

The Price of a Fox's Head

*By Rabbi Ariel bar Tzadok
Copyright © 2006 by Ariel bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.*

Rabi Matya ben Heresh says... and be a tail to lions and do not be a head to foxes. Avot 4:15

Here we are taught about proper relationships and the dangers of improper perceptions.

Which is better, to be a head or a tail? Which is better to reign or to serve? Most will respond and say it is better to reign and to be a head than to serve and be a tail!

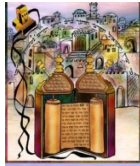
Yet, what price is one willing to pay to be a head, what is one willing to sacrifice in order to reign? Is there a price too high to pay for these things, or does anything go? Choose wisely how you answer these questions because your future and immortality will rest upon your answers.

The English writer John Milton wrote in his 'Paradise Lost' that "it is better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven." Indeed, many today embrace this philosophy as an expression of their defiance against any personal opposition. Most do not realize that these words written by Milton were words spoken by the Satan to justify his rebellion against G-d and Heaven.

How unfortunate that those who know the source of these words still embrace them and their meaning, regardless of their overt Satanic implications. How sad it is today that many people are willing to follow the path of the Devil straight to Hell, regardless the cost, simply to achieve their own selfish goals and personal gains.

There is a price to pay for the choices we make. If one wishes to reign in Hell, then one indeed can become a head, but one will be the head of a fox. A fox is a small runt of an animal. Although he is considered to be wily enough to out-fox many hunters; in the end the fox is hunted down, caught, killed and eaten, head, body and all. One who embraces the head of the fox will share the destiny of the fox. This is the price one pays for choosing to be the head of a runt.

There is a price we pay for the choices we make. If one is only willing to serve in Heaven, then one will indeed be only a tail, compared to the Angelic Host Above, but this tail belongs to the lion. The lion is the king of beasts, the symbol of the House of David and King Mashiah. It is the lion who hunts down the fox, overwhelms it with his mighty prowess and bites the foxes head off with ease before devouring the rest in



single bites. The lion is dominant and rules supreme, from his head down to his tail. The lion does not look at his tail as being subordinate. For the lion, head and tail and equal parts of his body.

It is we who when we look upon the lion that we differentiate between head and tail. We distinguish in a way the lion never does. When we make such a miscalculation in judgment, we are doomed to follow through with the consequences of our choices.

A lion is superior in every way, be it in head or tail. A fox is inferior in every way, be it in head or tail. Why then would one choose to be a fox? The answer is because one is deceived through improper perception. One thinks more of being a head than of being a fox. When one looks at the narrow view instead of the whole picture one is sure to draw wrong conclusion and come to make inappropriate decisions.

Pride always comes before a fall. When one pays attention to heads or tails, one misses the significance of lions and foxes. It is indeed not better to be in Hell, than in Heaven regardless of what one is doing in either place. Heaven is great; Hell is terrible. Why would one choose to be in a terrible place, regardless of one's position therein? In Hell all suffer, be they heads or tails. Foxes are hunted and killed. Lions are respected and held in awe.

The price of a fox's head is not worth very much. There is no honor to being a fox, even if one is its head. There is great honor in being a lion even if one is only the tail.

It is therefore wise of one to choose belonging to the greatest and best, even if one be the smallest thereof, than to belong to something less and unrewarding.

All too often, we choose to be the heads of a fox. Pride blinds our eyes. Lions have no such problem. As the verse in Amos says, the lion has roared, who will not fear?" One is never afraid to slap a fox in the head, whereas only a fool would pull on a lion's tail. Choose which you are. Strive to be the best.