



(1) נדחי ישראל לח (2) גיטין לח: (3) ישעיהו נח"ג (4) עירובין סה. (5) או"ח רצוה: (6) הובא במגן אברהם רצו:ב (7) מנחת שבת צו:יט

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויצאה מביתו והלכה והיתה לאיש אחרוג' (כד-ג)

At the age of 28, **R' Mordechai Eliyahu ZT"l** - who would later serve as the Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel - became the youngest rabbi in the Israeli rabbinate, when he joined the rabbinical court of *Be'er Sheva* in 5717 (1957). Even at that relatively young age, he was renowned as a brilliant scholar who was exceptional in his care and personal attentiveness to the needs of all whom he met. He once noticed a woman sitting outside the offices of the rabbinate reciting *Tehillim* with tears in her eyes. She recited the words with great intensity. This recurred for a number of days, and she only finished her recital and closed her Book of Psalms as the rabbinate office closed its doors for the day.

R' Eliyahu's curiosity and concern was aroused and one day he asked his assistant to call the woman into his office. "What you are doing here?" R' Eliyahu asked gently once she appeared before him. "Can I help you in any way?" In a thick and distinct Moroccan accent, she said, "I just moved to Israel from Morocco. The government settled me in this city, and I immediately sought out the local rabbinate. Back in Morocco my husband was a taxi driver. Ten days after our marriage he was driving from one city to the next and I never heard from him again. They say he died in a crash but were unable to locate his body. All they found was his wrecked car." Her voice faded away as the sorrow overcame her.

"Weeks turned into months and I was told that I cannot remarry unless someone testifies that he or she actually saw the corpse. No one ever has." She turned to look into the rabbi's face. "In Morocco, nobody could help me. Now that I am in Israel, I thought that perhaps a rabbi could assist me and permit me to remarry. That's why I have been praying here."

The rabbi nodded with deep empathy. Then he asked, "But why then have you not entered the office to speak to us?" "Who are you?" responded the Sephardic woman with an old-world flare. "You, the rabbinate, are but messengers. I am praying to *Hashem*, the Creator of the world. He will decide if I should remarry or I should remain an *agunah*!"

R' Eliyahu, admiring the woman's strong faith, traveled to Netivot, to the home of the renowned **Baba Sali, R' Yisroel Abuchatzairah ZT"l**, who originally hailed from Morocco, to see if he could advise him on where or to whom to turn.

The Baba Sali listened to the story. Then he said, "Go to Ramla and speak with my brother, R' Yitzchok (the "**Baba Chaki**")". He knows everyone and he will tell you who was in charge of burials in various Moroccan cities."

R' Eliyahu took a taxi from Netivot to Ramla, where the Baba Chaki resided. The sage from Ramla knew the city where the woman had lived and told him that two grave-diggers from that city had both moved to Israel a few months earlier; one lives in Kiryat Ata and one lives in Dimona. He gave R' Eliyahu the exact address for each.

The rabbi continued on his journey to the closer of the two cities, Dimona. Upon arrival at the home of the grave digger, he found a note on the door saying that the man had just passed away. R' Eliyahu arrived just in time for the afternoon *Mincha* prayer. He stayed awhile, prayed, and then shared some words of comfort with the family.

Hoping that someone might be able to give him a clue to aid him in his undertaking, he decided to tell over the woman's story. As he told the tale with the taxi and mentioned the deceased man's name, an old man dressed in traditional Moroccan clothing, jumped up in the corner of the room. "I am one of the grave-diggers who buried that taxi driver. I remember the story well. No one could identify the driver other than the fact that he was Jewish. We were told to bury him in the Jewish cemetery. The man who passed away today was the other grave-digger and I am here in his home to console his family"

The rabbi immediately gathered two others, creating a mini rabbinical court, and they took this man's testimony. The next day, under the auspices of the *Be'er Sheva* rabbinate, R' Eliyahu delivered a letter to the woman, permitting her to remarry.

Relating to his fellow judges in *Be'er Sheva's* rabbinical court what had happened the previous day, R' Eliyahu exclaimed, "This is the power of a prayer that comes from a sincere heart."

משל למא הדבר דומא

כי יקח איש אשה חדשה ושטח את אשתו אשר לקח וגו' (כד-ה)

משל: The daughter of **R' Duvid'l of Dombrov ZT"l** was engaged to the son of **R' Laizer Nisan of Drovitch ZT"l**. A joyous celebration was attended by many of their followers and friends who came to share in the *simcha*.

While preparing the *tenaim* (engagement contract), the two *Rabbanim* disagreed on certain terms of the dowry. The argument went back and forth until R' Duvid'l finally announced, "With all due respect, I feel that in this matter I am correct and my opinion should be accepted."

"And why do you feel so strongly this way," asked R'

Laizer Nisan with mock indignation and the hint of a smile.

R' Duvid'l answered, "You see, when it comes to the *tenaim*, my role is far more important than yours. My name was mentioned in Heaven, while yours was not."

"What do you mean?" asked R' Laizer Nisan.

"*Chazal* tell us (סוטה ב.): 'Forty days before the conception of a child, a Heavenly Voice goes out and says, 'The daughter of ploni is to be married to ploni.' I am the 'ploni' whose daughter is being referred to. Thus, I was mentioned in Heaven while you were not!'"

כי תהיין לאיש שתי נשים האחת אהובה והאחת שנאה וילדו לו בנים וכו' (כא-ט)

Parshas Ki Seitzai is filled with so many laws and rules - more than any other *parsha* in the *Torah* - regulations that address a Jew's daily actions as well as issues of national and universal import. However, the *mitzvah* regarding a man who marries two women - a "beloved" one (אהובה) and a "despised" one (שנאה) - seems to have very little practical application today. Since the famous "*Cherem of Rabbeinu Gershom*" was instituted over one thousand years ago, a man is not permitted to marry two wives and thus the entire scenario of promoting the despised wife's son over the beloved wife's son, seems to be out of play.

The **Gerrer Rebbe, R' Yisroel Alter ZT"l (Beis Yisroel)** provides a dramatic explanation from a *posuk* in *Kohelos*: "אף חכמתי עמדה לי" (ב-ט) - "*Even my wisdom stood by me.*" The word "אף" has a double connotation; it can also be used to mean "anger." *Shlomo Hamelech* was saying that it was his "anger" that stood by him. What does this mean?

Explains the Beis Yisroel, there are two ways that *Hashem* treats us and expects us to serve Him. One is by showering us with love; making our lives easy and peaceful and expecting us to devote our effortless existence solely to serving Him. The second is through tribulations; life is difficult, and even painful, but if we channel all of our hardship into *Hashem*, and serve Him in this manner, we may be able to rise up to even greater heights. Thus, writes *Koheles*, it is the "אף" - the "anger" of *Hashem* that stands by me; it enables a Jew to reach unprecedented levels of service.

The two wives in our *parsha* represent the two manners of *Avodas Hashem*: the "beloved" way - *Hashem* is good to us at all times, and the "despised" way - through trials and pain. The message in our *parsha* is that although the beloved way might be preferred, one should promote the despised way also, since it can elevate a Jew to the highest of heights.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

רגישות

The underlying idea behind this *mitzvah* is a very beautiful concept. One should not harness together two animals from different species since they will not work at the same rate and will only frustrate each other. How sensitive the *Torah* is to animals; how much more so must we be to people! In fact, the **Sefer HaChinuch** extends the sensitivity of this *mitzvah* to human beings and says there is a *mitzvah* not to set-up two individuals who are incompatible, in any type of relationship.

In our generation, it is true that we are experiencing a "shidduch crisis" and it is a tremendous *mitzvah* to arrange *shidduchim* between boys and girls. However, one should never simply throw together a "pair of pants and a skirt" in a self-righteous attempt to make a *shidduch*. This is extremely frustrating and upsetting to the prospective mates. One must realize that creating a match is a wonderful and exciting endeavor, but it is also an awesome responsibility.

The **Steipler Gaon ZT"l** (quoted in **לשכנו תדרשו**) says that there are three things that one should look for in a *shidduch*: 1) *Yiras Shamayim*. 2) *Middos Tovos*. 3) מתאים - the boy and girl should be "compatible" - with the same goals, attitudes and *hashkafos* on life. Family backgrounds and personality types should be taken into account as well.

Everyone (including YOU) should be trying to help those who are not yet married, to find their rightful *zivug*. But it is important to remember: PLEASE don't match up two totally different types - "species" - (after all, as the saying goes, "Men are from Mars; Women are from Venus.") - for by doing so, you may very well be transgressing a *mitzvah* in the *Torah*.

ביזמו תתן שכרו ולא תבוא עליו השמש כי עני הוא ואליו הוא נשא את נפשו וכו' (כד-ט)

The **Brisker Rav, R' Yitzchok Zev Halevi Soloveitchik ZT"l** was very particular to pay all those who learned in his *kollel* every *Rosh Chodesh*, in order to fulfill the *Torah* requirement to pay a hired person on time. Nonetheless, during the preceding month, he never involved himself in the obtainment of the necessary funds whatsoever. Instead, on the night of *Rosh Chodesh*, he would call his sons, and together they would exert themselves to come up with the money needed for the next day's payment.

R' Velvel Chechick ZT"l, a *talmid* of the Brisker Rav, once suggested that perhaps a special fund be set up from which money could be drawn out every month in order to pay everyone in the *kollel* without the monthly efforts and angst.

"I would not agree to such an arrangement," said the Brisker Rav. "Should I sell my *mitzvah* of *bitachon* for that? As long as there is no specific fund, each month I need to strengthen my *emunah* and *bitachon* in *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, that He will send me the necessary amount at the right time. But if there would be a specific account, I would not have to invest so much energy in my *emunah* and *bitachon*."

The Brisker Rav was willing to devote his time and expend so much of his energy and effort on the night of *Rosh Chodesh*, even though this took away from the time he could have used to study *Torah*, in order that he would be able to constantly live with *bitachon* in *Hashem*.

One who sincerely believes in *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will merit obtaining true faith and *bitachon* in Him as well. He will feel that the Almighty, with His all-encompassing power, will provide him with anything he is lacking. Such a person need not worry about what will be tomorrow; he will live a tranquil, secure life, similar to a baby who serenely relies on his mother to care for him in every way. This has been the way of our *Torah* giants throughout the ages.

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
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לא תחרש בשור ובחמור יחדו וגו' (כב-י)

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