



THE SHABUOT MATTERS

שבת קודש פרשת עקב | מסכת יבמות דף ס"ג

לע"נ הרב יהודה מאיר בן הרב יהושע הלוי

INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS

The Obligation to Marry and Ben Azzai's Love of Torah

אמרנו לו לבן עזאי...ואתה נאה דורש ואין נאה מקיים אמר להן בן עזאי ומה אעשה? שנפשי חשקה בתורה

The verse states (BaMidbar 3:1): "And these are the offspring of Aharon and Moshe on the day Hashem spoke with Moshe at Mount Sinai." Rashi, from the Gemara (Sanhedrin 19b) notes that the Torah only mentions the sons of Aharon, yet they are called "the offspring of Moshe" as well. This is because Moshe taught them Torah. This teaches us that whoever teaches his friend's son Torah, is viewed by the Torah as if he had fathered him.

We find that the famous Tanna Ben Azzai did not marry (our Gemara, Yevamos 63b). Here, Ben Azzai was teaching about the great mitzvah to marry and about the many virtues of marriage. The students wondered and asked him, "Rebbe, your lessons are filled with wonderful insights, but we see that you do not fulfill this mitzvah!" To this, Ben Azzai answered, "What can I do? My soul is bound up with the Torah." Generally, the response of Ben Azzai is understood to mean that for him, learning was more important than marrying, and he felt that on his level, he was exempt from the mitzvah. Yet this is quite a puzzling comment and needs to be explained.

Perhaps we can say, however, that since Ben Azzai was so involved with his learning, he was constantly teaching others. Our verse teaches us that if a person teaches Torah to the sons of others, it is considered as if he fathered them. Accordingly, Ben Azzai was indeed in fulfillment of the mitzvah of פרו ורבו.

STORIES OFF THE DAF Shalom Bayis

כי נסיב אינש אתנא אמרי ליה הכי מצא או מוצא מוצא דכתיב מוצא אשה מוצא טוב מוצא דכתיב ומוצא אני מר ממות את האשה

When a man marries a woman, people ask him: מצא or מוצא? Is the match one where you say: 'One who has found a woman has found (מוצא) good?' Or is it one where you say: Behold, I have found (מוצא) the woman more bitter than death?"

When Rav Sinai of Zamigrad, zt"l, was in Pesht, Hungary, there was a gala wedding of the only daughter of the gevir, Reb Shmuel Shteiner of Pupa. The wedding was truly magnificent, but Rav Sinai only took notice of the many great Rabbonim in attendance.

As is customary at weddings, the discussion turned to the topic of the Gemara in Yevamos 63. The age-old question was passed around by the group of Rabbonim: "What could possibly be the point of asking a newly married man if his wife is the fulfillment of מוצא or מצא?"

The Tzehlemer Rav was also in attendance, and he provided a profound explanation for the custom. "What aspect the wife embodies depends entirely on the attitude of the chosson! If he has in mind to marry for the sake of having children to fulfill the mitzvos of the Creator, she is an aspect of מצא. If, however, the chosson is only thinking of his own pleasure without considering the will of the Creator, she is an aspect of מוצא. This is why it says: 'Behold, I have found the woman bitter as death'—the personal pronoun is right at the front. If his main intention is his own pleasure he will invariably have a lot of difficulties! The husband who marries for selfish reasons will not be merged properly with his wife and will thus find her bitter as death! It is only if one is not thinking primarily of himself that the marriage will be found good!"

PARSHA CONNECTION

In this week's daf we learn that one who does not have a piece of land is not considered an אדם. In the beginning of this week's Parsha, Hashem promises us this special bracha of having our own land. Hashem writes in פרק ז פסוק יג ואהבך וברכך והרבך: וברך פרי בטןך ופרי אדמתך דגן ותירשך ויצהריך שגר אלפיק ועשתרת צאנך על האדמה. The words על האדמה seem out of place. Is it not obvious that the blessings of grain and fruit will be on the LAND given to us? When we look carefully at the previous Possuk it says that if WE listen to the commandments and observe them, we will merit the list that follows. Everything in this prior Possuk is written in the plural, i.e., if we do the Mitzvos, we will merit. However, in the Possuk that follows everything is expressed in the singular, i.e., your grain, your wine. The Alshich Hakadosh explains that the special blessings discussed in this verse, pertain to Hashem personally blessing every single element of our existence, and not doing anything via a messenger (מלאך). In addition, every reward is based on each individual's merits. For example, one person may have to work harder to perform a specific Mitzvah than his friend who has an easier time. Hashem recognizes every detail of our deeds and rewards every individual accordingly, which is why when talking about the reward it is written in the singular. This special providence, where the blessings are coming directly from Hashem is only found in Eretz Yisroel, which is why it says on the LAND which I gave you. It is a qualifier for the previous blessings, meaning all of this individually tailored rewarding is ONLY on this land.

MUSSAR Overwhelming Gratitude FROM THE DAF

רבי חייא הוה קא מצערא ליה דביתהו כי הוה משכח מידי צייר ליה בסודריה ומייתי ניהלה אמר ליה רב והא קא מצערא ליה למר א"ל דיינו שמגדלות בנינו ומצילות אותנו

The Gemara says that Rav Chiya's wife would cause him צער. However, he would always bring her nice items. When he was asked how he could do this, he responded that it is enough that our wives raise our children and save us from sin. How is Rav Chiya answering how he deals with a wife that causes him so much צער? What does one thing have to do with the other? Is his wife even thinking about how she helps her husband in these ways that he feels he needs to keep buying her items? Imagine a situation when a neighbor has decided suddenly without any reason to pay all your bills including mortgage, tuition, credit card, etc. Most people would feel extremely grateful and act very kind towards this person. Now imagine the same neighbor suddenly asked to borrow your lawn mower. Of course, you would lend him your lawn mower! However, after a few weeks, he never returns the lawn mower. And then he asks again to borrow your lawn mower. Of course, you would lend it to him! And again, he forgets to return it. Most people wouldn't feel any anger towards him and would still treat him with tremendous kindness because of the feeling of gratitude for all the chesed he has done for you until now! This was the greatness of Rav Chiya. Because he was so focused and overwhelmed with gratitude for the great chesed his wife had done for him, he felt he had to purchase her gifts. This feeling of gratitude negated any possible צער she could possibly have caused him. And even though she may have not had specific intention for the chesed she was performing to him. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz explains that a very big aspect of gratitude is when a person focuses on the magnitude of what they have gained (despite the others intentions).

Try to think of what life would be like without somebody who is close to you. Then you will begin to appreciate how much they have positively impacted your life. And then their comparatively small and insignificant idiosyncrasies will bother you anymore.

POINT TO PONDER

The Gemara tells a story about Rav's wife always doing the opposite of what he asked her to do. When his son was old enough to realize what was happening he started telling her the opposite of what his father requested, and this way, when she did the opposite his father got what he really wanted. Rav realized what was going on and told him to stop lying to his mother. Rashi says that although he didn't want his son to continue, he started doing the same thing himself. Why would it be okay for him to lie, if it wasn't inappropriate for his son?

Response to last week's Point to Ponder:

Why did the Torah choose the עקידה to teach us the concept that גוים are לחמור? It seems totally out of context to the overall story of the עקידה?

When אברהם was going to bring his son as a עולה he may have considered the fact that even if יצחק is sacrificed as a עולה he still has another son. By saying stay here with the donkey he showed that in his mind he is sacrificing his ONLY son, making the test that much greater. (Heard from Rabbi Baruch Rosenblum quoting the שלמה)

HALACHA HIGHLIGHT Exhuming the Deceased

קא מחטטי שבבי מפני ששמחים ביום אידם

They exhume the deceased because the Jews celebrate on their holiday

The Mishnah in Oholos¹ teaches that if one finds three graves together it is considered to be a gravesite and it is prohibited to exhume the bodies. Tosafos² explains that the prohibition against exhuming a body applies even if one finds a single grave and the Mishnah in Oholos is emphasizing a difference between discovering a single grave and a gravesite of three. When one comes upon a gravesite one can be certain that the burial was done with the intention that the bodies remain in this location and it is prohibited to exhume the bodies. On the other hand, if one finds a single grave it is not certain that the burial was meant to be permanent and one is required to investigate whether the burial was done intentionally in this spot, whereby the body may not be moved, or was it done by chance and the body may be moved to another location. Poskim offer a number of reasons for the prohibition against exhuming a body to bury it in another location. Some Rishonim³ write that upon burial the deceased acquires the location where they are buried and it is designated to be their burial spot until resurrection. Therefore, moving the body to a different location is akin to theft since the body is removed from its property. Accordingly, there are those who hold that this prohibition applies to non-Jews as well since it is also prohibited to steal from a non-Jew⁴.

Another explanation, based on the Yerushalmi, is that exhuming the body causes the deceased distress. Upon opening the grave the soul that is with the body becomes frightened that it is being called for trial before the Heavenly Court⁵. Rosh⁶ writes that the reason for the prohibition is that it is disgraceful for the deceased to be unburied during the time it is transported to the second burial site. An additional explanation⁷ is that exhuming the body reverses the mitzvah of burial. This explanation is consistent with the Gemara in Sanhedrin⁸ that rules that even after burial was performed one is obligated to re-bury the body if it is discovered to be exposed so exhuming the body is certainly unacceptable since it actively nullifies the original mitzvah of burying the deceased.

1. משנה אהלות פט"ז מ"ג
2. תוס' ב"ב קב ד"ה המוציא
3. רא"ש ור"ש על המשנה אהלות הנ"ל ותוס' בב"ב שם ורשב"ם שם קא
4. שו"ת רדב"ז סיק תשמ"א
5. ע' כל בו הלכות אבילות דף קל"ג
6. רא"ש מ"ק פ"ג סיק ל"ט
7. חזון איש א"ח סי' קל"ג סק"ב
8. גמ' סנהדרין מז

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The shavua matters is published by the Daf a week program under the rabbinical guidance of Harav Meir Stern shlita and Harav Shmuel Kamenetsky shlita

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