

## And now if you listen well to My voice and guard My covenant you shall be to Me the most beloved treasure of all people. (19:5)

The *Da'as Zekeinim* in *Parashas Vayeira*, (*Bereishis* 18:8) states that when the three angels came to visit Avraham *Avinu*, they ate *basar b'cholov*, an admixture of milk and meat. When Hashem prepared to give the *Torah* to *Bnei Yisrael*, the ministering angels came before Hashem and demanded that the *Torah* would be more appropriately welcomed and observed if it remained in Heaven. Hashem responded by reminding them that the *Torah* demands that one not eat an admixture of milk and meat, an activity which was not consistent with their behavior during their brief visit with Avraham. Immediately upon hearing these charges they conceded that *Bnei Yisrael* should be the rightful beneficiaries of the *Torah*.

Let us try to grasp the message of *Chazal*. The Heavenly angels ate *basar b'cholov* **prior** to *Matan Torah*, before the prohibition was enacted. After all, did not *Bnei Yisrael* also partake of milk and meat admixtures? Their repast hardly seems to disqualify them from receiving the *Torah*! What is there about the angels' actions that was so negative that it precluded their qualification for accepting the *Torah*?

*Horav Simcha Zissel Broide, Shlita*, infers a profound insight from here. When any "creation" other than a human being commits an infraction against the *Torah*, regardless of its severity, it creates a "distancing" from Hashem which is irrevocable. This "*merchak*", distancing, is a blemish that cannot be erased. Once they have crossed the line of *Torah* observance, they can no longer be reconciled to the same spiritual plane as before. Consequently, those angels who "partook" of the forbidden food, although it occurred **before** the *Torah* was given, were considered to have acted contrary to *Torah* dictate, with irreparable results -- no angels, not even the countless myriads who would later be created, could ever receive the *Torah*! Hashem's relationship with His "creations" (i.e. angels) leaves no room for *teshuvah*, repentance. Once the gap has been created, it cannot be closed up.

Not so Hashem's relationship with the *b'chir ha'yetzurim*, choicest of His creations--Mankind. We have been availed of the opportunity to repent for our sins, to mend our ways, and return to Hashem. Moreover, if the *teshuvah* is performed *me'ahavah*, as an expression of boundless love, the sins are transformed into merits.

This concept enables us to glimpse the *chasdei* Hashem, kindness of the Al-mighty, in His relationship with us. We also become acutely aware of the eternal nature of the *Torah*. For any creation other than Man, once they have sinned, lose their share in the eternity of *Torah*. Only Man is privy to the singular gift of *teshuvah*.