

PARSHAS EMOR

COUNT FOR YOURSELVES FROM THE DAY AFTER SHABBOS -

The Targum translates matzo as petira. The Zutshka Rebbe suggests that this hints at the idea that when we eat matzo this exempts us from all troubles, pain and sufferings - like the word patur. The reason for this is that matzo hints at the attribute of humility and when a person acquires the trait of humility he is exempted and naftir from all evils, whether retroactively or in the upcoming future. The yetzer hara has no control over someone who is humble, and regarding the past the yetzer looks at him and his past as matters of little or no consequence since he has humbled himself to a nobody, a zero. If he is so lowly and humble that he is like a nobody, like a no one, then the yetzer gives up because what is the value of prosecuting a nobody or going after no one?!

When Bnei Yisroel were still in Egypt they connected to the attribute of humility hinted at by the matzo, as it says Shemos 12:8 "They shall eat the meat that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs," right then and there, they were immediately saved from all accusations and merited the redemption.

The root of all tikkunim that mends and rectifies eating is the act of eating matzo. Therefore the pasuk juxtaposes these two ideas one next to the other: Devarim 11:15-16 "And I will give grass in your field for your livestock, and you will eat and be sated. Beware, lest your heart be misled. . ." as Rashi explains (ad loc pasuk 16) "Beware, [lest your heart be misled]: Since you will eat and be full, beware that you do not rebel [against the Holy One, blessed is He], for nobody rebels against the Holy One, blessed is He, except out of satiety, as it is said, "lest you eat and be sated... and your herds and your flocks multiply... What does he [Moses] say after this? "and your heart grows haughty, and you forget the Lord, your God" (Dev. 8:12-14)."

We see that by eating, a person is liable to end up haughty and proud, therefore he requires extra safeguarding and precaution to prevent himself from sin. If he always remembers how humble and lowly, he is and what a lowly animalistic act eating is as it one of the things that makes us most similar to a beast (Chagiga 16a). This is the best protection available to prevent us from sin. This is why we eat matzo which is tied to humility to teach us this important lesson to protect ourselves from being drawn after haughtiness, vanity and a heart filled with arrogance and vanity. Instead, we need to keep humility in mind, and then we will remain spiritual.

This is also why after we eat the kezayis matzo that we begin the next day to count Sefiras HaOmer. The Omer offering was made of barley grains and that is animal feed, this is meant to rectify as a refinement and tikkun for our animalistic acts of eating.

Only after the kezayis matzo can we even begin to work on refining our eating. When a person remembers how lowly he is when he eats, the act that gives such pleasure and delight in such a physical thing, is truly animalistic, like a beast. Whereas the real primary reason for eating is to refine and uplift the fallen sparks of holiness and to strengthen the body to serve Hashem properly. By having this in mind then when we eat it will be done in sanctity and purity. And then our thoughts will also be holy and pure and our character traits and virtues will be refined by such an act of eating. All of man's substance and essence is built through his eating and the primary avodah of the days of Sefiras HaOmer is to refine and fix our traits through tikkun hamidos.



The Rebbe shlita baking matzos for this Pesach.