



פרשת וארא

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Dangerous Mixtures

Contents:

Part I. Unnatural Mixtures - 1

Part II. Forced Mixtures - 4

Part III. Separating the Mixture - 7

Part I. Unnatural Mixtures

A Strange Name

One of the most extraordinary of all *makkos* was the plague of *Arov*, when a mixture of wild animals marauded through the Egyptian villages. Now, all of the *makkos* were unusual of course, each in its own way; but when it comes to *Arov* we note that even its name is unusual. Because all the *makkos*, the name tells you what it was. *Dam* was blood, *Tzefardeia* was frogs, *Kinnim* was lice, and so on. But *Arov* just means 'Mixture' – nothing is mentioned in the name about what the *makkah* was.

Again, I want you to understand the question: Blood is the plague. Frogs is the plague. But the plague of 'Mixture'? Mixture of what? It could be a mixture of sugar and cocoa and flour. **הַעֵקֶר הַחֵסֵר** – *the most important piece of information is missing*. And that's something that has to be studied.

Pedagogic Plagues

Now, don't think it's a waste of time to study these things. After all, that's what the *makkos* were intended for – to be studied. We should never forget that Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu that the purpose of the *makkos* was **וַיִּדְעוּ** – so that they should know (Shemos 7:5, 14:4, 14:18). It wasn't only to punish the enemy and to set us free. They were intended as lessons in understanding the world; that the world has an Owner and that He reacts to what men do. **וַיִּדְעוּ מִצָּרִים כִּי אֲנִי ה'** – that's the purpose!

And we understand of course that it wasn't only for the benefit of *Mitzrayim* that these *makkos* were teaching *emunah*. Even more than them, it was given for the *Bnei Yisroel* to learn. Everybody is expected to benefit from what Hashem does in this world but of all the *talmidim* for whom the lessons are intended, the *Am Yisroel* is the most important. The lessons are for us. **וַיִּדְעוּ מִצָּרִים כִּי אֲנִי ה'** means 'even' *Mitzrayim* – even *Mitzrayim* should learn.

And so the *Bnei Yisroel* surely learned; it was an entire subject, a *sugya*. A whole *mesichta* it was –

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Mesichta Makkos. Every *makkah* was another *perek* in the *mesichta*. And our forefathers sat and studied that *mesichta*; they paid attention to details and talked them over. They spent a long time on it.

Ancient Current Events

It was a family affair; the father and the grandfather and the wives and the sons and daughters they were all in one little house crowded together – there were no Pesach hotels in Mitzrayim – and they were sitting and talking: What's the news of the day? The current *makkah*; the *makkah* that's right now in vogue.

To us it's old news but to them it was happening right now and therefore, it was the rage of the moment. It was exciting and so they talked and talked and talked. And they went into all the details. And we're expected to do the same – that's why it's in the Torah, so that we should study it like they did.

After all, Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't send events *stam* that are closed up, that are entirely mysterious. He puts into each event some kind of a clue to give us a hint as to why it came so that we should gain the full benefit.

And so, every *makkah* that came upon the Egyptians was planned with precision, so that its lessons would be understandable. What was the reason that this *makkah* came? And why did it come in such and such way? If you'll study the *medrashim*, you will discover many lessons. And in some cases you can use your own head and discover lessons yourself.

Holy Homework

Now, you shouldn't imagine that you'll discover much by one second of thought or one minute. It's too important for that. If a person, *lehavdil*, goes to school and he pays money for a course and the instructor gives a lecture, does he spend one minute trying to understand it? No! He goes home and he reads his notes because he wants to get his money's worth. He's not lazy; he tries to understand.

The Bnei Yisroel weren't lazy about it. Every *makkah* that came, they studied what was happening and looked for its lessons. They didn't say, "It's a punishment, that's all." No, they weren't like that. They understood that הַיְסוּר גוֹיִם – *when Hakadosh Baruch Hu brings troubles upon the nations*, הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ – *He's showing something*, הַקְּלִמֹר אֲרָם דַּעַת – *He's teaching man knowledge* (Tehillim 94:10). And they understood that Hashem has plans, and plans within plans, and that whatever efforts they put into trying to understand His lessons would be well worth it.

Activated Animals

And therefore when they saw troops of wild animals descending upon the towns and villages it was something remarkable to them. After all, ordinarily an animal is shy; it's afraid of humans. If he's hungry sometimes he'll come close to where humans live but otherwise he keeps away. But now, from the forests, the desert, all the animals came out; they were activated. They lost their shyness and they made their way into the villages and cities and attacked humans. It was something never seen before.

But besides that, there was something even more bizarre; it was a mixture, an *arov*. A very queer thing, that the animals that usually avoid each other – they travel either alone or they travel in packs of their own kind – now they came together in troops. A motley troop of animals, mingling with each other in ways that was the opposite of their natures.

You know, among the notable phenomena is the fact of the segregation of the species. It's the *yad Hashem* that has put an instinct into every *min*, every kind; whether it's insects or birds or mammals, reptiles or fish, that they remain separate from each other. I'm not even talking now about propagation. That, of course; but even to mix, to join forces, is unusual.

Now, it's true that you'll find some exceptions to this but it's only in situations where there is some mutual benefit. In some ant colonies there are beetles that live together with the ants in harmony

because these beetles are being used by the ants. The ants stroke them to produce honey from the beetles; they milk them. Or sometimes it's the other way around – the beetles are using the ants.

Egyptian Exceptions

Even in Mitzrayim, before *Makkas Arov*, there were such things. If you go to the Nile you'll find there the Egyptian crocodile. It's a fierce animal; it can snap a person's head off with ease. Now there's another animal, a bird, that also makes it home near the Nile. It's a certain wading bird; the plover I think. So this plover makes its way over to the crocodile, the crocodile opens its mouth and the plover picks food from the teeth of the crocodile. It gets some of its nutrition from the scraps in the teeth of the crocodile; and the crocodile allows it. Instead of eating the plover for a snack it lets the plover do its thing because it keeps the crocodile's teeth clean and healthy. A crocodile needs good teeth after all.

But those are exceptions; those are cases where Hashem from the beginning established that symbiotic relationship. Otherwise, there's no such thing. Our backyards are full of cats. The alleys are full of dogs. They never attempt anything except to fight, to destroy each other. Very rarely will they cooperate even to attack a human.

But now, something different happened. Now there was a mixture. In huge numbers! And the Bnei Yisroel were amazed. But not amazed like we are when we see something out of the ordinary – you'll go to a circus and you'll see a monkey balancing a ball on his nose. And he's riding a bicycle too; so you're amazed. It means your nerves are tickled. But the Bnei Yisroel didn't have ticklish minds like we do. They had very big minds.

And so when the Yisroel looked through his windows and saw these animals trooping by in mingled packs, packs that had never traveled together before, he was thinking, "What kind of business is this?" He never saw such a thing before – a wolf and a bear mingling together? What's that about?

It's For You!

Now, he knew of course that it was intended as a punishment for Mitzrim – sometimes the Egyptian masters would sic an animal on a Jew and now they were getting it back – but he knew it was more than that. If that was all, let the Egyptian be attacked by a wolf and finished. But here my Egyptian neighbor is being attacked by a wolf and a bear together. A queer thing that never happened before! Where a wolf is, a bear isn't, and where a bear is, a wolf isn't. And here both together were attacking one Egyptian! Hakadosh Baruch Hu is causing the animals to come in a confusion, an unnatural way. It needs an explanation.

Now in those good days we had leaders. Not like today when the rabbis are afraid of their congregants – they might lose them to the rabbi down the block. In those days they had leaders who told them the way it is. Moshe Rabbeinu spoke to them; the *ziknei hador* spoke too. You know what they said? "It's a message for you! You're the ones being criticized here. The *arov* is an unnatural mixture because here also, among us, an unnatural mixture took place."

Taking the Hint

What was it? It says that the Bnei Yisroel so multiplied that, **וַתְּמַלֵּא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם** – *the land became full of them* (Shemos 1:7). 'The land' means that the land where they weren't supposed to be, outside of Goshen; Jews moved in right next to the Mitzrim. And what happens when you live among them? You begin to act like them. The Yalkut Shimoni (162:11) says that **שָׁנְתוּ מַלְאוֹ בְּתֵי טְרִטְיָאוֹת** means **וַתְּמַלֵּא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם** and **וּבְתֵי קִרְקִסְיָאוֹת מֵהֶם** – that eventually some of the Bnei Yisroel even began to join the Egyptians in their public amusements.

What happened? The worst thing that could happen to a Jew: **וַיִּתְעַרְבוּ בְּגוֹיִם וַיִּלְמְדוּ מֵעֲשֵׂיהֶם** – *When the Bnei Yisroel, some of them, began to mingle with the gentiles they learned their ways* (Tehillim 106:35). That's the meaning of the *possuk*: **וַיִּתְעַרְבוּ בְּגוֹיִם** – *they began to mingle with the nations* and the next thing

is, it's automatic, **וילמדו מעשיהם** – they learned from them.

And now, Hakadosh Baruch Hu was showing them by this sign from heaven – they looked outside the window and they saw a very unnatural thing – and they were being reminded that they too were acting in an unnatural way. That's even more unnatural than what the animals are doing – it's more unnatural for Bnei Yisroel to mingle with non-Jews than if wolves and bears would mingle.

And now it hit them like a ton of bricks: *Arov!* Such a curious name Hashem gave to this *makkah*. Mixture?! But now they understood. Because that was the most important purpose here, that lesson of the danger of mixture. The Am Yisroel is **הן עם לבָדָד**; it's a separate kind of people. They don't have anything to do with other nations, the styles of other nations, the modes of living, the way of thinking of other nations – it's not for the Am Yisroel. And we needed to learn that lesson.

Part II. Forced Mixtures

The Misplaced Makkah

So you'll ask, why should the Mitzrim suffer from the *makkah*? It's a good question *lichorah*. After all, it was the Bnei Yisroel who were mixing in where they didn't belong so why didn't the *makkah* of mixed animals come upon the Bnei Yisroel?

So you'll tell me that the Mitzrim deserved it too? OK, that's true – so it should have come on both of them. The Mitzrim would get what they deserve and the Bnei Yisroel too would be taught a lesson.

But actually, even before the *makkah* came Hakadosh Baruch Hu already told the Bnei Yisroel the answer to this question: **וְשִׁמְתִי פְדוּת** – I'm going to make a redemption, **בֵּין עַמִּי וּבֵין עַמְּךָ** – between my people and the Egyptians (Shemos 8:19).

The Sages (Shemos Rabbah 11:2) tell us that the word *pedus*, redemption, indicates that the Bnei Yisroel were actually in real danger – only that they were redeemed. **מִלְמַד שְׂהִי יִשְׂרָאֵל רְאוּיִן לְלִקוֹת בְּזוֹ הַמִּכָּה**

– The plague of *arov* was actually destined to come upon the Bnei Yisroel, **וַיִּתֵּן הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא פְּדִינָם הַמִּצְרִים**, – only that Hashem redeemed them by punishing the Mitzrim instead. It means that this *makkah*, more than all the others, was intended originally for the Bnei Yisroel; only that an exchange was made and the Egyptians became victims instead.

Learning From Others

And so when the wolf and the bear were chomping on a wicked Mitzri, the Bnei Yisroel were quaking; they were shaking in their sandals because they were told beforehand, 'This *makkah* is really intended for you; take note of that!'

You have to know, these ideas weren't invented by the Sages of the Medrash; they're traditions from the Bnei Yisroel who sat there in their homes and observed what was taking place. The Bnei Yisroel of those days heard this *peirush* from Moshe Rabbeinu and the *Zekeinim* of that *dor*. It was explained to them: "What's going to happen next week is really intended for us. We were the ones who are supposed to learn from the lesson."

Now, the truth is that the lesson is much more effective if a *ben Yisroel* would be attacked by a wolf and a bear at the same time; a lesson like that is much harder to ignore. But Hakadosh Baruch Hu said the following *possuk*: **נָתַתִּי כַּפָּרָה מִצְרַיִם** – I am making Mitzrayim your atonement; they'll atone for you, **כּוּשׁ וּסְבָא** – Kush and S'va, those are provinces of Egypt, **וְתִהְיֶיךָ** – they'll be instead of you (Yeshaya 43:3). It means they'll be your redemption; instead of you, Egypt will have to suffer from the *arov* (Shemos Rabbah *ibid.*).

Shifting the Blame

Now, there's a good reason for that. Don't think it's arbitrary or unjust. Because Hakadosh Baruch Hu said, "Who are their teachers in wickedness? Who introduced wickedness to the Bnei Yisroel? Only the Mitzrim. And so, if it's the fault of Mitzrayim that they're learning wickedness, **נָתַתִּי כַּפָּרָה מִצְרַיִם** – I'll give Mitzrayim as your redemption. Let Mitzrayim

have the visitation of that *makkah* and you should learn your lesson by watching and thinking.”

That’s an important principle. *The gentiles are to blame for the sins of the Jewish people!* If you see a Jewish boy who is a hippie or is part hippie or on the way to becoming a hippie, he didn’t learn that in the *beis medrash*. If you see a Jew lying in the gutter – physically or mentally – it’s not because he learned it from Jews.

You know, Jews never invented an idol. Study Jewish history; you’ll never find it. There’s no Jewish idol in the whole Tanach. Did Jews sometimes sin and worship idols? Yes; but never was it a Jewish idol. All idolatry that we find in our history was something that seeped in from our neighbors. It was always imitations of the idols of the gentiles.

All the trouble, all the sins, the immorality, that you find by the Jewish nation, they come from imitating the gentiles. If you see divorce and rebellious youth and immorality proliferating among the Jews, it’s not our invention. All the wickedness, atheism and evolution and materialism and everything else, it’s not a Jewish product; it comes from the examples given by the general gentile community. If you study what’s really doing, you see that our big problems aren’t Jewish problems; they’re gentile problems.

Shikkur Shkutzim

I’ll describe a scene I saw with my own eyes. I used to walk in East Flatbush Shabbos morning. It was a gentile neighborhood, a white gentile neighborhood in those days. On Saturday mornings I used to see a nice gentleman, well-dressed, seven o’clock in the morning lying fast asleep on the sidewalk. Fast asleep! He was dead drunk. I’m sure he got up later and boasted, “Ooh last night I really had a night!” He was so proud of himself; he was *really* drunk last night.

I saw that again and again. Gentiles wobbling out of bars. Gentiles passed out on the sidewalk. Drunk gentiles fighting. But I never saw a single Jew. Even the *mechallel Shabbos* Jews; they wouldn’t

stoop so low. Because even the worst ones among us understood, at least to some extent, that **הָן עָם לְבָרָד יִשְׁכֵּן** – we are a nation that dwells alone, **וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשְׁבּוּ** – we aren’t counted among the *umos ha’olam*. We are different, entirely different.

Shikkur Jews

So how is it that you find such things today? Today, you could find Jews who are also dead drunk on the sidewalk. You’ll find worse. After generations of living among gentiles, of cozying up to gentile attitudes, finally they succeeded in becoming like *goyim*; and today we’ve reached that great moment in our history when all of their problems have become ours. Today the Jew is beset with gentile problems because he mingled with the gentile world.

Take an American Jewish boy. He hasn’t the slightest idea that all the things that are bothering him, all the troubles and tests, they’re all gentile influences. The problem is that he never understood himself as disassociated from the gentiles; he doesn’t understand that he is not one with them and therefore all the *tzaros*, all the troubles that the gentiles are suffering, he has accepted upon himself. He feels that he is one with them and so their problems become his problems too. He’s bothered, he’s excited, about whatever bothers them.

Minding Our Own Business

But take a Jew who has no bridge with the gentiles. So their problems have nothing to do with him! What’s his business if the gentile youth are running wild? They want to jump off the roofs? They want to shoot up with dope? He’s not interested at all. It’s like people on a different planet are doing crazy things. The troubles of the gentile world are not his troubles!

Those Jews who are living a Jewish life, who turned their backs on mingling, on acclimating themselves to the gentile environment, don’t have gentile problems. That’s why when you go let’s say to the synagogues in Williamsburg you’re not going to hear any lectures on the drug problem. You’ll listen for months and months; years you’ll listen –

never once will you hear it. When you go into the Flatbush synagogues, however, the rabbis have one burning subject: The drinking problem among the youth, the drug problem.

Over and over again they're talking about gentile problems. At the conventions of the Union Orthodox Jewish Congregations, it's a favorite theme. Young Israel too; it's a favorite theme in their magazines and in their lectures. Here's a series of lectures for Jews. Are they talking about *teshuva*, about *emunah*? No; the drug problem!

"Is that our problem?"

"Yes," they say, "it's our problem."

You know why it's your problem? Because you are part of the gentile world. And so even if it's not your problem, you think it is. And sooner or later, because you're mingling, it actually becomes your problem. So now you have Jewish drunks and Jewish dope addicts. Even Jewish murderers we were *zocheh* too.

You Get What You Ask For

When you bring the gentile into your home so he comes along with all of his baggage. You think that you're just turning on the television; it's an innocent thing. Absolutely not! When you turn on the television and you let a gentile climb in through that window right into your dining room, so he brings with him all of his problems too, all of his corruption. It means you're murdering your family.

Suppose a gentile climbed in through your window; he stuck his mug in your window and started talking. You'd put your foot into his face and shove him out. At least you'd call the police. But now, because he's coming in through a wire, so it's ok. You'll even accept what he's telling you and showing you. And it's not one *goy* – if you turn the knob so another *goy* sticks his face in through your window; you turn again so it's a different *goy*. And you sit there with your wife and your children and you're listening to him; with *respect* you listen!

So how can you expect anything different? If you live together with the gentile world so their

faults become yours, their problems become yours. Divorce becomes a Jewish problem. The desire for luxuries becomes a Jewish problem. Immorality becomes a Jewish problem. Youth in rebellion becomes a Jewish problem. All the gentile problems become ours.

Stop Mixing

And therefore the biggest problem facing the Jews today – Brooklyn Jews, Yerushalayim Jews, Williamsburg Jews, Lakewood Jews, Manhattan Jews surely, Jews everywhere – our biggest problem is how to be *patur*, how to free ourselves, from the influence of the environment. Even the best ones; even if we don't watch their television and we don't read their newspapers and we don't go to their schools but the atmosphere is saturated with their *shtus* and their lies. And you can't help yourself because, naturally, the majority surrounding you will have an unfavorable influence on your mind.

And so if we can divest ourselves, if we can rid ourselves of the influence of the nations of the world, that's the number one solution to all of our problems. To degentilize ourselves; to get rid of the influence of the outside world. As much as possible we have to cut loose from the gentile influence.

Now I can't enumerate all the ways of cutting loose because that will take an extra lecture, but it's enough to know that it's the mixing that is the big problem in our private lives and in our history as a Jewish community; because it means we are absorbing gentile attitudes. The outside world is what causes all kinds of losses, and the biggest loss of all is the loss of the true Torah *hashkafa* – proper Torah attitudes.

Live Naturally

And therefore, as much as it's our responsibility – *הָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל רְאוּיִן לְלִקּוֹת בְּזוֹ הַמִּכָּה* – it should have come on us – but it's the gentiles who are blamed for this great ruination we see in the Jewish street. If the Am Yisroel is forsaking the whole Torah or parts of the Torah it's squarely on the shoulders of gentiles.

Of course the Jew has *bechirah*; he has the choice of resisting bad influence. And the one who chooses to follow the bad examples of the gentiles is not exonerated – if he doesn't stake the warning of Arov then he too will go lost; many of the Bnei Yisroel went lost in *Makkas Choshech*. But because the source of trouble is them, so Hakadosh Baruch Hu teaches us the lesson on their shoulders.

And that's why Arov came for the Mitzrim, because they were the biggest source of the trouble. But the biggest beneficiaries of the lesson were the Bnei Yisroel who were watching. "What's that about?! Animals coming in a confusion, in such an unnatural mixture?" It was *very* unnatural! But it was a reminder that it's even *more* unnatural for Bnei Yisroel to mingle with non-Jews than if wolves and bears would mingle. And when the Bnei Yisroel looked through their windows and they saw these animals trooping by in queer packs that never traveled together before, so they were thinking – they consulted their leaders and it was explained to them: "It really was intended for us because we mixed unnaturally. And therefore we are the ones who were supposed to learn the lesson most."

Part III. Separating the Mixture

Korban Pesach Secrets

And now we come to the subject of the *korban pesach*. Because after learning this lesson of *Makkas Arov*, the nation had to take action. You can't just sit back in your chair and relax when you learn a lesson like that – something has to change! You have to put your foot down: "I'm done with being a half gentile, or quarter gentile. It's time to expel these gentile attitudes from my mind."

And that's one of the secrets of the mitzvah of *korban pesach*. (Shemos 12). Because what was the outstanding feature of the *korban pesach*?

We understand from the words of Moshe Rabbeinu himself what it was. When Moshe heard the mitzvah of *korban pesach* from Hashem, he was

astounded. "You mean to say that we should publicly take a sheep and slaughter it?!"

You know, the sheep was considered *kadosh* to the Egyptians. It was a god to them. Now, why it was *kadosh* to them is not my business now to tell you but it's a well known fact. Moshe Rabbeinu said, הֲיִן נִזְבַּח אֶת תּוֹעֵבַת מִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִסְקְלֵנוּ – "How can we even think of such a thing? If we slaughter their *avodah zarah*, they'll massacre us!" (Shemos 8:22).

So you'll say, "Well, we'll do it on the sly. We'll just take the lamb right before the time comes to *shecht* it, just a minute before the *shechitah*, that way the *goy* won't have a chance to see what we're doing."

Potential Pogroms

No, you can't do that. Hashem says, מִקְחוּ מִבְּעֹשׂוֹר – On the tenth day of Nissan, long before Pesach, you have to take it. It means it had to be a public demonstration. It wasn't hidden; everyone could see the Jew pulling the lamb through the street.

So the Mitzri would ask, "Hey, where are you taking that?"

And the Yisroel had to answer, "I'm bringing a *zevach*, a sacrifice."

"A what?! You're going to slaughter a lamb?!"

To the Egyptians, that's a terrible thing. It's like the cow in India. The cow is holy; it's worshiped. I don't know how it is now, but not so long ago if you kicked a cow in India, that was the last thing you did in your life. And Egypt was no different; only it was the sheep, not the cow.

And so you can be sure that Moshe Rabbeinu was worried about that. וְלֹא יִסְקְלֵנוּ, he said. They're going to stone us all. It would cause a pogrom. All of Egypt would get up in a rage and massacre the Bnei Yisroel. "Why do we have to make such a demonstration?" Moshe asked.

That's the Point

So Hakadosh Baruch Hu told him, "That's exactly it!" That's the mitzvah of *korban pesach*! To slaughter what is considered by the *umos ha'olam* to be so

precious! To make an open demonstration that what's important to them, what's untouchable to them, what's impossible for them to think of slaughtering – we go ahead and we disregard it completely.

The only way to remain separate, to not absorb the outside influences, is by reminding ourselves again and again that we disregard completely what is important to the *goyim*; it's nothing to us.

Makkas Arov taught the Bnei Yisroel that mixing is unnatural for us – we are different and must remain different – and the *korban pesach* was a proclamation that we are committed to that way of life. That's what it means to *shecht* the *avodah zarah* of the *goyim*.

Slaughtering Their Ideals

Not only the lamb; that's just a symbol. In general, it's a *klal gadol* that the Am Yisroel disregards the ideals of the *umos ha'olam*. It doesn't mean you tell a *goy* to his face; you don't have to insult him. But we can't hide the truth that we are fundamentally different from the *umos ha'olam*.

Of course, we're polite and kindly; we treat everyone with decency and respect. And we're loyal citizens who follow the laws of the country – we should follow the laws even more than the gentiles do. But we are different; we are fundamentally different from the *umos ha'olam*. And the *korban pesach* means that we remain different only because we oppose with a complete disregard all the ways of the *umos ha'olam*. We disregard their holy feelings. We disregard their worship. We disregard the honor they give to their religion. To us, it's nothing at all. It's *hevel vorik*. **שָׁהֵם מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהַבֵּל וְרִיק** – they bow down to nothing. **כִּי כָּל אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים** – All of their gods are nothing-gods. We say that all the time.

But not only their religion. All of their ideas and attitudes, their *middos* and *hashkafos* and interests and practices, we're not interested! We have to slaughter the ideals of literature, of drama. It never happened, it's all false. Now, I understand that people are already accustomed to fiction, to

imaginary stories that never happened, but it's time now to get unaccustomed.

Mock the Movies

You have to slaughter their movies. How could it be that a *frum* Jew watches gentile movies? What are movies for? To tell you things that never happened. A fool sits down, a wicked man, and writes a book and then they put it into movies and his stupid ideas are being transmitted now to millions of people.

All movies have to do with women, immorality, all stupid things. It's good for horses in the stables. They're interested in such things; they're interested in female horses. But human beings should understand the difference between a man and a woman is made by heaven; it's a wonderful *briah* but it's for a purpose. There's a *kedushah* in married life. But to take that wonderful invention of Hashem, **זָכַר וְנִקְבָּה בְּרָאָם**, and to contaminate the world with it? And along comes a Jew and he joins in? Just the opposite! We don't mix – we show contempt, complete disregard for such things.

Mock the Libraries

Another thing – no libraries. Don't go into libraries anymore! And *chas v'shalom* to bring your children into the libraries. Once upon a time a library was a nice place – there were *parveh* books there – but today it's no good. No good at all! Libraries are dirt today. They're all garbage. The world is crazy today. The literature is filthy. Filthy, disgusting ideas.

So you'll tell me that there are some good books there for your children. Well, suppose an apple fell into a toilet bowl, would you let your child take it out and eat it? It's a kosher apple, why not? Well, it might be the most beautiful apple, but he's taking it from a dirty toilet. It's going to depend on what else is in the toilet. Nobody should let their child play with excrement.

So there might still be certain books in the library that are still readable – I don't know if that's true – but you have to know that once you walk in there you immediately smell the odor of *tzoah*, of

excrement. The library today is a foul place more than ever before. And therefore, no matter what, you stay out in order that your garments should not be redolent with the fragrance of the public library.

Fat Americans

Some people are so Americanized that they identify with the American sports scene. A Jew doesn't have any interest in sports, unless it's for exercise for himself, for health. Isn't it stupid to be enthusiastic as people are skating or playing lacrosse or basketball or soccer, whatever it is, and you're watching it? If you could get on the field yourself and kick the ball around, so at least you get exercise. But being an American means you're sitting on a chair and all you're doing is getting hemorrhoids from sitting on a hard chair. And if not hemorrhoids, if you're sitting on your couch, so you're getting fat. What a stupidity to come and watch other people getting exercise! You're being victimized.

Even if there's nothing wrong in a game – that's what the boys tell me; “But there's nothing wrong” – but it's stupid, it's meaningless. Who cares who wins? And the mere fact that you identify with the herd, that fact that you're being stampeded by the herd is a tragedy. You're losing your identity – you're the *Am Hanivchar*, the chosen nation; you have different things. You're not interested in that garbage.

You say it's not a sin? Certainly it's a sin to be gentilized! Certainly it's a sin to mix our ideals. It's unnatural! And that's what Makkas Arov comes to tell us. It's an unnatural mixture because the Am Yisroel was chosen to be the *הָן עַם לְבָרָד יִשְׁבֵן*. We are alone – separate from all the nations of the world. We are to be entirely different. We are expected to be *הָן עַם לְבָרָד יִשְׁבֵן* – Behold the nation that dwells alone, *וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשְׁבּוּ* – and we're not counted among the *goyim*. A *frum* Jew dissociates himself from public amusements.

Exaggerated Extremism?

Now, that's easy to talk about but it's not being done. You pass by a yeshivah today, you see things

going on. *Teiere* boys! They're good *frum* boys and yet they're behaving like *goyim*. I don't want to say why and how. Their games are *goyishe* games. Their sports are *goyishe* sports. Some have haircuts like the *goyim*; they wear Reeboks or certain *goyishe* pants. They speak with gentile words, gentile attitudes.

Even when you go to a bar-mitzvah, you see that their dancing is *goyishe* dancing. It's all gentile ways. Boruch Hashem, we're happy with them. I'm happy with them. *Kein yirbu! V'chein yigdelu!* I love them! But Jews should have other ways of doing things.

Now, I understand that when you go out from here, they'll tell you that Rabbi Miller is extreme, that it's exaggerated. But it's not so. I'm not even saying it the way I should. If I would, you wouldn't come back here.

Remedying the Error

Now, don't misunderstand me. It's a pleasure to see *frum* Jews today. It's a pleasure to see people who are *shomrei mitzvos*. It's a pleasure to see *bnei Torah*. It's a pleasure, *mamash* a pleasure to see that. It's a happiness to see *frum* girls, Beis Yaakov girls. It's a great happiness to see big Jewish families. And yet you have to know that it's not what it's supposed to be. *הָן עַם לְבָרָד יִשְׁבֵן* means that we have to be set off from the *goyim*, that we have to beware of identifying with the nations that we live among!

It's a tremendous error that we are making today. We think we can be *frum* Jews and still be mixed with the gentile ideas. The Modern Orthodox surely; they think they can assimilate and still be *frum*. But actually it's impossible. And therefore, very many of them are going lost, *nebach*. Very many. Especially their children.

There's only one solution: You have to de-Americanize! That's the call of the day! De-Americanize! Of course, you have to be loyal; you have to be a patriot for the country. You have to do what's right. You have to vote. Be a decent person to everyone. But don't become one of them.

The Real Plague

And that's one of the most important lessons of *Makkas Arov*; it came to tell us that a *frum* Jew doesn't mix because mixing is the biggest problem for us. And that's why the name of the *makkah* was *Arov*; because that was the most important lesson. The 'Mixture', *that's* the plague!

That's what the Bnei Yisroel were thinking when they watched the wolf and the lion and the crocodile and the bear marching into the villages. That unnatural mixtures are a tremendous danger! Hakadosh Baruch Hu was teaching them that *הַבְּדִילֵנוּ מִן הַגּוֹיִם*, because He wants to *הַבְּדִילֵנוּ מִן הַטּוֹעִים*. To keep as separate as we can from the *umos ha'olam* so that we should be separated from all of their mistakes. He made us different and He wants that we should dedicate our lives towards trying to answer this question: What is the true Torah way? What is the true Torah attitude? An attitude free of any adulteration, free from any admixture of ideas of the outside world.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Separating and Remaining Separate

Makkas Arov taught us that the greatest plague comes through mixing. Symbiotic relationships are unnatural and there should be no mixing between Yisroel and the nations. Each day during *Birchos haTorah* this week, as I say "*asher bachar banu mikol ho'amim – He has chosen us from among all the nations*", I will *bli neder* set aside 30 seconds to review this lesson and think of how to apply it practically in my life.

— This week's booklet is based on tapes: —

R-7 - Taking a Hint | 155 - Studying the Makkos
534 - A Nation That Dwells Alone | E-271 - Havdalah

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The Rav speaks often about the importance of speaking Yiddish. What about teaching in the yeshiva in Yiddish to a class that understands English better; is that the right way?



That's not a moot question; it's a very important question. It's worth teaching Yiddish to Ashkenazi boys and girls because in a certain sense it maintains the tradition; it maintains a certain aloofness from the nations – it shows we are a separate people. However, many times the message goes lost in an unfamiliar language. When they teach in a foreign language so the children who barely understand Yiddish are lost – and sometimes the subject matter is so difficult in itself that even in English it's difficult and now you compound the difficulty by teaching it in Yiddish. And therefore it's a question.

Some children must have *only* English instruction. And even then it's a question if they'll succeed. Because the Torah subjects are not easy. Chumash for some children is a mountain. It's remarkable how difficult it is for some children to climb that mountain. And then they need expensive tutors. And Gemara?! Gemara is the Alps for some children; many fall down and become discouraged – they become disillusioned because of the difficulties of the studies. And if their difficulty is increased by using a foreign language like Yiddish, it's a big problem.

And therefore, wherever possible English should be used until the child knows the subject. Then Yiddish should be introduced. Exactly how much Yiddish and how much English has to be left to the teacher on the spot.

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