

TAL TorahActionLife

COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

KI TEITZEI

13th ELLUL 5776

Shabbat begins: 18:59

Shabbat ends: 19:58

This week's edition is sponsored
Lehatslachat Raaya Bat Liora
Yehudit Vechol Mishpachta



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Two Wives!

Are you married? No? What you waiting for join the club.

Yes – for how long? Has it been a while since you were under the chupa with your spouse to be? How's married life treating you?

When we are young we all desire to settle down with the perfect spouse. Yet when we hear adults talking about married life, it doesn't seem all that desirable. In a generation of high divorce rates and many singles around, how can we put the impetus back into marriage?

This weeks parsha relates the law of a man who married two wives. The Torah hints that in such a case, one of the wives will be loved and the other despised. It's not an ideal situation.

The Torah continues to discuss the laws of the children of these two wives. When both

these wives have children and the father wishes to give his inheritance - Vehaya Ben Habechor LaSenia – the Bechor (first born) states the Torah will be born to the despised wife. The Torah does not say 'Im' – if the first born is born to..., rather it states 'Vehaya' – the first born will be born to the hated wife. What is the Torah teaching us?

Hashem is Kel Rachum Vechanun a merciful G-d, He is a G-d full of love and care. We are taught VeHalachta Bedrachav – that we should emulate His deeds, just as He is loving and merciful so to we should be. Hate should not exist between us, especially between husband and wife.



The Sefer Tomer Devorah is relatively small yet it is embalmed with potent words of wisdom. The Sefer authored by the Saintly Rabbi Moshe Kordovero is built on the 13 attributes of mercy mentioned at the end of Micha. (Mi kel Kamocha)

The Tomer Devorah explains that the twelfth mida is Asher Nishbata Lavotenu – The Merit of our Forefathers - Zechut Avot . Hashem looks down towards us with certain aspects of mercy. There are times that we are not worthy, and all we have going for us is the Zechut Avot. Our forefathers merit have weight until today, and helps carry through even those that are not worthy.

We are taught to emulate Hashem's attributes. Thus we are also obligated to view others, (even if we think they are not worthy) as worthy. For they carry the merit of their fathers. This is how Hashem's mercy extends towards us and this is how we should view others. When we don't like a certain person, when we think that they are worthless, we should remember that they too descend from Avraham Yitzchak and Yaakov, they to carry this merit and we must love them as Hashem loves them.

There exists a further attribute of mercy. The Thirteenth attribute is Mimei Kedem.

What does that mean? Mimei Kedem refers to the early years. Observing children can be fun. They are so cute and innocent. Their early years and limited understanding cause us to look favourably upon them. It's difficult to really punish a cute kid.

Hashem says, when you sin, I don't punish you straight away, I take into account your youth. I remember your cute early years – when you were relatively innocent and free from sin.

Similarly we too are taught to look favourably at others. To remember that not long ago



Living with Mitzvos

1. The Torah says that a firstborn gets double inheritance. How can people nowadays go against this commandment and give inheritance equally to all children?
2. What important halacha do we learn from the parsha regarding how to deal with Jewish burial?
3. Why is it wrong for a man to remove white hairs?
4. When else in the year do we read from Parshas Ki Seitsei?
5. Which two of the six remembrances said after davening appear in Parshas Ki Seitsei?
6. How many mitzvos appear in Parshas Ki Seitsei?
7. Which mitzva in Parshas Ki Seitsei do you get without doing anything?
8. What mitzva to you get a reward for by not even intentionally giving?

Answers On Page 3

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in the early days of our relationship we viewed them differently.

Do you remember the first date? The man probably got out of the car and opened the door for the lady. He listened to every word she had to say that night. She was so excited to speak to him. They saw the potential of building a great family together. That potential several years later still exists and should be close to reality.

Hashem deals mida keneged mida (Sanhedrin 90). In the same way as we judge others, we will be judged. Thus when we look favourably upon others, Hashem looks favourably upon us.

When we get in an argument with our spouse, children friends, do we look at them with the eye of these attributes. Do we remember their Zechut Avot, does it enter our minds at the heat of an argument to remember that these are holy individuals who were once free from sin (mime Kedem). Does a husband remember the days when his wife followed him in trust of his every

move. Does he remember the difficulties she went through to serve him and respect his every wish. Does he recall the pain of pregnancy. Does the wife remember the way the husband turned his timetable upside down to please her, how he spent his monthly salary delighted to please his wife?

These are the Yemei Kedem. This is the way Hashem deals with us. It's difficult, but it's not impossible. If we look at people with a different light, then many of the futile arguments and problems fall aside.

When Yaakov was conned into working seven years for Rachel, the Torah states (Bereishit (29:20)) they were in his eyes like yamim achadim – they passed by quick with his love for them.

Our sages are surprised by this statement. If you love someone and are told you have to work seven years, then time passes by very *slowly*, it should have said that the years were like *forever* for Yaakov who was

eager to get married. Why does it say they passed by *quickly*?

The answer is that for Yaakov, due to his love of Rachel, seven years for him were a cheap price to pay for such a wonderful kalla! He appreciated her so much, the time was worth it and passed by quickly.

Rav Dessler Zt"l used to give sound advice to every chattan and Kalla. So long as you think about giving to the other side your marriage will be constantly steady and successful. The moment either side thinks about taking that's when the challenges come.

In an age where singles are the norm, and marriages need fortifying let us take the message from the Torah, let us emulate Hashem. Open our eyes, remember that first love, remember the merit of the forefathers, respect our spouses and build wonderful families for the next generation. Let us shine new light on our marriages and may Hashem deal with us in kind. Amen.



RABBI DAVID GARSON

The Effects Of Our Actions

The first three topics discussed consecutively in the parasha are: "Eshet Yefat Toar," "Isha Senuah" and "Ben Soror Umoreh."

"Eshet Yefat Toar," concerns the laws of marrying a non-Jewish woman in a time of war. "Isha Senuah" refers to the laws of a firstborn child to a second wife who is detested by her husband. "Ben Soror Umoreh" refers to the wayward son who is put to death for his deplorable behaviour.

Rashi makes an interesting observation concerning the sequence of these three topics - if a person indeed follows his base desire and marries an "Eshet Yefat Toar," he will then come to despise her (isha senuah) and the story will ultimately conclude with them bearing a child who will follow the dismal path of the "Ben Soror Umoreh."

The Torah is demonstrating to us the power of one's actions. A person may believe that the act of marrying a woman found in battle is an isolated one and not connected to future endeavours, but in fact, every move one makes has future consequences and in

the end he will bear a child who is a ben soror umoreh.

The Arizal says that when the Torah discusses waging war against one's enemy, it refers metaphorically to the war against the yetzer hara. The Sefat Emet explains that our greatest enemy is our own yetzer hara and so this concept can relate to other sins one may transgress. The yetzer hara may trick one into thinking that transgressing a particular sin will not be relevant and important enough to impact other areas of his life. Yet the Torah tells us that one's actions do have consequences that arise in unexpected areas and can begin a slippery slope from bad to worse transgressions. This idea is reinforced by Tosafot Daat Zekenim on these pesukim who say that the sequence of parashiot teach us "Aveira goreret aveira – a sin brings about other sins." (Although the Torah permits marrying a woman captured in battle, it is nevertheless discouraged and against the will of chachamim – see Daat Torah, R' Yerucham Levovitz)

This is the case with regards to transgressions. However this rule also certainly holds true for good deeds, as is demonstrated later on in the parasha. The Torah (ch. 22, 6) juxtaposes the mitzvot of Shiluach Haken (sending away a mother bird to acquire the leftover eggs), to building a new house and then owning a vineyard. Rashi explains the connection of these three mitzvot - "If one fulfilled the mitzvah of "shiluach haken," then in the end one will build a new house & will fulfil the mitzvah of ma'ake (building a fence on one's roof) because one mitzvah brings along another mitzvah, eventually he will own a vineyard, a field and nice clothes, this is why these parashiot were put next to each other."

Not only does Rashi teach us that performing one mitzvah will lead to other mitzvot, but we also see that Hashem will send a person the physical and material possessions necessary to facilitate the continuity of performing other Mitzvot. Since Rashi says that having a house is in the zechut that it will be used in order to do the mitzvah of ma'ake, it is implied that when a house is used as a means to do mitzvot, it will bring other opportunities to do mitzvot with other material possessions. Hashem will send a person further material items, e.g. clothing, a field, etc. in order for him to be able to fulfil other mitzvot.

In summary, the two sequences of parashiot of mitzvot and aveirot discussed above, reflect the concept taught to us in Pirkei Avot (4, 2), that one transgression drags along other sins, as well as one mitzvah drags along other mitzvot. The lesson to be learned is that there is power and consequences in our actions for better or for worse, and failure to attach importance to even the 'minor' acts, will allow the yetzer hara to succeed in his war against us.

Especially now in Elul when we prepare ourselves for the Yamim Noraim, it is a prime opportunity to do Teshuva and discontinue unwanted behaviours. Any mitzvah e.g. small acts of chessed, or committing to join a weekly shiur or learning/listening to a shiur whilst one commutes to work, any 'small' act, encourages and improves us in other areas of our life to do more mitzvot and better ourselves. By contrast, we must exercise caution in not transgressing any aveirot however insignificant we may think they are, since the ripple effects towards a detrimental end, may ensue.

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STORIES OF OUR CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Ben Tzion Abba Shaul

A man living in Eretz Yisrael was laid off from his job where he was worked for many years. As each day passed he became more and more depressed. He received many offers for different jobs, but he refused all of them since none could compare to his previous job, which was pleasant work in a quiet accounting office.

One morning, he realized that he should face reality, and he decided that he would willingly accept the next job offer he received. Later that day, he met an old acquaintance who was a principal of a Talmud Torah, and when he heard he was out of work, he offered him a job as a supervisor on the school bus.

The next morning, he started his new work. Despite his decision to accept any work willingly, he could not hide his dismay at the contrast to his previous work in front of a computer in a quiet office. Now he was expected to control a bunch of rambunctious children, who did their best to make sure to give the supervisor a run for his money. The children could sense his negative feelings, and were even more rambunctious than usual.

One day, the driver told him an interesting story. A few decades ago, the doors of the small school buses were opened manually by a handle near the door. On one school bus, the supervisor found it very difficult to constantly get up to open and close the door for each boy as he got off. The supervisor began a dispute with the driver, claiming that it was the driver's responsibility to open and close the door. Eventually, they decided to approach the Gadol, Rav Ben-Tzion Abba Shaul, zt"l, for his opinion on the dispute.

When Rav Ben-Tzion Abba Shaul heard the question, he arose from his seat, and said fervently, "Young school children (tinnokost shel rabban) are compared to Sifrei Torah, and since Sifrei Torah are placed in an Aron Kodesh, the school bus

for the children is considered an Aron Kodesh. Opening and closing the door is considered like the mitzvah of hachnasah and hotzaah -the great mitzvah of opening the heichal before reading the Torah and closing it afterwards." Then Rav Ben-Tzion Abba Shaul raised his voice and said, "According to what I know, Yehudim usually fight over the important mitzvah of opening the heichal since everybody wants to merit it. And you, who are standing before such a mitzvah tens of times a day, when you open and close the door of the bus, are fleeing from it and arguing that the mitzvah should fall on the shoulders of the other one?!"

The man who had been laid off was very affected by this story. From then on, he began greeting the children with expressions of affection, such as, "Good morning, my little Sefer Torah." The children were affected by his positive attitude and affection, and even their parents reported that the children were especially happy when they arrived home. In time, the man's depression lifted, and he was happier and enthusiastic about his life.

STORIES OF OUR CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Ephraim Navon

The gaon Rabbi Ephraim Navon Zatzal was born in the city of Constantinople, where he and his friend of the same age, the gaon Yaakov Sasson, studied Torah with their teacher Rabbi Alfandri Zatzal. Rabbi Ephraim continuously elevated himself in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Heaven, studying with extraordinary diligence and perceptiveness. When he reached the age of marriage, he married the daughter of the gaon Rabbi Yehudah Irgaz Zatzal, at which

time he and his father-in-law left for Eretz Israel and settled in Jerusalem. Rabbi Ephraim remained isolated for 10 years, studying the entire Talmud with tremendous concentration and in great depth. During that time he also studied the works of the Rambam and the Beit Yosef. Thus Rabbi Ephraim's name became famous in the Jewish world.

Sent by Rav Roshehien, Rabbi Ephraim left Israel and returned to Constantinople, where he became the Rav of the city. At the same time, he wrote his famous book Machaneh Ephraim on various Halachot, a book that the Chida described as being incredibly insightful and valuable. In fact his book was acknowledged by the entire Torah

world, and even today both Machaneh Ephraim and its commentaries are studied in yeshivot throughout the world.

In reading Machaneh Ephraim, one can clearly see the author's extensive scholarship and wisdom. It is even said that Rabbi Ephraim could perform wonders, knowing the sacred Names of Hashem and being able to use Kabbalah to save Jews from their hardships and illnesses. Rabbi Ephraim Navon passed away on Nissan 26, 5491, as his soul ascended to the celestial academy. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed.

Living with Mitzvos

1. The Torah's command is only after death. People draw up wills and give the inheritance as a present whilst still alive and by death they no longer have it.
2. To not delay burial but to do the utmost to bury the dead on the same day (unless a delay is in order to honour the deceased).
3. It is beautifying himself like a woman which comes under the issur of *lo silbush gever simlas isha*.
4. The end of this parsha is read for maftir on Parshas Zochor, the Shabbos before Purim.
5. The remembrance of the results of the loshon hora said by Miriam (24:9) and remembering about the attack by Amalek (at the end of the parsha).
6. There are 74 mitzvos in Parshas Ki Seitsei of which 60 are relevant to us nowadays. Can you think of any?
7. It is the mitzva of Shikcha (24:19), by forgetting to give alone the mitzva has been fulfilled!
8. Rashi (24:19) brings that if a person drops money and a poor person finds it and is supported by it then you still get reward for it.

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