

A Pillar of Salt

שבילי פנחס

given over by Rav E. Barclay

“Don’t look back”

Lot and two daughters obey. But his wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.

Why such a strange punishment?

Was the aveira so bad (to look back)?

Rashi: Enough that you are rescued. You don’t deserve to look back.

מִידָה כִּנְגַד מִידָה -- She sinned with salt and was punished with salt.

When visitors came, Lot said, “give a little salt to these the visitors.”

So she said to him, “even this evil custom you want to introduce to this place?”

Mizrachi: Punished with death because turned around. She turned into a pillar of salt because of her aveira with salt.

Why didn’t she give salt to the visitors? She didn’t object to doing hachnasas orchim! Something against salt. . . What’s it all about?

A few seforim with fascinating insight:

רב שמשון אסרטופולי, פנים יפות, נחלת יעקב (נתיבות - חוות דעת)

In Lech Lecha, leaving Charan, why didn’t Avrohom discourage Lot from coming along. He’s not such a good fellow.

Zohar: Avrohom Avinu knew (in Ruach Hakodesh) great Tzaddikim would come out from him: Rus, Naama, Dovid Hamelech.

Since Lot had the zechus great Tzaddikim would come out from him. Avrohom wanted to keep a good eye on him.

Medrash Raba:

וגם ללוט היה צאן ובקר ואוהלים.

Wealthy with tents?

שני אוהלים: רות המואביה ונעמה העמונית.

In a similar way, in this week’s Parsha, the Malach says to Lot:

קום קח את אשתך ואת שתי בנותיך הנמצאות

And your two daughters who are **found** with you.

Medrash: two precious souls could be found within Lot: Rus & Naama.

תהילים: מצאתי דוד עבדי

Where was he found? In Sodom.

When had to leave Sodom, Lot delayed.

“What? What? What?”

Rashi: to save his money. But your life is in danger!

Nachlas Yaakov: wasn’t afraid. “Dovid Hamelech will come from me.”

Confident he will be rescued.

אל תביט אחרֶיךָ. Don’t look at your future generations. Get going.

Lot’s wife also knew: Dovid Hamelech from her.

ותבט אשתו מאחריֶיךָ.

She looked behind Lot – at his descendants. She figured, if from Lot – then from her. Who else? She never dreamt from Lot and her daughters.

Why is salt so important?

מים אחרונים – because salt from Sodom can make a person blind.

Why does it damage the eyes? Because they went after their eyes.

Zenuse.

צר עין. No doing chesed.

Lesson: one must guard one's eyes.

How did Lot join Sodom?

וישא לוט את עיניו

When wanted to barge the house – smitten with blindness.

Punishment of the wife of Lot was salt. She objected to salt because she wanted eyes to be used for whatever she wanted.

Salt – a sign of controlling one's eyes.

Gemora Menachos (page 21) – all Korbonos need salt. Salt of Sodom.

Korbonos come as an atonement.

Salt is a sign of one's aveiros. Salt blinds the eyes because many aveiros come from the eyes. Many Korbonos come from misuse of the eyes.

Watch one's eyes.

The eye sees and the heart desires.

Watch your eyes.

And when use salt on your food, use it as a reminder to watch your eyes.