

דרכים בפרשה בא

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וכסה את עין הארץ ולא יוכל לראות את הארץ ואכל
את יתר הפליטה הנשארת לכם מן הברד - *They will*
cover the visible surface of the land so that one will
be unable to see the land. They will eat all that was
spared

The Kli Yakar wonders: why does the Torah specifically tell us that the *viewer could not see the land*? His insight is subtle and novel. It is not the land itself that is the focus. The *arbeh* are the viewers. The Gemara in Yoma teaches that a blind person who eats never becomes satiated. In the same way, because the *arbeh* could not see, their appetite was insatiable. Seeing what one consumes allows for satisfaction. Without sight, there is no limit, no recognition, no contentment. That is why the *arbeh* did not merely eat. They consumed everything, even *the yeser hapleita*.

This idea also sheds light on the beginning of the pasuk. Perhaps the land itself being “covered” hints at the people who inhabit it. When they fail to see and appreciate what Hashem provides, their own *brachos*, sustenance, and bounty, their eye is covered. Just as the *arbeh* could not see and therefore could not be satisfied, so too people who stop noticing and valuing what they have risk losing it all. Awareness and appreciation are essential to maintaining a *bracha*.

From this, we see a remarkable *chesed* of Hashem. **בחן** **בחסד וברחמים**: When we eat, He does not simply provide nourishment. He allows us to **see** our food, and often makes it **beautiful**, pleasing to our eyes. The colors of vegetables, the aroma of bread, the textures and shapes of fruit are all part of the *chein* that He bestows, turning simple provision into delight. The Torah assumes we will notice and enjoy what we are given. The mitzvah of eating itself is built around awareness. Sight is not incidental. It is part of the *bracha*, a mechanism that enables true *satiation* (*s'viah*).

Rav Chanina bar Papa said: “כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא כל ברכה כאילו גזל להקדוש ברוך הוא וכנסת ישראל” (Berachos 35b) — Anyone who derives benefit from this world without a *bracha*, it is as if he stole from Hashem and

the community of Yisrael. From Rav Chanina we learn two important lessons. Firstly, if he would even see a flower, or anything that gives pleasure, he would make sure to thank Hashem for it. Secondly, by not doing so, one is called a thief. Why is that so? As we were saying, by not truly seeing and appreciating the *bracha* that one has, a person risks losing it. By not making a *bracha*, it may cause the removal of that item, and in that sense, one becomes a thief.

Similarly, the pasuk in Devarim (8:10) instructs: “וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָךְ”, emphasizing that after we eat and are satisfied, we must bless Hashem for the good land He has given us. Awareness, recognition, and gratitude are built into the very act of eating. Without noticing and appreciating, abundance can be as unsatisfying as hunger.

This principle extends far beyond food. Life itself is full of *brachos*—moments, possessions, experiences—and Hashem gives us the ability to notice and value them. Yet, too often, people continue accumulating without pausing to see and appreciate what they already have. They rush from one acquisition to the next, from one achievement to another, never pausing, never recognizing the gifts before them. Like the blind eater in Yoma, like the *arbeh* that consumed everything without stopping, they remain restless, never satisfied.

The “eye of the land” that was covered teaches an important *limud*. Just as the *arbeh* could not see and therefore consumed everything without measure, so too can people who fail to see and appreciate Hashem’s *brachos* lose what they have. We are not suggesting that one needs to become a foodie, constantly focused on meals, and taking selfies with their food, but still, one must show appreciation for what is given. When we stop noticing and valuing our families, our friends, our homes, and even our food, all the *brachos* we have, our surroundings, and the moments in our lives, our spiritual and physical sustenance diminishes. The pasuk teaches that sight itself—awareness, recognition, and gratitude—is part of the *bracha*. Only when we truly see and recognize the gifts before us can we achieve true *s'viah* and contentment. Awareness preserves abundance, and recognition transforms provision into lasting satisfaction.

מרדכי אפפֿעל, Good Shabbos