



RE'EH

Likkutei Sichos

By Rabbi Shalom M. Paltiel

“You must not eat any abomination.”

(Deut. 14:3)

Commentaries:

This is a general introduction to forbidden foods (*Ramban, Ibn Ezra, Sforno, Abarbanel & others*).

Rashi:

Anything that I have made abominable to you. For example:

- If one nicked the ear of a firstborn animal in order to slaughter it {outside the Temple}, it is abominable to you, as it is written: ‘there shall be no blemish (in sacrifices).’
And this verse comes to teach here that he may not slaughter and eat it with this blemish.
- If he cooked meat in milk, it is abominable to you, and this verse warns here regarding its consumption.

UNPACKING RASHI:

Q. Why doesn't Rashi say it's simply an introduction, like the Commentaries?

A. Because whenever possible, every verse should teach a novel law.

But let's understand Rashi's many details:

- If one **nicked the ear** of a **firstborn** animal **to slaughter it** {outside the Temple}, it is abominable **to you**, as it is written: 'there shall be no blemish (in sacrifices).' And this verse comes to teach here that he **may not slaughter** and eat it **with this blemish**.
- If he cooked meat in milk, it is abominable **to you**, and this **verse here warns regarding its consumption**.

REBBE'S QUESTIONS:

1. Why not: 'if one blemished a sacrifice'? Why specifically 'a firstborn'?
2. And why 'nicked the ear' and not any blemish?
3. Why is his intention 'to slaughter it' relevant?
4. Why 'he may not slaughter it'? Say: 'he may not eat it'?
5. And only 'with this blemish' can't he eat it?
6. Prohibition to eat milk & meat is derived from threefold repetition:
"Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk" – as Rashi teaches (3x)!
(If it's here to add a transgression, why not go with "Commentaries" approach?)
7. Why the emphasis, repeatedly: 'It is abominable to you'?

REBBE'S EXPLANATION:

What's bothering Rashi:

Not just “Why is this verse needed” but more fundamentally:

What does this verse even mean?!

If something is abominable, obviously you can't eat it?!

Rashi's explanation:

Verse is not about INHERENT PROHIBITION for all Jews.

Rather: CONSEQUENTIAL PROHIBITION for individual violator.

ANSWERING REBBE'S QUESTIONS:

1. Why not: 'he blemished a sacrifice'? Why specifically 'a firstborn'?

A. Firstborn is only sacrifice entirely permissible once blemished.

2. And why 'nicked the ear' and not any blemish?

A. Ear piercing is hardly abominable in and of itself.

3. Why is his intention 'to slaughter it' relevant?

A. This prohibition is all about his abominable intention.

4. Why 'he may not slaughter it'? Say: 'he may not eat it'?

A. To indicate reason why he can't eat, because of negative intention to slaughter.

5. And only 'with this blemish' can't he eat it?

A. Correct. If another blemish developed accidentally, he could eat it.

ANSWERING REBBE'S QUESTIONS (CONTINUED):

6. Meat & milk's prohibition to eat is derived from threefold repetition: "Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk" - as Rashi teaches (3x)?!
(If it's here to add a transgression, why not go with "Commentaries" approach?)

A. Additional "consequential prohibition" applies, in addition to "inherent prohibition".

7. Why the emphasis, repeatedly: 'It is abominable to you'?

A. This is all about the individual's poor choices, not objective abominations.