א ביסל תורה!

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ה' חשון תשפ"ז · **נח**

Is Lab-Grown Meat אבר מן החי?

By Caleb Schachter '30

In this week's פרשה, פרשת נח, it talks about the שבע מצוות בני נח. They include not worshipping false gods, not cursing Hashem, not murdering, not engaging in forbidden relationships, not stealing, not eating a limb removed from a living animal, and setting up courts and bringing offenders to justice. We are going to focus on the sixth one, אבר מן החי, the prohibition against eating a limb from a living animal. Lab-grown meat is a very popular topic right now in Israel and the United States. To explain briefly, lab-grown meat is created by taking real animal tissue (stem cells) and growing the animal cells in a controlled environment. As opposed to raising and slaughtering animals, scientists grow the cells and then combine the resulting tissue with other ingredients to form the shape and texture of a steak, brisket, etc. The question is if taking the stem cell from the cow is אבר מן החי, since the cow is still alive when the cell is extracted. Also, you could not reliably *Shecht* a cow and then extract the stem cells, as the cells die relatively soon after the cow dies. There is a מחלוקת between the חתם סופר and the פרי מגדים regarding liquid that is extracted from a piece of meat. The חת"ם סופר says that such an extract is not considered "meat" according to the תורה, but only מדרבנן. However, the פרי מגדים says that even this is considered meat according to the תורה. In this case, lab-grown meat, which is sourced from meat cells, is comparable to this meat extract. It follows that, according to the חת"ם סופר, lab-grown meat is certainly not considered meat מדאורייתא. It might also not be considered בשרי, even מדרבנן, once additional factors are taken into consideration. However, according to the פרי מגדים, lab-grown meat is definitely considered בשרי.

Another important thing to note is that in 2023, הרב דוד לאו, the Chief Rabbi of Israel at the time, said that lab-grown meat produced by Aleph Farms, a leading lab-grown meat producer in Israel, should be considered kosher פרווה, even though it contains a trace of stem cells. However, he also raised the point of מראית עין, which means that something may look halachically forbidden even though it is permitted. For example, if someone were seen walking down the street eating something that looks like a cheeseburger made with real meat and cheese, other Jews might think that all cheeseburgers are kosher, even if the person is eating a lab-grown meat cheeseburger that has been ruled פרווה. They would not know that the particular burger is kosher. However, הרב צבי שכטר שליט"א has a completely different idea. He cited המעיין, issue #216, a תורה journal in Israel, as ruling that lab-grown meat does not need to come from a kosher animal. According to this view, even lab-grown pig meat could be permitted. In addition, we may extract the meat cell from which the lab-grown meat develops from a living animal without concern for אבר מן החי, the prohibition that applies to all human beings against eating flesh taken from an animal while it is alive.

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הרב שכטר bases his argument on the following sources: The Gemara (סנהדרין סז:) records that several אמוראים created an animal based on the ספר יצירה, a Kabbalistic work, and consumed it on Shabbat. The פתחי תשובה (יורה דעה סב:ב) cites the של"ה, who says that the laws of אבר מן החי do not apply to such a creature. The מלבי"ם on בראשית יח:ו agrees and writes that lab-grown meat is not halachically considered meat and may be consumed with milk. The חשק שלמה (on the יורה דעה צח:ז ,ש"ך) agrees as well. הרב שכטר, in turn, argues that the same reasoning applies to lab-grown meat. He maintains that only meat derived through conventional means has the halachic status of meat. This leads to another important question which is: Is Lab-Grown Meat פרווה?

הרב יעקב אריאל, former Chief Rabbi of Ramat Gan and co-founder of the Gush Emunim organization, similarly insists that lab-grown meat is meat, not פרווה, since it is simply multiplied meat stem cells. הרב אשר וייס agrees with this view, and the OU has adopted this position as its policy. The שולחן ערוך (יורה דעה פז:ז) rules that parts of an animal that are not normally edible as meat, such as skin and bones, are not halachically defined as meat. Accordingly, lab-grown meat might not be considered meat halachically if it is developed from stem cells taken from parts of the animal that are not edible. However, הרב אשר וייס, a halachic advisor for OU Kosher, argues that lab-grown meat is considered meat because the final product is edible and functions as meat. There is a somewhat similar debate regarding whether animal-derived gelatin is considered meat or פרווה. הרב אהרן קוטלר rules that gelatin from a kosher animal source is meat, while הרב משה פיינשטיין rules that gelatin produced from a kosher animal is פרווה. Another thing to note is that OU Kosher considers gelatin from an animal source to be פרווה while classifying lab-grown meat as meat. One explanation for this distinction is that gelatin is far more processed than lab-grown meat, which essentially multiplies meat stem cells.

Was נח a צדיק? (Part 2)

By Noah Levy '29

This weeks פרשה starts out "אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו אֶת הָאֱלֹקים הִתְהַלֶּךְ נֹחַ"

"this is the line of Noah - Noah was a righteous man; he was blameless in his age; Noah walked with G-d" (בראשית ו:ט). After reading this line, one would think that נח is a צדיק.

Last year, we looked at רש"י who says if נח lived in the generation of אברהם, he wouldn't be a צדיק. Additionally, we looked at Rabbi Sacks who explains that רש"י is saying "בדורותיו" "in his generation" because it only applies in his generation; therefore, if he was in the generation of אברהם, he wouldn't be a צדיק. Last year, we focused a lot on what happened before the flood, this year I want to focus on what happens after it.

After נח and Hashem make the covenant with the rainbow, that Hashem won't destroy the world again, it says: "וַיָּחֶל נֹחַ אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּטַּע כָּרֶם" "And נח settled down (ויחל) to be a man of the earth, and he planted a vineyard" (ט:כ). חז"ל explains that the word "ויחל" means that he "became profane" ("עשה עצמו חולין"). According to Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, we may ask: how is it that נח, who in his early days was termed a "righteous man ... perfect in his generation," becomes

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a “man of the earth,” makes his life profane, discards his garments (i.e. his distinction) and rolls about naked like an animal on the ground? This פסוק may serve as the basis for those who say that “בדורותיו” is a negative description and not a positive one.

In דברים רבה it says, many daughters have performed virtue, but you have exceeded them all (יא:ג). This is talking about משה, and how he is the greatest צדיק. Later in the Midrash, it says, - Noah said to Moses: ‘I am greater than you, as I was delivered from the generation of the Flood.’ Moses said to him: ‘I am more exalted than you, as you saved yourself, but you did not have the ability to save your generation. But I saved myself and saved my generation when they incurred liability to be eradicated due to the [sin of the Golden] Calf.’ Rav Soloveitchik in his commentary on the פרשה tells the story of אברהם by סדום, and משה (like in דברים רבה), by הר סיני. The Rav says that by משה and by אברהם, they both argue for the people that they are trying to save. נח on the other hand, does not appear to argue at all for even a little mercy on the entire world. Another person נח could be compared to is לוט. לוט like נח, doesn’t argue when the people around him are being destroyed, instead he just leaves them behind.לוט’s ending is also simalar to נח’s: The story of לוט ends with him being drunk and being violated by his kids. (does that sound familiar).

Keep in mind, even though נח may have been a צדיק compared to his fellows, he probably still had to interact with them. Did they rub off on נח? We always hear that you have to surround yourself with good people – he didn't. Do you think he knew any of them personally and therefore would have been sad that they died. The answer is yes, you can't go through life without interacting with people, and no matter how bad they are, it should still be sad enough to argue a little with G-d about killing everyone you know outside of your family. Rav Aharon Lichtenstein sums it up pretty well: “However, it may be that the difference between them (נח and משה) lay not in their capability but rather in their will. נח was able, but unwilling - he demonstrated spiritual apathy and lack of caring for his generation. נח was quite content living up to the difference between himself - the "perfect, righteous one," and them - the corrupt masses. His ego lifted him above them, strengthened him. Had he lived in a generation containing other righteous men - in אברהם’s generation, for example - "he would not have been considered anything at all." And what is the proof? His entire generation was wiped out; he alone remained in the world - and began behaving as a simple "man of the earth," devoid of any specialness.” I’m going to end the same way I did last year. Even though נח had flaws, he is still a צדיק. In a non-religious sense he is very similar to Babe Ruth. Babe Ruth was great in his day but would he still be good even in the modern MLB? The same goes for נח, what would his role be in the generation of אברהם or משה? In my opinion, just as I still consider Babe Ruth a great baseball, so too נח was a צדיק. I mean how am I supposed to judge someone who spoke to Hashem and be able to call them a צדיק or not.



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