouthful (of Kezayis size) and we could have at times saved even some of the finest, most reputable people, who occasionally fall prey to these prohibitions, surely we will be severely punished. When the day of Reckoning comes, there will be a punishment as great as if we ourselves were eating forbidden foods. According to this, it is possible that even a most scrupulous, observant person, who abstained from even the slightest shadow of a doubt of a prohibition during his whole life will be judged as having eaten a piece of Treifoh and the like. When he asks in amazement: "How am I charged with these prohibitions, when I cannot tolerate them? Nothing having even the slightest doubt ever entered my mouth!" They will reply to him: "Did you not know that all Jews are responsible for one another? Remember that people from your town, at such and such a time, ate all these severely prohibited foods while you just stood from afar

and didn't see fit to help them in the time of their need, that they should not have to come to these prohibitions. **Therefore, come and accept your judgment as is fit for you."**

## VI

How greatly he will regret this! For a mere admonition on his part could have saved him from all these judgments! Let him not fool himself into thinking: "Surely, the judgment will not fall upon me alone, for I'm not the only one in my town." He should know that analogically, when one co-signs on a loan of tens of thousands of dollars, even though there are many other co-signers, nevertheless, when the time comes to pay, his portion, while admittedly only a part of the whole, will still be quite a large sum, and will indeed be a very pressing burden for him to bear. Our case here is similar. According to what is presently well-known, the current rate of violation of the prohibition against forbidden food has risen greatly. Were a census taken, it would amount to thousands of portions (Kezaisim) of prohibited foods, all eaten in one week and in one place. Those who have their power to alert their fellow townspeople to observe this Mitzvoh of the sanctity of foods, and to prevent Jewish souls from transgressing these prohibitions, but are too lazy to do so, will surely bear the main part of the blame. This is illustrated in the *Tonoh De'Vaih Eliohuh*: Anyone who finds it within his power to protest but didn't, to restore to virtuousness but doesn't, all the blood which is spilled is his own fault, as it is written: 'And you, son of man, I have placed you as a scout for the House of Israel; and you shall hear from my mouth a word, and you shall caution them concerning it, in my saying to the wicked: Surely you shall die. And you

did not warn them, etc. He is wicked, he will die bearing his sin, and his blood I shall seek from your hands." In my opinion, this same idea is expressed in the supplication, Ovinu Malkainu, in the two requests: "Our father, our king, blot out and wipe away our transgressions and our sins from before your eyes. "And, afterwards, "Our Father, our King, with your great mercy, erase all records (lit. 'titles') of our indebtedness, "These verses are apparently redundant. However, according to our previous explanation, it is understandable as two separate ideas: First, we beg for forgiveness for sins and transgressions that a person commits on his own, and then afterwards, we plead for the "records of our indebtedness," which are not our personal sins, but rather, our collective responsibility toward others, which is also considered records of our indebtedness.

## VII

It is also written there: And now, let us explain the reasoning of those who are lax in this aspect, and give a conclusive refutation to their argument.

There are those who claim that the number of those in our town who have gone astray has become many; we don't have the power to save them all, so what's the use of our saving a few of them, if we don't have the ability to save them all? This argument is merely the cunning deception of the Evil Impulse, and is really analogous to a group of people who were going on their way on a bridge, until it collapsed, and all of them fell into the river, and cried: "Help! Help!" They were drowning. There were two men there who knew how to swim. One of them ran to the river



to save whomever he could from the water. The second one said to him: "Why should you trouble yourself? Did not about twenty people fall in there? Do you think you can save all of them?" He replied to him: "I don't understand your question! Just because I can't save all of them, shall I then hide me eyes from the blood of my brothers who are drowning, and be lax in saving whomever I can save?!! Even if I save a small number of them, all my toil and trouble will have been worth it. Whoever preserves one Jewish soul, is as if he preserved the entire world!" So also, in relation to our subject: Just because we don't have the ability to save all of them from transgression of negative commands (Lavin) and Kerisos, shall we then be completely lax? Rather, whatever is within our ability to do, and to whatever extent we can save them from transgressing the Mitzvos of the Holy Torah, we are obligated to save them, even if we will save only the smallest minority. This is clearly demonstrated by King Solomon,: "Whatever your hand will find within your power to do, do!"

### VIII

Behold, from all the above-mentioned holy words of the Chofetz Chaim, of blessed memory, the great obligation of the Mitzvoh of admonising one's fellow man is clearly explained. For the person who truly loves G-d, it is impossible not to cry out bitterly when he sees people rebelling against G-d, and saturating their bodies, blood and souls with Trefah, which is the very foundation for the embodiment of the Torah, and upon which depends the entire sanctity of the Jewish people. If he doesn't protest with all his might, it is considered as if he had personally

eaten Trefah, for each individual is responsible for his fellow man.

How our hearts pain us when we see what many of our people, even those who pray three times a day and keep the mitzvos, still fall prey to the prohibition of forbidden foods, and saturate the souls of their children with all types of and trefe food, may Heaven save us! Woe to our eyes that behold such! How our hearts will ache! Even the influential people do not arouse the hearts of our brothers throughout the course of their sermons and their words, to admonish our brothers not to bring, heaven forbid, disaster upon themselves and upon all of the Jews by means of their eating trefah, and foods of questionable kosher status.

## IX

Now we can well understand the Medrosh Yalkut with which we began, that because the Sanhedrin did not protest, the blame for the seventy-two thousand Jews who were killed in Givas Binyomin is considered theirs; every one is responsible for one another, and once they didn't protest, the debt was collected from the "co-signer" who assumed responsibility for them. The co-signers in this case were the Sanhedrin, who should have gone from city to city and from town to town, crying out and alarming the people of their sins, that they were being negligent with Trefah foods, or with that of questionable Kosher status.

Therefore we call out to the Jewish leaders and influential persons: *Have mercy and pity on your brothers, who are being massacred spiritually by the eating of forbidden foods and trefah and unclean animals!* If, Heaven forbid, an enemy attacker came to kill, Heaven forbid, the residents of your city, would you just sit tranquilly and securely, and not strive with valor to save your brothers? *Behold, this enemy*

*attacker, the evil impulse, has come and is killing souls and is causing, Heaven forbid, calamity to your brothers, by the eating of forbidden or questionable foods! Why are we silent? Why don't we cry out bitterly, to save brothers from spiritual massacre?*

*Have pity and spare your brothers, and save their souls! Restore the crown of holiness of the Jewish people to its original shine!*

## X

Let us please remember that before the last war, in which, due to our many sins, the vast majority of the holy communities in the world succumbed to martyrdom, that all the holy communities in every land were imbued with the desire for Kashrus observance. Everywhere the Rabbonim would see to it that no one from their community would become contaminated with questionable foods, Heaven forbid. Everywhere, all matters of Kashrus were conducted with an observant eye. However, through our many sins, after the destruction of the major structure of Orthodox Jewry, now that only a few scattered Mitzvo observers remain from the many, the obligation is all the greater to save the few remaining from the Destroyer from rising up again, Heaven forbid, and engulfing the few that are left.

Therefore, I propose and request: *return, please, the crown of the holiness of Israel (i.e. Jewry) to its prior glory! Instruct, please, your brothers to guard their souls and those of their children, that they should be protected from any pitfalls concerning the matters of forbidden foods, Heaven forbid! By means of this, the verse: "And you shall sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy," will be fulfilled in us, in whose merit we shall be worthy of the speedy coming of the Messiah.*

## CHAPTER 12

## Supervision

## I

## Hashgacha (Kashrus Supervision): Pitfalls and/or Reliability

*A brief discussion of the great neglect found in Kashrus supervision, inspection and certification; a description of the deplorable state of Kashrus due to lack of sufficient knowledge of the technological innovations in the food production industry.*

The Talmud states, "Every day a heavenly voice from Mount Horeb proclaims: Woe is to the people because of the disgrace of the Torah!" What can we say today when Kashrus, an important principle of the Torah, is being trampled underfoot? How can we defend ourselves when such a vital commandment is openly desecrated?

But even those who wish to keep Kosher completely are subject to pitfalls that exist because of laxity in supervision. Many individuals of dubious honesty give *Hechsherim* and *Hashgachos*, proclaiming their products to be "Kosher even for the most scrupulous."

(כשר למהדרין מן המהדרין)

It must be realized that the Hashgochoh-Hechsherim industry is very large, and the rewards to those who know how to "play the system" are very great. Needless to say, temptations abound. This is especially true in the larger factories, where the supervising Rav must be an extremely G-d fearing man; he must realize that the soul of Jewry is in his hands. Our *Chachomim* said, "The judge, when passing judgment must visualize *Gehinom* open beneath him."

## II Technological Proficiency

Besides being a pious, righteous and G-d fearing individual, the Machshir-Mashgiach must also have expertise in food production as well as highly-developed technological proficiency. He must be familiar with all processes related to his field of Hashgochoh. He must possess common sense, curiosity and sufficient understanding of the industry to discover any possible tricks, so the food manufacturers cannot "pull the wool over his eyes."

A naive supervisor cannot testify to the reliability of a *Hechsher*; the potential pitfalls are many (as described later). In addition to saying a fervent prayer for Heavenly guidance and help, he must above all place his soul into his job, observe with a "thousand eyes," and use all his senses and all his knowledge to discover what is being done under his supervision and what is being called "Kosher" under his signature.

Unfortunately, most people (even from the most reliably Kosher homes) rely on the certifications of rabbis whose motivation is profit. These rabbis do not serve as impartial observers. They have "no-show" jobs, going to the food production plant only for appearance, passing in and out casually. And in some instances the Mashgiach thinks it unnecessary. In essence, this is a cover-up, a peek here and a peek there.

Sometimes, because of fear of the owner, or of monetary loss, or simply a lack of genuine integrity, they do not properly investigate the origin and derivation of all the ingredients used in the particular product. Sometimes these are *Trefe* according to the Torah itself (*De'oraisah*).

At times when such a rabbi does know of the possibility that there is *Trefe* in the product, that worm infestation or other Kashrus violations exist, the temptation of monetary gain overwhelms him. He rationalizes and negates violations with flimsy excuses, such as too much use of *Bitul* (annulment). But then, aren't all violations annulled by money?

Another rationalization is: "If I were not the certifier, someone else would be. He would be even more lenient than I am, resulting in even greater danger. So why not?" This convincing consolation tells him that his intentions are legitimate.

Meanwhile the deed is done and religious Jews unwittingly fill their stomachs with forbidden foods because of him.

### III

It is known, unfortunately, that the majority of Mashgichim (supervisors) receive their wages not for meticulous supervision; instead, a condition of the factory owner in hiring them is that they not see, not hear and not speak. In the event that the Mashgiach *does* see something, he should turn the other way.

The hashgochoh is only a cover-up, fooling the public into relying on the Kashrus of the food. They know the certifying Rabbi or Rov (indeed, the indication is that he must truly be one of the great men of his time). Who is empowered to tell him what to do? This is sufficient to fool the public, which seeks leniency by saying, "Nowadays we are too weak to be very strict. If Rav So-and-So approves, we will eat our fill relying on his responsibility, and if we stumble into any prohibition *he* will be blamed for it."

Although the Mashgiach will be blamed and duly punished for sinning and for causing others to sin, the consumer also will be held responsible. He will be asked, "Did you investigate whether or not one may trust his supervision? Does he know how to do the supervision properly, giving the factory full scrutiny, or does he do his job superficially?"

If one relies on this Rav in *De'oyraisa* prohibitions, would he also lend him large sums of money without any investigation or precaution? Why should one be different from the other? I am afraid that the consumer shall be blamed along with the Mashgiach, as in the example the Talmud gives of mutual blame, שהרכיב האדון החיגר על הסומא ושנייהם לוקין כאחד

#### IV

One will surely reply: "One witness is believed in matters of *Issur* (prohibition); it is not necessary to check on him." This reasoning is incorrect. It is a misapplication of the *Halochoh*, for it is clearly stated: (Ramoh, *Yoreh Dayeh* 127:3) "Wherever the prohibition is already established, e. g. *Tevel*, or a piece of meat which is not *menukeres*, one witness is *not* enough to permit it." Many canned products may contain an established prohibition. It is not within the power of the certifying rabbi to remove the prohibition, for the manufacturers will not let him alter the recipe and remove vital flavoring agents. Therefore, he reluctantly gives the product his seal of approval. It is publicly acclaimed to be validated by Rav So-and-So, and is widely used by the masses. Thus, tens of thousands of Jews eat forbidden foods.

Another inconsistency in this reasoning is: even if there

are two witnesses who are believed for anything, (even issues of life-and-death), the Torah commands us to investigate the truth of their testimony. Relatives or biased people are invalid as witnesses; At the very least, one must find out who the witness is, and whether or not he can be believed. Perhaps, because of monetary interests, he is falsifying his testimony; he is testifying that the forbidden is permitted, that the Trefe is Kosher. This has already happened innumerable times. A G-d fearing person must not allow himself to rely on a Hechsher unless it is clearly known that one may trust this particular Rav; he would not let anything that is not kosher pass his inspection.

## V

Even more alarming is the fact that many people buy cans of assorted delicacies with labels that state in big colorful letters "Kosher" without specifying who the certifying Rov is. If they do list a name, it is not known who he is or whether he is still alive! Quite frequently, the Rov whose name is on the label passed away many years earlier; yet the firm still sells under his name. Occasionally, a company will even invent a fictitious name and print it on their labels as a Hechsher. This suffices for most people who want to let themselves be misled. They say: "It says 'Kosher' on it in *Ashuris* (scroll-type) print." Unfortunately, the Rabbonim remain silent about the issue; there is no one to rectify the situation.

## VI

Even in the houses of the most Orthodox, those who inquire as to the reliability of every Hechsher and its giver, there is laxity regarding the prohibition of feeding



forbidden foods to infants of two and three years of age. They consider it permissible to feed these children all sorts of canned goods, to give them milk which is not Cholov Yisroel (of an Akum) (with the danger of having forbidden additives in it), and to give them all sorts of candies, chocolates, and occasionally even baked goods. Most of these products are of questionable Kashrus. Occasionally there is hardly any doubt that they are Trefe. This is especially true of baby formulas, which I myself investigated with the assistance of expert Rabbonim, who say there is suspicion of Trefe, and of milk and meat being mixed together. Baby foods, such as those in jars, and baby cereals, are suspected by known Rabbonim to contain Trefe ingredients.

We do not need any evidence to show this to be true, for they are produced in factories of non-observers of *mitzvos* without any supervision. They may contain some forbidden additive, especially in vitamin supplements, which are essential to the baby's health, or in flavoring agents to make the food palatable to the baby. How can one determine the kashrus of these ingredients? Each ingredient is composed of various chemicals. It is impossible to determine their source or purpose. The factory owners do not list all the specific ingredients; they give them a general composite name such as "vitamin B12". The specific ingredients are a trade secret, not to be revealed. How is it possible to rely on their Kashrus without knowing what is put into them?

We are able to state definitely that these products are used even in the most observant homes, that the children are fed prohibited foods, without second thoughts. The parents think this is totally excusable, merely because of force-of-habit and the fact that it is so widely practiced.

Although the public has transgressed this prohibition, no one has protested. Since the Rabbonim are silent, their lack of response is taken as an indication of condonement. Therefore, no one avoids the prohibition. These are the very matters that "stand on the highest plane, but people belittle their importance." (Talmud)

## VII

I see fit to quote the Ramoh in *Yoreh Dayeh* (81:7), "Likewise, the nursing woman should not eat forbidden foods; similarly, for the baby himself. This will be detrimental to him in his later years." The Pri Chodosh writes (sub-Sif: 26), "Since, in our time they are not careful in these matters, most children degenerate to delinquency, the majority become the most arrogant of the generation, with no fear of G-d in their hearts; even if rebuked, they will not accept chastisement. Therefore it is imperative to take the utmost care in this."

The Taz and the Shach wrote regarding the above Ramoh that: "This is in the case where the nursing woman had to eat the forbidden food because of serious illness, in compliance with doctor's orders. Nevertheless, the father is obliged to engage a different Jewish nursing woman, since eating the forbidden food is detrimental to the child, causing a degeneration of character and a heartless spirit and inducing an evil nature."

The Bnei Yisaschar, in the *Agroh De'Pirkon* (letter 126), writes in the name of his master, Rabbi Mendle Mariminov, regarding the enigma of children who go to their instructors faithfully, are diligent in their studies, pray with fervor, answer "Ye'hay Shmey Rabboh" and go in the righteous way; but when they grow up, develop

poor character, dismiss the Torah and prayer, and do other wrong things. How does this happen? Did they not learn the Torah in their childhood from a breath free of sin? It would seem that Torah would have remained with them in their later years, to have supported them so that they would not sin, for one Mitzvoh brings another in its wake.

The Bnei Yisaschar says that the reason is that their fathers fed them from stolen money and filled them with forbidden foods. This in turn becomes part of their flesh, through which they acquire evil passions and inferior characteristics, causing them to degenerate to delinquency. This generation is a vain generation, They are not careful in this or like matters, therefore their offspring are arrogant and have no fear of G-d.

## VIII

The *VaYaged Yaacov*, a commentary on the Torah, explains the verse in *Varyikroh* (Leviticus), "Do not abominate your souls; this includes your children," as is elucidated in the Holy *Zohar Shemos* (128), regarding milk mixed with meat. "The blemish imprinted by forbidden foods is passed on to the children."

Refer also to the *Orach Chaim* (ibid) who quotes the Talmud: "The boor (*Am Ho'oretz*) is a creeping abomination for by eating abominable foods he himself becomes an abomintion."

According to the *Zohar*, it is also understood why the Talmud concludes: "And their daughters are an abomination."

In the *Yerushalmi* of *Chagiga* it is written that Elisha (Achair) degenerated because, when his mother was still

expecting him, she passed by houses of gentiles and smelled their foods. The odors would rage throughout her body like snake venom. The *Kurbon Ho'aidah* writes: "His composition was formed from that scent; therefore he desired sin." The *HaGaos HoAshrie* writes in chapter 2 of tractate *Avodah Zorah*, "Warn the nursing women not to eat Trefe and pork; surely they should not feed them (the babies) Tomaih (defiled) foods. Proof of this is Achair, for his mother ate of that type of idolatry and this caused him to degenerate into evil" (*Ohr Zoruah*). Consider how far-reaching these matters are.

## IX

In the *Medrosh Hagodol*: (Sheminie, 11:42) " 'Do not eat them!' One might have deemed it permissible to feed them to underage children. Therefore, the Torah excludes this with, 'Do not eat any abomination' i. e., with anything which makes the soul abominable, you are warned not to abominate your souls." Also in the *Sifroh*: " 'Do not eat' holds one who feeds another as liable as one who eats it himself."

Space is too short to quote every word of our Rabbis on the subject of conscientiousness regarding forbidden foods. I will however quote from *Mesilas Yeshorim*, (chapter 11), "Behold, anyone from Yisroel who has a brain in his head will consider forbidden foods like poisonous foods, or like a food that has a poisonous substance mixed into it." For, were such a thing actually to happen, would a person permit himself to eat of it? Should he have even a small doubt? Definitely not! If he overlooked the danger, he would be considered a fool. We have already explained the prohibition of forbidden

foods, that they are veritable poisons to the Jewish heart and soul. If so, how can anyone with any common sense adopt a lenient policy, taking the chance of committing a transgression?

Let us reawaken and contemplate. Who dares feed his own little sons and daughters, his beloved flesh and blood, foods mixed with lethal poisons? Even if there is only the slightest possibility of poison, or of any danger? He would certainly give away everything he has to save the lives of his children from a chance of danger; he would flee from danger more than from a wild lion! How then can he not be careful to save his children from forbidden foods and from milk which is not Cholov Yisroel (of an Akum;) from those foods that our Rabbis testified are poisonous to the poor soul, create evil passions, disgraceful characteristics, an impure and licentious spirit, etc.? Surely one should be extremely cautious about this.

In the holy books, I have seen that this is the explanation of what we say in *Viddui* (confession): "We have turned aside from your commands and good judgments and did not value (them) to us." This means that G-d's good commands and judgments were not worth as much to us as our bodily needs.

To you, most distinguished Rabbonim, I appeal: Awaken, please! Arouse the public to repent in this totally neglected matter! Certainly much could be rectified. It is true that "sincere words issuing forth from the heart enter into the heart of their listener." (Talmud).

## X

The following are the holy words of the Satmar Rov,

which he said at an assembly in the year 1961:

"I will mention one specific point, which may be of practical use. It is one of the weaknesses of our generation, one which is very neglected. Namely, here in America, there are innocent people who desire to fulfill the commandments of Tefillin and Mezuzoh, but the vast majority of Tefillin and Mezuzohs are totally disqualified. The result of this is that one who prays with them never actually put on Tefillin; he who affixes them on his doorpost never actually fulfilled the commandment of Mezuzoh. If they knew this, they themselves would complain loudly about it. I saw an actual occurrence where someone brought his Tefillin to be checked, and the scribe told him, that the Tefillin were invalid since they were originally written. This person broke down crying and said, "Had the rabbi who brought me the Tefillin for five dollars asked me for another ten, surely I would have given it." For the Bar Mitzvoh party, they spent thousands of dollars; by the next day it is totally forgotten. But for the Tefillin, if they're asked for another ten dollars for a mitzvoh which lasts a lifetime, they will say they've been cheated. It is already the established practice of the common man not to want to recognize that mitzvos cost money. If one installs paneling for his house, even if it costs many hundreds of dollars, he is satisfied. However, for a Mezuzoh, which is for a lifetime, if it costs a few cents more he will consider himself a victim of fraud.

There is cause to rectify this problem. Unfortunately, many Mezuzos on the market aren't even made of parchment, but of ordinary linen. Countless bundles of such merchandise are exported, with some Hechsher or other on them. In Bnei Brak, I saw with my own eyes, a Mezuzoh made by a wholesaler, claiming to be kosher;

but they drew out actual strands of linen from it. Also, the artisans aren't even scribes, rather mere laborers, with the primary concern being a large output to yield a cheaper price.

It is with great vexation that I must say that the leaders are guilty; they do not ask the average person if he desires kosher Tefillin and Mezuzohs! Rather, they say: "Buy Tefillin! Buy Mezuzohs!" in order to increase the economy of Eretz Israel. However, they do not caution the people to buy only from Kosher scribes. Through this, they lead astray hundreds and thousands of Jews, who want to be Jews, with the result that they never had a Mezuzoh in their lives, and if they pronounced a benediction, it was in vain.

Our wise men, of blessed memory, said that the Men of the Great Assembly fasted twenty-four fasts that Tefillin and Mezuzoh scribes not become wealthy. This must be clarified. Why were they concerned about whether or not the scribes became wealthy? They should have prayed that the scribes never cease writing, not that they not become wealthy. The answer is simply that if people saw them becoming wealthy from writing Torahs, Tefillin, and Mezuzos, then everybody would want to become a scribe. This would make the field a mere business, automatically destroying the Kashrus and reliability. I remember that in my home town, a large city abundant with wise men and scribes, there were only two or three scribes that one could rely on, and they were poor, as usual. It is a cause of great anxiety that in this country all religious articles are dealt with as mere business, with competitive pricing. The primary concern is to turn out large volumes and net large margins, without any concern as to their Kashrus. Also, Kashrus supervisors of

Hechsherim give their approval on matters containing many pitfalls, every supervisor saying that it is his colleague who is not within the Halocho and is not to be trusted. This tragedy is due to Kashrus becoming a mere business, resulting in the decline of reliability.

I have stressed this point which can be rectified. Halochoh obliges us to inspect our Tefillin and Mezuzos once every seven years. Although an inspection cannot compensate for Mezuzos and Tefillin written by an unqualified scribe, it can serve as a partial amendment, at least, and many will be saved from becoming ensnared. In my opinion, everyone gathered here is obliged to take heart and see to it that every synagogue obtain a kosher, G-d fearing scribe and announce that everyone should bring him his Tefillin and Mezuzohs for inspection, to rectify all that is possible and to save thousands of Jews from this great pitfall. This accomplishment will truly be great.

## XI

The Will of the Holy Arugas Habosem, from Hachonoh DeRabboh:

*I warn you with the greatest severity to avoid allowing others to depend on your reliability. Also, do not accept any position of Hashgochoh in a factory, wine concern, meat smoking plant, etc. or business or company where you may risk transgressing a prohibition; whether a risk of leaven on Passover, or any other prohibition. Even more, you should not give any Hechsher or certification, unless the factory owner himself is a reliable Jew, who can be believed, and who needs no outside testimony except where they do not*



*know him. Accept nothing else. The inherent pitfalls of wine and brandy are already well-known and established; so are those of smoked meats which have been already were exposed. Unfortunately, many have fallen prey to drinking and eating prohibited foods, while the blame rests squarely on the givers of the Hechsher. Therefore, beware of giving any Hechsher other than in the above-mentioned conditions. If you should be enticed by the lure of money, remain steadfast in the face of temptation and bear in mind the verse "You shall love Hashem your G-d with all your might." Hashem, may He be blessed, who sustains and supports His creations mercifully shall not forsake you or abandon you. If you fulfill the verse "Trust in Hashem and do good, dwell in the land and pasture faith," He will fulfill the verse: "You shall have pleasure with Hashem, and He shall grant you the quests of your heart, etc." May our portion be among theirs.*

## XII

A quote from the *Responsa of Levushai Mordechai*, Yoreh Dayeh, section III, clause 7:

After all the aforementioned cautions, any sensible, G-d-fearing person will find the necessity of a proper Hashgochoh obvious. The Mashgichim should never leave the factory, and should watch the entire production with open eyes. The larger the factory, the more G-d-fearing Mashgichim are required. The keys of the rooms should be in their hands overnight and during any breaks. The

Mashgichim must be clever men, able to detect any deceit the factory may attempt. It goes without saying that mere periodical inspections, entering and leaving, do not suffice.

Refer to what he says further on this matter.

One should not say that since he cannot keep all these particulars, because of health or other causes, he should not bother to keep any degree of stringency. Nay, do not say this! Shall one with patched clothes rip them completely asunder? No! On the contrary, the more one sanctifies himself, even to the slightest degree, he has made a great gain, and they sanctify him above, in the world to come, exceedingly. (Refer to Rashi, end of Shmini) (*Shulchon Hatohor*)

### XIII

The following incident is well-known among the Gerrer Chasidim who were with the *Chidushai Horim*, ZTL:

Among the Chasidim of this town, there was one who was extremely wealthy. For years, as a matter of practice, he would bring his Rebbe a barrel of goose-fat in honor of Passover. The Gerrer Rebbe would use no other than that which his Chosid brought him. Suddenly, the Chosid's fortune changed and he lost all his money, becoming very poor. When he complained to his friends that he had no way of supporting himself, they suggested, "You are an expert in rendering fat, why don't you render fat and we will purchase it from you?" The suggestion pleased him; he tried it and succeeded. Before Passover, he brought his Rebbe a barrel of goose-fat. The *Chidushei Horim* asked him: "What is this?" The Chosid replied: "I have brought

the Rebbe goose-fat as every year." The Rebbe replied, "Fine, but who gives the Hechsher?" The Chosid, totally perplexed, asked wonderingly, "Rebbe, for twenty years I've been bringing goose-fat to our Rebbe, and everything was in order. Why is it that he is now asking me about the Hechsher?" The Rebbe answered, "Until now, you were acting under your own private interests. Now, you've become a merchant; once you're in business you need a Hechsher."

#### XIV

I find it appropriate to point this out to the unsuspecting Rabbonim, who trust everyone. If someone merely puts on Tefillin regularly and keeps the Sabbath, they will appoint him as a Mashgiach and give him full responsibility. They do not check his knowledge or principles, to determine whether he is worthy of such a position. Can he stand up to the cunning, who are always attempting some means of deceit?

A different but equal problem are the Mashgichim who mean well, are G-d fearing and outstanding in all their ways, who even keep a strict rule over their own households, but due to their great naïveté it does not enter their minds to suspect the untrustworthy, so they never bother to check up on them. There are some Mashgichim, ignorant and frivolous, who are not any more familiar with Kashrus or the laws of Chometz than the baker. This naturally pleases the baker immensely. There stands the Mashgiach with his long beard and impressive appearance, reassuring everyone. People fall into the trap unwittingly, trusting that all is in perfect order. In this case, it is the good name that covers everything else.

Actually, it is not within our power to re-establish the faith to its pinnacle. This, however, does not justify sitting back passively, saying "at least I saved myself." With strategy we can find a way to combat the evil-doers and public defrauders. The very least we can do is to publicize through wide-spread advertisements the prohibition relevant to baked goods for Passover, if not properly watched. Also we can publicize the stringency of the prohibition on pork, and of Chometz remaining after Passover, and, that due to the severity of the prohibition and the extent of the responsibility, the Rabbinical Court has refrained from giving a Hechsher on any Passover baked goods (*Shimusho shel Torah*).

## XV

I have been asked if it is permissible to maintain a Mashgiach for milk on a farm where there is no quorum for prayer and the Mashgiach must pray alone.

Response: As it is presently the eve of the New Year, there is no time for a prolonged deliberation, so I must be brief. Essentially, milk which a non-Jew (an Akum) milked with no Jew watching him is Trefe. In order to save even one Jew from eating Trefe, it is permissible for the Mashgiach to pray without a quorum for his entire lifetime. If he cannot pray at all, he is totally exempt from prayer. This is all the more true when hundreds of souls can be saved from eating Trefe. Therefore, it is an absolute obligation on the part of the congregation to raise the necessary funds to send out a Jew to supervise the milking and pasteurizing. May G-d help you that you not fall victim to eating Trefe, Heaven forbid. Because of the

numerous preoccupations of the Sabbath and Holiday, I shall conclude here.

Rav Levi Yitzchok Greenwald,  
of Cong. Arugas Habosem,  
Bklyn., N.Y.

## XVI

We quote the following two letters from the Torah journal, *Hamuor*. The writers personally witnessed the pitfalls and scandals that exist in the field of the Hechsher and its reliability.

### Letter 1:

"I was in a certain market in New York last week, where I saw the sign in English: 'Kosher and Non-Kosher Products Sold Here. Our provisions stand under the Hechshar of Rav . . .' [name omitted]. I spoke with various Mashgichim and company owners there; they told me that they produce and process both Kosher and Trefe together, while the certifying rabbis merely come to collect their wages and do not supervise at all.

How can a Mashgiach, even with eyes on all sides, give a Hechsher there? During our conversation they told me that his factory works on Sabbath and Holidays, even Yom Kippur. It went from bad to worse. They told me that in the catering business it's the same thing. They prepare both Kosher and Trefe banquets together, and the certifying rabbis come and collect a large pay check, then go home without the slightest apprehension."

### Letter 2:

"My heart trembles within me to give this to be printed. I worked many summers in a certain hotel in the country, the name of which I do not wish to reveal. The place is

frequented by many Chasidim, Torah scholars, and G-d-fearing people, who eat there throughout their stay. On the Sabbath day, in the morning, someone lights the stove; then they put all the food on the stove to heat up. If meat is lacking, they put in fresh meat to cook with the meat left from yesterday. The people who eat there do not know of this. There is no greater desecration of the Sabbath. Therefore, it occurred to me to write to the esteemed editor about this to publicize the matter. Take caution that no one should eat in any hotel, no matter which, unless they have an appointed Mashgiach on duty at all times. In my opinion, the hotel owners have no credence, just as a butcher is not trusted to slaughter and sell his own meat. Quite often, the hotel owner told me to put the food on the stove during the holy Sabbath day, but I refused to obey him, saying that I cannot desecrate the Sabbath. He replied, : 'You're not a Mashgiach, you're a mere worker, and you must obey orders!' Immediately, I left his place, and my source of livelihood, and returned home that Sunday."

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## CHAPTER 13

## The Sanctity of the Rearing Of Sons and Daughters

## I

Rabbi Yosef Caro writes: (*Orach Chaim*, section 343 clause 1) "If a minor is eating Trefe, the Rabbinical Court is not obliged to stop him. However, his father is obliged to reprimand him, and to stop him (in the case of a prohibition of Torah force). To commit the act of consciously feeding the minor Trefe, however, is forbidden; even if the prohibition is only of rabbinical force." The decision of the authorities is that committing the act of consciously feeding the minor is always forbidden, even for an infant with no comprehension whatsoever. This prohibition is of Torah-force, (i. e., feeding the minor), and we derive it from the verse regarding creatures that crawl: "Do not eat them." This passage is superfluous and our wise men, of blessed memory, explain (*Yevamos*, 114) that this means to say: "Do not feed them to minors." In reference to blood, also, it is written: "Every soul from you shall not eat blood" and our wise men of blessed memory interpret it: "Do not feed it to minors." Similarly, in reference to defilement of Cohanim, it is written: "Say," and: "You shall say," and our wise men interpret it; "'Say' to those of responsible age that they should say to the minors." From these three cases we derive that the same holds true throughout the Torah. It is forbidden to feed them any Torah prohibition, or to order them to transgress it. So have decided the greatest of Rishonim, as brought in *Mishnoh Bruroh* (ibid, sub-clause 4).

The *Mogain Avrohom* decrees further (ibid): "It states in the end of the ninth chapter of tractate Shabbos that it is forbidden to give an infant a live Trefe locust to play with, for perhaps it will die and he will eat it. Even something only prohibited because of "Do not abominate your souls" is forbidden to put into the infant's hands. All the more forbidden is something suitable to eat as it is. It is stated, too, in the *Hagawos Ashrie*, (ibid) for the reason that this constitutes actively feeding him (viz. ibid.). To tell a non-Jew to give a forbidden thing to an infant is also prohibited; all the more so to instruct the infant to eat it himself (ibid) (*Mishnoh Bruroh* quoting the Achronim).

## II

And now, dear parents, I direct my words to you: Have mercy and spare the souls of your little sons and daughters! Do not defile their souls by feeding them prohibited things! The parents themselves transgress a severe prohibition (as explained previously); they also endanger the souls of their little sons and daughters, may the Merciful One spare us, as the Talmud says, in the tractate *Shabbos* (page 33:2); "When our Rabbonim entered the study-hall in Yavneh, there were present Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Elozor the son of Rabbi Yosi, and Rabbi Shimeon. The following inquiry was posed before them: Why does this plague (e. g., Askoroh, may the Merciful One save us) begin in the intestines and end up in the mouth? Rabbi Elozor the son of Rabbi Yosi replies, 'Because they eat forbidden foods with it.' The Talmud refutes this saying: "Can it enter your mind that they actually eat forbidden foods? Rather the reason is that they



eat untithed foods with it." (e. g., the mouth) (viz. *ibid*). Parents bring about spiritual danger to their sons and daughters, by feeding them poison foods that the Torah prohibited. It is explicitly lucidated in the words of our Rabbonim of blessed memory, and in the holy books, that this implants in them evil passions, disgraceful characteristics, and an impure and licentious spirit. We have already stated that which the great *Bnei Yisoschor* wrote in his holy book, *Agroh De'Kalloh* (letter 126) in the name of his instructor and teacher, Rav Mendle Marimenov, of blessed memory, that quite frequently we see children who during their youth faithfully attend their house of instruction, are diligent in their studies and pray with fervor, answer "*Ye'haiy Sh'maiy Rabboh*" and rectify their ways. However when they grow up, they change completely and acquire disgraceful characteristics, dismiss the Torah and prayer, and other such evil things. How does this happen? Was not the Torah they learned in their youth from a breath pure of sin? Shouldn't it have remained with them in their later years to act as a support not to begin sinning? For one Mitzvoh brings another in its wake. He answers that it is because their parents fed them forbidden foods, may the Merciful One spare us, which in turn became part of their flesh and thereby gave birth to evil passions and disgraceful characteristics. It is also written in the sefer *Machzik Brochoh*, "The father and mother must keep the infant away from forbidden foods, for this causes him to degenerate to delinquency. This generation is a vain generation for they do not observe this, nor the likes of it; which is why the children produced are arrogant, with no fear of G-d on their faces."

## III

The Chachomim of blessed memory say that one of the seven adorations of the world is the love of a father for his children. However, the fool who does not have the sense to distinguish between beneficial and destructive love, builds up his love to the point where he will shower his children with forbidden sweets, which are poisonous to their souls, becoming thereby their enemy, rather than their beloved one. Only after he has completely ruined them will he bemoan his fate, seeing the product of his so-called kindness. Then he will finally confess that his mercy was cruel malice, but it will be too late, and all his hope will be frustrated. Therefore, exercise caution, while there is still time, to save your little sons and daughters from forbidden foods; certainly, do not consciously give them to them. Then it will be good for you and them, in this world and the next.

I have heard and I have seen and my blood boils with indignation. It seems unbelievable; I have seen devout Torah instructors giving candies and other things of questionable Kashrus, to their juvenile students of three and four years of age. Occasionally, there is no Hechsher at all. Even if these Torah instructors have altruistic intentions, to keep the children's attention so that they will listen to their instructors and develop an interest in their learning, in such instances we may say colloquially, "Don't do us any favors." It is clear that they are doing more harm than good, and rather than bringing the children's minds closer to the holy Torah, they are turning them away as far as possible, which will be very difficult to rectify.

## IV

The Sages say in *Tonoh De'vaih Eliyohuh* major (Chapter 26), which is also stated in *Tosefos*, tractate *Kesubos* (104:1), "Before one prays that Torah enter his body, let him pray that luxury does not." They demonstrate this with the example of Rebbi Yehudah Hanosi, who at the time of his departure, pointed his ten fingers heavenwards and said: "Master of the World, it is revealed to you that I toiled in Torah with my ten fingers and did not derive pleasure even with my pinky, etc." Thus you will see that although he was speaking of permissible pleasures, the Sages of blessed memory say that one should pray that they [pleasures] do not penetrate oneself. All the more so, one should pray that forbidden pleasures do not penetrate him, before he prays for words of Torah to enter; one is dependent upon the other. If forbidden pleasures *do* enter, it is impossible for words of Torah or any holiness to penetrate. Torah instructors, contemplate that before you encourage words of Torah to enter your pupils, you must caution them that forbidden pleasures not enter their bodies. Even more, you must not consciously supply them with forbidden treats. You should, instead, explain to them the severity of the prohibition, and its widespread lack of observance. "Train the lad while he is yet young, for even in his later years it will not depart from him." (Proverbs) Caution the students to observe this prohibition carefully their entire lifetime, and in Heaven it shall be recorded in your credit, for the most important factor in anything is the root and beginning. Similarly, the sages expound in the second chapter of *Yerushalmi Chagiga* (5), on the verse: "'Better is a matter's end than its beginning', providing that it was

good from its beginning." This should be firm, and for the sake of Heaven. Only then will the product, the end, be good. One must also realize that in our generation, especially in our country, a great percentage, perhaps even most of the responsibility of the child's upbringing rests on the teachers; their fathers and mothers are often too preoccupied earning a livelihood to have time to fulfill their obligations in this matter. Although this is not justifiable, it is to some extent beyond their control. Also, they erroneously believe that your taking over absolves them from all responsibility; in any case, you should strive to do all that is in your power. The Chochmim said, "'The public benefactors are forever like the stars' — these are the Torah instructors of juveniles."

## V

In the Responsa of the *Chasam Sofer, Orach Chaim* (section 83) an outstanding incident is recorded. An excerpt:

There was a child who was, unfortunately, mentally retarded. All the doctors agreed that the only hope for his cure would be to send him off to Vienna (Austria) or to the town of Wazin (Rumania), bordering Budapest, where he could enroll in one of the new institutions specially geared to handle such problem cases with specially trained faculty. There, unquestionably, he would improve vastly; even if he would never become brilliant, he would be able to function normally in society. The only reason for second thoughts was that in these special institutions, he would not be able to eat kosher food. None was available on the premises, naturally, and the institutions did not permit any food to be brought in from the outside. The

question now is: Is it permissible to send him to the institution, since he will be forced to associate with the various elements there, and worst of all, to eat Trefe?

Reply: Regarding the lad suffering mental retardation, whose relatives wish to send him to an institution for the retarded, I have been asked to reply as to whether it is permitted. The problem involved is that for the duration of his stay there, he will be in the hands of members of a foreign religion, not from our nation, and it will be impossible to obtain food for him in compliance with the holy Torah.

Even though I do not deem myself worthy to decide such an issue, to grant your request, I shall answer as best I can [Translator's note: This merely reflects the Chasam Sofer's deep humility. Actually, he was quite capable of rendering the most difficult decisions.]

Our Sages, of blessed memory, testified that the eating of forbidden foods during youth causes a spiritual congestion of the heart and gives birth to an evil temperament. Therefore, I still say: "Be it far better to remain a fool for life, in this world, rather than appear wicked before the eyes of the Master in the next world."

May G-d grant wisdom, with blessings, signed Thursday, the 12th of Tammuz, 5584 (1824).

## CHAPTER 14

**In this chapter we describe the harm which will befall a person and the terrible punishment in store for one who eats forbidden foods.**

### **Whoever eats forbidden foods ...**

- 1) is judged as a despised person since Hashem loathes him in this world and the world to come. (*Zohar-part III, 41:*)
- 2) defiles his soul (*ibid*) (*Reishis Chochma*)
- 3) will suffer much since all of a man's suffering in this world is because he was not scrupulous in the observance of kashruth. (*ibid, 42*)
- 4) attaches his soul to the forces of impurity and a spirit of defilement rests upon him. (*Ibid*)
- 5) leaves the sphere of holiness and enters a sphere of impurity. (*ibid, 42*)
- 6) woe unto him and woe unto his soul. He has not attached himself to those of the eternal life. (*ibid, 41*)
- 7) is as though he has worshipped idols G-d forbid. (*ibid,*)
- 8) has no part of the G-d of Israel. (*ibid, 41*)
- 9) will have his face take on the appearance of a wild animal. (*Zohar part II, 125*)
- 10) will have his soul acquire the impurity of a lizard. (*Or Hachayim Shmini*)
- 11) has entered within him thoughts of atheism and heresy. (*Rambam*)
- 12) unintentionally defiles his soul; with intent - his

### **Whosoever eats forbidden foods...**

soul becomes like that of a lizard. (*Or Hachayim Shmini*)

13) prolongs the coming of the Messiah, (*Bris Mateh Moshe*)

14) does not belong to Hashem y.s. (*Rashi on the verse ... "A Holy Nation"*)

15) brings upon himself the punishment of askorah. (*TalmudShabos 33b*)

16) will see his children turn to evil ways. (*Igre D'pirke 126*)

17) causes terrible blows to fall. (*Or Hachayim Shmini*)

18) even rabbinically forbidden foods, brings one to further sins (*Kav Hayoshor, Avos D'rabeinu Nosonchap. 15*)

19) creates an impurity in his heart and soul (*Mesilas Yeshorim*)

20) feeds his body with prohibited objects. eventually his body will become filled with all types of impurity. (*Nidchai Yisroel chap. 29*)

21) will have impurity become another limb on his body. (*Reishis Chochmo Shar Hakedusho chap. 17*)

22) can never be purified and destroys his share of this world and the world to come. (*Yesh S'char pg. 42*)

23) Because of minimal impurity one can be brought to the depths of Gehinom. (*Arugath Habosem*)

24) Most apikorsim (heretics) have become so due to

**Whosoever eats forbidden foods...**

eating neveilos and treifos. (*Chasam Sofer Kdoshim*)

25) Because of unsuitable shoctim, Jews are unable to earn a livelihood. (*Likutei Moharan*)

26) 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 p. 1 [7]*)

27) will find it impossible to pray with the proper devotion and intention . (*Oir Hagonuz - Parshas Toldos*)

28) The majority of insolent people in every generation, failing in yiras shomayim (fear of Hashem) and non-acceptance of rebuke come about by eating forbidden foods. (*Pri Chodosh -Yoreh Deah 81*)

29) will suffer a punishment whose force is stronger than that of any other sin. (*Yesod Veshoresh Hoavodeh*)

30) will become a heretic and evil. (*Shulchan hatohor- quoting the Ari z.l.*)

31) is to receive lashes and brings further evils upon himself as well and is called evil. Since his body is made up from forbidden foods and he defiles his soul, it becomes difficult for him to observe the mitzvohs of the Torah, and to be G-d fearing.

32) is held captive by his own impurity and is thus unable to ascend to holiness. He is unable to separate himself from his impurity until he is buried in the grave or through consistent penitence and fasting. (*Sefer Tfilo Lemoshe, chap. 68*)



**Whosoever eats forbidden foods...**

33) even unknowingly need to repent for the wrong he has done. (*Sifrei Chasidim in the name of the holy Baal Shem Tov*)

34) will commit other severe sins and will fall prey to the evils of the gentile world. (*Divrei Yoel Parshas Shmini*).

35) forces his soul to become subservient to the body and its physical environs. (*Sefas Emes, Parshes Shmini*)

36) even though he merely is lenient in something which requires stringency, defiles his soul and is unable to comprehend the ideas of the Torah. (*Meor Veshemesh*)

37) is as though his soul has left him and he remains a living corpse and is considered as evil. (*Chasam Sofer Parshas Shmini*)

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## CHAPTER 15

### The Duty to Admonish and Protest - Quotations from Talmud, Zohar, and Midrash

- 1) Anyone who has the ability to protest against the members of his household and does not protest, is seized for the sins of the members of his household, against the people of his city, is seized for the sins of the people of his city, for the entire world, is seized for the sins of the of the entire world (*Shabbos 54b*).
- 2) Since Phinehas should have protested against Hophni, Scripture considers it as though he had sinned (*Shabbos 55b*).
- 3) One who has the ability to protest and does not, the sin is ascribed to him (*Yerushalmi Shabbos ch. 5*).
- 4) Because of four things, the property of householders is given over to the government, (one of which is) because they have the ability to protest and do not do so (*Sukkah 29b*).
- 5) Since the Rabbis were present and did not protest, this indicates that they agreed (*Gittin 56a*).
- 6) Abner was punished (by being killed) because he should have protested against Saul, but did not (*Sanhedrin 20a*).
- 7) Joshua the high priest wore soiled garments because his sons married women unfit for the priesthood, and he did not protest against them (*Sanhedrin 93a*).
- 8) Concerning Zedekiah it is written: "(II Kings 24:19) And he did what was evil in the eyes of the L-rd," because he was able to protest and he did not (*Sanhedrin 103a*).
- 9) If a person learned, taught, observed, (negative commandments), and performed (positive

commandments), but did not protest, he is deemed cursed. On the other hand, if a person did not learn, did not perform (positive commandments), did not observe (negative commandments), did not teach others, and did not have the ability to protest, yet he protested, he is deemed blessed (*Vayikra Rabbah* 25).

10) The Holy One, Blessed be He, said (to the Divine Attribute of Justice): "These are completely righteous men, and these are completely wicked ones." He replied: "It is fully revealed to me that they had the ability to protest, but did not do so." He said to him: "It is fully known to Me that if they had protested, they would not have heeded them." He retorted: "If it is fully known to You, is it fully known to them?" They, therefore, should have protested and allowed themselves to be humiliated for the sanctity of Your Name, and to suffer beatings from the Jews (*Tanhuma Tazria* 9)."

11) "(*Num. 25:4*) Take all the heads of the people and hang them." The sins were attributed to the heads of the people because they did not protest against the people (*Tanhuma Balak* 19).

12) Now who killed them? (i.e. who was responsible for the deaths of all those killed in the civil war against Benjamin because of the killing of the concubine in Gibeah of Benjamin?) Phinehas, because he had the power to protest and did not protest. Now, anyone who has the power to protest and does not protest, to bring the Jews to improve their ways, all blood that is shed among the Jews, is shed because of him (*Yalkut Judges* 68).

13) The great Sanhedrin should have tied iron ropes around their waists and lifted their cloths above their knees and gone throughout all the cities of Israel, one day to Lachish, one day to Eglon, one day to Hebron, one day to Jerusalem, to teach them proper manners (*ibid*).

14) Jerusalem was destroyed only because they did not admonish one another (*Shabbos 119*).

15) If a Rabbinical scholar is loved by the people of his city, it is not because he is superior, but because he does not admonish them concerning matters of Heaven (*Kethuboth 105b*).

16) When the footsteps of the Messiah will be heard, there will be no admonition (*Sotah 49a*).

17) Because of what did Jeroboam merit the kingdom? Because he castigated Solomon (*Sanhedrin 101b*).

18) One should love admonition, for as long as there is admonition in the world, goodness and blessing come to the world, and evil departs from the world (*Tamid 28a*).

19) Everyone who admonishes his friend for the sake of Heaven, merits the portion of the Holy One, Blessed be He, moreover, a cord of grace is drawn over him (*Tamid 28*).

20) Anyone who knows how to admonish and admonishes the public, brings content to his Creator (*Tana d've Eliyahu Rabba 3*).

21) One who knows that his fellow is wicked, yet he flatters him, he knows that he is full of sins, yet he says to him, "You are righteous," deserves that all the curses in the Torah come upon him. But, one who admonishes his fellow that he repent, takes the blessings of the one who is admonished. If he accepts the admonition and repents, he, too, receives blessings (*Yalkut Devarim 793*).

22) Is there any man who hates his son? But, since he does not admonish him concerning Torah, wisdom, and proper manners, he will eventually hate him. If he admonishes him, however, he will eventually love him (*Yalkut Proverbs 950*).

23) At that time, the Divine Attribute of Justice rose and

said before Him: Even on the righteous among them, You shall write on their foreheads a *Tav* of blood, *Tav* standing for *Tamuth*, you shall die. The Holy One, Blessed be He, replied and said, "Why?" She answered, "Because they did not admonish your children with words of admonition, and they did not instruct them not to sin." The Holy One, replied, "It is revealed before me that if they had admonished them, they would not have listened". The Attribute of Justice replied, "Even though they would not have accepted, nevertheless, the righteous should have rebuked them". The Holy One acceded and proceeded to treat the righteous of that generation in Jerusalem as wrongdoers. Six angels of destruction were dispensed to Jerusalem and they devastated it (*The Letters of R' Akiva*).

- 24) Whoever is able to admonish and does not do so is stricken with *tzaraas* (*Zohar Part 3 part 45b*).
- 25) The righteous man is conscientious to go to the wrongdoers to help them turn away from their sins. He informs them of the heavenly judgment and the punishment of Gehinom. He does not allow himself to rest day or night until he has rebuked them and brought to full repentance (*Zohar Pg. 20b*).
- 26) All Jews are responsible for each other (*Shevuos 39a*).
- 27) Even the perfectly righteous are held responsible for the sins of their generation ... for not rebuking the wicked (*Midrash Tanchuma Mishpatim*).
- 28) Some sins are so great that those who commit them are not afforded Divine assistance to repent. Included among them is one who was able to rebuke others, be it a group or individuals, and did not do so but left them in their backsliding (*Rambam Hilchos Tshuva 4:1*).

29) It is a Jew's duty to protest against sinners. Anyone who has the ability to protest, and does not do so, is held responsible for that sin (*Remah Yore Deah 334:48*).

30) (Evil) decrees fall only upon who could have protested and did not (*Yalkut Ruth on the verse, "And Elimelech died ..."*).

31) Anyone who says that Solomon actually sinned is in error. (The sages ask) But it is written, "and Solomon sinned .."? (They answer) because he should have reprimanded his wives and did not, scripture considers it as if he actually sinned. Rabbi Yehuda says in the name of Shmuel that Solomon would have preferred to be a lackey to a foreign thing rather than have it to be written in Scriptures that he sinned. Rashi explains the Gemorah to mean that he would rather be hired to chop wood and draw water for idol worship. This teaches us how severe the rebuke is for one that could have protested and did not (*Shabbos 56b*).

32) For this the people died in the civil war against Gibeah: Hashem said to them, "For My honor you did not protest, but for the honor of mortals you do protest!" (*Sanhedrin 103b*).

33) The verse, "and I shall destroy from amongst you the righteous and the wicked," is referring to the righteous who are imperfect. Since they were able to protest and did not, they are considered imperfect (*Avoda Zara 4a*).

34) Aaron did not protest when Moses hit the rock at Mei Meriva for he considered himself as Moses' disciple. However, one need not give honor to a teacher when there is a profanation of the Divine Name. Because he did not protest, he was punished in the same way as Moses (*Midrash Tanchuma, Chukas*).

35) From Pinchas one should learn to be zealous for Hashem when there is a profanation of the Divine Name of the Torah. The importance of this is shown by the gratitude and good favor through which Hashem gave the priestly covenant of peace to Pinchas (*Shelah Hakodesh, Ten Praises*).

36) It is written in *Midrash Tanchuma, Re'ei*, that many upright people lived in Noah's generation but, nevertheless, perished with the others. The reason that those upright people perished is that they did not protest (the wrongdoings of the others), unlike Noah who did protest, as our sages point out in *Breishis Raba* on the verse "They hated the Admonishor in the gate" (*The Chida, Chomas Anach, Parshas Noah*).

37) One who does not oppose those who persist in their evil ways is punished for all their sins. Furthermore, he transgresses the negative command, "You shall not bear his sin ..." It is obligatory upon every G-d fearing and G-d loving person and those of pure heart to arouse zeal ... (*Sha'arei T'shuvah, Sha'ar 3:59*).

38) *The Remah (Yoreh Deah 334, Choshen Mishpat 12)* quotes the Responsa of the *MaHariv 157* that in our times we do not protest against wrongdoers because of the danger involved. The *Bechor Shor* (quoted in the *Piskei T'shuva*) says that many, basing their actions upon this decision, justify themselves in flattering influential people even though there is no certain danger. This rationalization, which has weakened the Torah, is a blatant mistake, for the words of the *MaHariv* were said only when there is certain danger. Were this not so, then the precept, "Thou shalt not fear a man," is null and void. Certainly this precept was meant for a situation in which there is a reason for fear.

A judge who is appointed to punish wrongdoers and fulfills this precept, will merit the reward of Pinchas, the zealous, and no evil will befall him.

39) *The Zohar part 1 pg. 239b* tells us not to envy wrongdoers, for anyone who sees their actions and does not arouse zeal transgresses three negative commands. For this reason a man should sever relations with them and have a separate way from them.

40) The Angel of Death does not have the same power over a man who is zealous for Hashem as he has over other men (*Zohar 29b*).

41) With anyone who is able to protest and does so, thus avenging Hashem from the wicked of this world, Hashem seals a covenant with him and his seed, just as He did with Pinchas (*Reishis Chochma Sha'ar HaYirah ch. 12*)

42) If even a minor sin receives public and juridical acceptance, this is the product of corruptness, and unpardonable sin, and furthermore, the entire people are held guilty. Forgiveness is possible only after a punishment has been executed upon the entire nation. This was the sin of Sodom (*HaAkeida 20*).

43) Because they did not protest against evildoers, the future generations learned from their bad ways (*Rashi Sotah 41b*).

44) It is clearly derived from both the Oral and Written law that one who can protest and does not do so, is held responsible for that sin and for neglecting a positive commandment. Furthermore, he is considered in the category of the wicked (*Chinuch Mitzvah 239*).

45) The judges of Israel are responsible for the sins of their people (*Yalkut Yechezkel 341*).

46) *It is written in Yechezkel 3:17*, "Ben Adam: A sentinel



have I appointed you for the Family of Israel and you have heard the word of My mouth .. but you did not speak up to warn the wicked one concerning his evil way to save his life. He, the wicked one, shall die for his sin, and I shall demand his blood from you.”

47) It is possible that Moses, assured of the righteousness of his brother Aaron, knew that his intention in making the golden calf was not evil.

However, he accused him for the evil-doing of the people. Since their downfall came through him, he was deserving of rebuke (*Rambam Ki Sisa*).

48) Why do many Torah scholars die young? (The answer given is) that they allow themselves to be disgraced, for they do not avenge like a snake, the words of Torah and the fear of Heaven (*Avos of R' Nasson ch. 29*).

49) There were great men of Israel who saw evil and looked the other way. The Holy One remarked to them, “There will come a time when I will do likewise” (*Midrash Rabbah Lamentations*).

50) In summary, I would like to cite that which R' Chaim Sofer writes in his illustrious work, *Sha'arei Chaim 6a* “Woe to us from the day of Judgment; Woe to us from the Day of Rebuke, when the time comes for Hashem to search through the action of every living being and it will be found written: This righteous man desecrated the Sabbath; this pious man transgressed the prohibition of Niddah; this G-d fearing man transgressed the prohibition against eating non-Kosher food and wearing shaatnes; this holy man is guilty of having realtions with a married woman. All believers will be astonished and wonder, for these men were part of a generation of righteous. But Hashem will reply in wrath, “Behold, it was in your power to rebuke such and such a wicked man. Why did you not remember him and remind him of his sin?”