

KASHRUT BULLETIN # 20

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

STORIES OF KASHRUT

THE GREAT BENEFACTOR IN NEW YORK CITY IS A HIDDEN SWINDLER WHO FED JEWS WITH NEVELOT AND TEREFOOT

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 kashrut 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.

A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WITH WHICH MANY ACTS OF KINDNESS WERE PERFORMED

This Jew was a pillar of the Jewish community, a strictly Orthodox Jew with a long beard and a reputation as a "Machnis Orchim" (Always inviting guests to his house) 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.

ONE NIGHT THE POLICE DISCOVERS HIS EVIL ACTS

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.

NOT ONLY THE OWNER WAS GUILTY BUT ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THE KASHRUT BUSINESS WERE GUILTY AS WELL

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 the Rabbis who give the certification of Kashrut 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.

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

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

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO RELY ON THESE PEOPLE?

THE MOST UPRIGHT BUTCHER IS A PARTNER OF AMALEK

See further the last chapter of Kiddushin (82a): "The most upright butcher is a partner of Amalek." Rashi explains that many cases of questionable kashrut come to his hand, and in trying to save money, declares them kosher, and - sell them as such. We can see to what extent the Rabbis evaluate the pitfalls resulting from the butchers, that they did not hesitate to use the sharpest epithet when referring to them. The expression, "partner of Amalek," is, by far, the sharpest epithet used in the Talmud. One's hair can stand on end when one thinks about how far this matter extends. For a question of doubtful kashrut the Rabbis called him such a name, and not only a usual butcher, but "the most upright butcher " so that no one can be confident in himself and say that since he appointed a reliable butcher, no pitfalls can result from him, and it is accepted that a Torah scholar does not allow any pitfall to result from his doings, especially if the butcher is really learned, since the Rabbis say that a Torah scholar will commit a minor infraction in order to prevent an ignorant person from committing a major infraction.

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)

WHO CAN CONTRADICT THE WORDS OF THE PELE YOETZ?

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

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

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