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8 years of Points to Ponder on Parashas Ki Tze Tze

**כִּֽי־תֵצֵ֥א לַמִּלְחָמָ֖ה When you go to war (21:10)** - How can we effectively plan for war? The **Chofetz Chaim** explained thatthe Torah knows how overwhelming the experience of war is. It’s possible to lose sight of the value of the individual during war time. But those people are still people and they still have all their personal struggles, and those personal struggles just end up being ignored. The Torah doesn’t see it that way—the Torah notes that the individual and the community both count.

**כִּֽי־תֵצֵ֥א  When you go out (21:10)** - The term Ki Tze Tze appears twice in the Parsha. In the first instance, Rashi notes that the Torah is speaking to the Yetzer Hara’s attempt to entice us in sin. In the second instance, we are not only warned to avoid DOING a sin but also not to think a sin. What is the connection? **Rav Nissan Alpert ztl.** explained that there are different ways that we go to war with our enemies. If we are going as a part of the camp so we need to be protected from every and anything bad. When we are alone we need to know that we are not alone, we are with the Yetzer HaRa.

י**ְפַת־תֹּ֑אַר** **Yifas toar (21:10) – Rashi** explains that the Torah spoke K’Negged the Yetzer HaRa. **Rav Schachter** **Shlita** explained that Rashi is teaching us a valuable lesson about pleasures that exist. People always assume that pleasures they are missing are always greater than the pleasures that they have. The lesson of Yifas Toar is that this is not so. Once you tell a person that something is not Assur, his Yetzer HaRa for it will not be as strong.

**והיה אם לא חפצת בה...ומכור לא תמכרנה בכסף If you shall not be interested in her send her away…do not sell her (21:14) – Rav Mordechai Zuckerman ztl**. points out that war did not allow EVERYTHING. The Yetzer Hara, left unchecked, will replace one desire for another – in this case the desire for physical companionship with the desire for money and power. Still, the Torah reminds us that there is a limit to the Heter of war – and of our need to remember that indeed we CAN conquer our Yetzer HaRa. Certain areas are tough under immediate stress but the long term desire for wealth can be brought under control.

**כִּי־יִֽהְיֶ֣ה לְאִ֗ישׁ בֵּ֚ן סוֹרֵ֣ר וּמוֹרֶ֔ה Ben Sorer U’Moreh (21:18)** - **Rav Schachter Shlita**  pointed out that one of the messages of Ben Sorer U’Moreh (the rebellious son)  is that one should love Hashem even more than his children. The **Chovos Halevavos** says that one’s love for his family and friends is a part of one’s Avodas Hashem since God commands you to love them. Your love for everyone else should be an example of your love of God. (Avraham Aveinu experienced this test at the time of the Akaida).

**כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה When a Person has a Ben Sorer U’Moreh (21:18)** – The Talmud debates as to whether this even existed. Rav Yochanan declared that he had seen one and sat on his grave. How does one explain the difference of opinion? Either it never was meant to exist or one sat on the grave? **Rav Avraham Dubver Kahana Shapiro ztl, Rav of Kovna** explained that in fact during the life of a Ben Sorer U’Moreh, he appears to be living the life and is a Tzaddik however, on his death one sees that the Tziddkus was not real and was flawed.

**כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה Ben Sorer U’Moreh (21:18)** – **The Talmud (Sanhedrin 71a)** notes that Ben Sorer U’Moreh is one of those conditions that will never happen. The only reason that it is written is in order to study it and teach it and receive reward. The question becomes apparent: The Torah is expansive enough, why need specific Mitzvos just to add and receive Sachar**? Rav Schachter Shlita** would often note the explanation of the **Baal HaTanya** who explains that if we have Mitzvos whose practical application is indeed impossible, it demonstrates that the Torah, and Elokus in general, is by definition infinite and beyond the boundaries of “practical”. Rav Schachter would often use the example of the international date line as an example. The Rishonim (esp. the Yesod Olam, a student of the Rosh) had a hard time understanding how there could be a place that would make Rosh Hashana 18 hours after Yirushalayim because of a set date line in a place where there were no Jews. The answer though, was clear – the issue was based on a theoretical date line. Things that are theoretical in Halacha make one aware of the infinite influence of Elokus.

**כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה When a person has a rebellious son (21:18) – Rashi** explains that the Ben Sorer U’Moreh is punished in regard to his future. It seems odd that we judge the son because of the results of HIS actions but allow his father, the one who in the moment could not control himself, he earns a free pass. Why do we not provide the same pass to the son? **Rav Bentzion Bruk ztl.** explained that we see the dangers of the impressionability of youth here. While the soldier (who can only join the army at 20) is given some leeway under the duress of war, the youngster is still under the tuteledge of Chinuch. If at the young age he is not set to understand the proper path without shortcuts, he will ultimately be a danger to society as a whole. The Torah would rather limit that potential danger.

**כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה If a person will have a rebellious son (21:18)** – The Talmud notes that the Ben Sorer U’Moreh is punished because of the way he will end up in the end – not based on his current crimes. How does this make sense in light of that which we find in regard to Yishmael who was judged Ba’asher Hu Shom – where he was? **The Kotzker Rebbe** suggests that the words Al Shem Sofo refers not to his end but rather the end of his title – “U’Moreh” that he will teach others to follow in his footsteps. It is crucial to create opportunities to rehabilitate the future of anyone needing the help but we cannot allow that to come at the expense of others.

**בְּק֥וֹל אָבִ֖יו וּבְק֣וֹל אִמּ֑וֹ To the voice of his father and the voice of his mother (21:18)** - Why does he separate the voice of the parents here but later he does not -- voicing “Koleinu” not two voices? **Rav Yaakov Bender Shlita** explained that when parents speak in one voice, consistent, clear and direct in their approach the children will not encounter that which we find in the Ben Sorer U’Morah. Parents can disagree but their Hashkafos and focus on Middos need to be consistent so that the children learn how to properly live.

**כי יהיה לאיש בן סורר ומורה When a person has a rebellious son (21:18)- Rashi** explains that he is judged based on his end. The Torah prefers that he pass as one who is worthy instead of being a major sinner. The **Alter of Kelm** notes that the opposite is true as well. If we start to move in the right direction— even if we only make the start, we can be considered on the right road even now.

**איננו שומע בקולינו He does not listen to us (21:20) – Rav Shach ztl.** explains that the problem of the rebellious son is that he does not listen. One who is too busy to listen cannot grow and can never be a part of Kedoshim Teeheeyu. Such a person cannot rise to the occasion.

**וְתָלִ֥יתָ אֹת֖וֹ עַל־עֵֽץ**: **And you shall hang him on a tree (21:22)** – Why do we hang the person on a tree? And why man and not a woman? The Talmud (Sanhedrin 38) that this is a reference to Adam HaRishon who denied Hashem at the time of Avaira. The author of **the Eitz Yosef** on the Ein Yaakov points out that it was the Tree (Eitz HaDaas) that led him to the sin. Returning him there – albeit temporarily – is a reminder of the source of the sin. The **Hegyonah Shel Torah** adds that this is not a punishment but rather a symbol.

**הָשֵׁ֥ב תְּשִׁיבֵ֖ם לְאָחִֽיךָ Return them to your brother (22:1)** - The Midrash notes that when it comes to Ir Miklat, we have a Mitzva to set up direction signs on the road so that s/he who is running will be able to get there and not need to stop for directions. **Rav Elyashiv ztl** noted that if this is the case for a inadvertent murderer (i.e. that we show that person the way to go) then when someone had lost something, we certainly need to give him the direction to find it. Moreover, if it is not an item s/he has lost but himself, certainly, we need to give people direction to find themselves. In the old days, there was a stone -- the Even HaToen -- that people went to announce the location of lost objects. Today, there is no such stone but there ARE shuls and Battei Midrash that announcements for lost people -- who’ve lost themselves or their way, can go to be found.

**וַֽהֲשֵֽׁבֹת֖וֹ לֽוֹ And return it to him (22:2)** – Why does the Torah use the strange combination of V’Hasheivoso Lo “You should return him to him”? **Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that the unusual wording provides us with three different lessons to be learned: First, the **Torah Temima** explains that one has an obligation to return himself to himself. Sometimes people need a good word of encouragement. This too, is a part of the Hashava. Additionally, the **Ramban (Toras HaAdam)** explains that doctors cannot charge more than their lost practice time in setting prices – for they are returning a lost person to himself (physically). Finally, the **Minchas Chinuch and Gilyon Maharsha** note that when a person falters and needs a little reproof, this too, falls under the rubric of Hashavas Gufo.

**וְכֵ֨ן תַּֽעֲשֶׂ֜ה לְכָל־אֲבֵדַ֥ת אָחִ֛יךָ אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאבַ֥ד מִמֶּ֖נּוּ This is what you should do to all the lost objects of your brother’s that shall be lost and you find it (22:3)** – The mishna identifies a special stone – Even HaToein – which functioned as a sort of lost and found location. The Mishna notes that it was in Yirushalayim but the **Rambam** seems to locate it outside. Why**? Rav Mordechai Ilan ztl. (Mikdash Mordechai)** explains that like with those with accounting difficulties which were worked on outside of Yirushalayim so that the Yirushalayim experience should never be built on a sadness of bad accounting, the anticipation of finding lost object followed by dashed hopes should also not take place within Yirushalayim.

**כִּ֣י יִקָּרֵ֣א קַן־צִפּ֣וֹר | לְפָנֶ֡יךָ בַּדֶּ֜רֶךְ בְּכָל־עֵ֣ץ | א֣וֹ עַל־הָאָ֗רֶץ  When you happen upon a bird’s nest on the ground (22:6)** - The Gemara (Chullin 139b) asks that if one finds a bird’s nest on his head is he obligated to perform Shiluach HaKaan. The Gemara determines that the answer is yes since we find a second possuk that compares the top of the head of a person to Adama -- earth. **Rav Wolbe ztl.** explains that the Gemara is reminding man that even after being created, man is lowly -- like a clump of earth. But notwithstanding man’s nature, he can rise to the highest of levels -- his potential is unlimited. Harnessing our power toward the service of Hashem can bing Geulah to the entire nation.

**לְמַ֨עַן֙ יִ֣יטַב לָ֔ךְ וְהַֽאֲרַכְתָּ֖ יָמִֽים**: **Send the mother away and the children you shall take for yourself so that it will be good for you and you shall have a long life (22:7)** – The rationale for this Mitzva is mystifying. Why is the reward here connected to longevity? **Rabbi Dr. Reuven Bulka Shlita** noted that the other time we find the same reward is in connection to honoring one’s parents. He noted that at least homiletically this is not haphazard. It is only through our appreciating the sources of our existence and behaving respectfully towards those sources that we can have a happy life, a life which will be blessed in quantity and in quality. Preservation of our physical life source brings with it the promise of continual food supply and hence a long life; preservation of our spiritual life source brings with it the promise o f a life of tranquility and blessedness, a longevity in which each day is profoundly valued .

**ִּ֤י תִבְנֶה֙ בַּ֣יִת חָדָ֔שׁ When you build a new house (22:8)** – The **Sifrei** derives from the word “Bayis Chadash” that once it is ready, one must put a Maakeh (parapet) on his house. **The Brisker Rav ztl**. notes that in this regard, Maakeh is different from Mezuzah. The Mitzva of Mezuzah requires one to have a home before the obligation of Mezuzah begins. Maakeh is different – it begins as the home is completed irrespective of habitability.

**כִּֽי־יִפֹּ֥ל הַנֹּפֵ֖ל מִמֶּֽנּוּ: So that no one should fall from it (Devarim 22:8)** - If the person who might be killed if there were no fence did not deserve to die (in this manner), would he fall just because the homeowner did not build a fence? If indeed he would not fall, why is there a need for the *mitzva* in the first place**? Rav Yosef Carmel Shlita** explains that one approach is that of **Kli Yakar** who notes that the fence saves only the one who wasn’t supposed to fall. It is not clear if he means that the saved person would not have fallen or that he would have fallen elsewhere or died in another way, assuming it was not destined how and where he would die. **Sefer HaChinuch** notes that when one relies on a miracle s/he doesn’t receive it.  It does not take a miracle to spend time on roof without a fence and not fall.  The fence just reduces the risk a little more. According to this idea, the mitzva of Maaka suggests that iif 1,000 Jews (not *tzaddikim* like Avraham) without a decree to die decide to ignore proper safety precautions and enter a 1/100 chance of death situation, approximately 10 will die from it. This is an important opinion to consider for those who, to use just a couple of examples, drive less carefully than they should, smoke, eat unhealthily, or ignore the risks of dangerous infectious diseases.

**בְּשֽׁוֹר־וּבַֽחֲמֹ֖ר יַחְדָּֽו Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together (22:10) - Rav Dr. Abraham J. Twerski ztl**. noted that the rationale behind this Mitzva is that animals of 2 species will not pull at the same rate and will frustrate one another. Similarly, notes the Chinuch, putting people who are fundamentally incompatible into a joint venture is equally as troubling. Rav Twerski added that any effort that requires cooperation be it societal, marital or occupational, that is compelled on the incompatible may actually be a violation of an Issur in the Torah.

**כי יקר איש אשה ובא עליה ושנאה When a man takes a wife and he hates her (22:13) – Rashi** explains that if one starts off hating someone then s/he will come to make up ugly rumors – even about a spouse! **Rav Yitzchak Kupfelman ztl.** pointed out that the Motzee Shem Ra is a symptom and not the problem. The problem begins at the source – that there is marital discord and the couple needs to work on that first.

**וְשָׂ֥ם לָהּ֙ עֲלִילֹ֣ת דְּבָרִ֔ים**  **And he set off rumors (22:14)** – **Rashi** explains that here we find the concept of Aveira Gorreres Avaira – that since he violated Lo Tisna he came to Lashon HaRa. The **Eretz Tzvi of Koshenglov** noted that the comparison is based on the idea that Lashon HaRa and Sinas Chinam are really one and of the same. In order to say Gorreres Aveira, the 2 Aveiros need to be of similar type.

**עַל־דְּבַר֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר לֹא־צָֽעֲקָ֣ה בָעִ֔יר**  **The girl because she did not cry out (22:24)** – Why is the Naarah HaMiOrasa stoned in the same way as the alleged attacker simply because she did not “cry out?” **Sfas Emes** notes that the implication of the actions here are that the relations were consensual. We often claim that we are not to blame for our sins since it was the Yetzer HaRa’s coercion that caused us to sin. Sfas Emes says we do not have such a right to that claim. If we were indeed coerced, we should have cried out – davened to Hashem to help us fight off the Yetzer HaRa.

**עַל־דְּבַ֞ר אֲשֶׁ֨ר לֹֽא־קִדְּמ֤וּ אֶתְכֶם֙ בַּלֶּ֣חֶם וּבַמַּ֔יִם בַּדֶּ֖רֶךְ בְּצֵֽאתְכֶ֣ם מִמִּצְרָ֑יִם Because they didn’t greet you with bread and water when you left Mitzrayim and they hired Bilaam to curse you (23:5)** – These seemingly disparate reasons for excluding Moabite converts need reconciliation. How are the two reasons related**? Rav Eliezer Gordon ztl. (as cited by Rav Elchonon Wasserman ztl.**) explained that hiring Bilaam is an antithesis to an argument that they did not believe in miracles and thus did not believe respect was due to the Jewish nation. Once they hired Bilaam – they showed that they believed in Hashem and His power and just did not want to respect the Jewish nation. The Telshe Rosh Yeshiva added that the same is true of secularists. They cannot argue that they do not believe in anything. They believe in a lot but are not sure in what to believe . Thus, without Torah, one remains blind and baffled.

**עַל־דְּבַ֞ר אֲשֶׁ֨ר לֹֽא־קִדְּמ֤וּ אֶתְכֶם֙ Because they didn’t greet you with bread and water (23:5) - Rashi** notes that they gave you advice in order to get you to mess up. In the Torah, 2 different ideas are the reason to keep them out. They hired Bilaam and they didn’t greet you with food. But Rashi adds that they tried to lead you astray. Why does Rashi provide a third reason? **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ztl.** explained that Rashi is showing you the explanation of their thinking. Lest someone think that there were mitigating factors -- not feeding you and hiring Bilaam as defense moves -- Rashi corrects that and tells us that their intention was offensive not defensive and thus they can never join our people.

**ויהפך ה' אלוקיך לך את הקללה לברכה Hashem changed his curse to a blessing (23:6)** – We do not find any actual blessing by Bilaam. We merely find his expression of the traits of Bnei Yisrael. What does the Possuk mean when it suggests that Hashem changed his curses to blessings? **Rav Nosson Zvi Wachtfogel ztl.** suggested that in the same way that a curse can begin merely by pointing out one’s shortcomings (See Rashi to Bamidbar 24:1) which was Bilaam’s intent by highlighting the sins of the Jewish people, the mentioning of our traits of strength become the greatest vessels for a Beracha from Hashem.

**לֹֽא־תִדְר֥שׁ שְׁלֹמָ֖ם וְטֹֽבָתָ֑ם Don’t seek out their peace or goodness all your days (23:7)** - The Gemara (Gittin 57b) notes that Bilaam was asked by Onkelos, who the most important nation was inthe world of truth and replied that it was the Jews. He asked if Onkelos should join them and Bilaam responded with this Possuk. Isn’t that contradictory? Shouldn’t one seek out to be among the most successful? **Rav Avigdor Miller ztl** explains that this is the intent of a truly wicked person. They see the truth but they understand the hatred of the Jew so much more, that they are willing to falsify it even in the world to come.

**וְנִ֨שְׁמַרְתָּ֔ מִכֹּ֖ל דָּבָ֥ר רָֽע: Protect yourself from all evil (23:10) - Ramban** explains that the rules of keeping the army camp clean are based on the fact that Hashem sees even this place as a place of Kedusha. **Rav Haim Sabato Shlita** adds that sometimes people assume that war time is a hazardous time and laxity is allowed. While there might be a set of different circumstances during a war, the person who recognizes that he is obligated to the same Hashem who is still with him in the war camp will allow him to stay focused and holy, deserving of the protection and Hatzalah that those with Hashem always deserve.

**וְיָד֙ תִּֽהְיֶ֣ה לְךָ֔ מִח֖וּץ לַמַּֽחֲנֶ֑ה  You should carry a shovel on your belt (23:14)** – The Torah’s acute reminder to preserve the soldier’s cleanliness is paralleled by the Talmud’s (Kesubos 5a) reminder to clean our ears from Lashon Hara based on the same Possuk. **Rav Shaul Yisraeli** **ztl**. explained that the Israeli army is a different army than any other one in the world. The other armies fight based on hand to hand and tank to tank numbers. Our victories are built on our holiness and spiritual superiority in the army camp. Thus, the need to keep the camp holy – as it is our secret weapon.

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| **לֹ֖א תּוֹנֶֽנּוּ:**  **You must not ill-treat him. [(](https://www.sefaria.org/Deuteronomy.23.16-17?lang=he-en)**[**23:17)**](https://www.sefaria.org/Deuteronomy.23.16-17?lang=he-en)**-** The Torah concludes this passage with the phrase, "Lo Tonennu" |
| (t לֹ֖א תּוֹנֶֽנּוּ: ranslated above "do not ill-treat him"), meaning that you should not verbally abuse this person. This comes in addition to the prohibition against verbal abuse of any Jew (Vayikra 25:17), and the special |
| prohibition against verbal abuse of a stranger in the land (Vayikra 19:33). Thus, this verse adds a new |
| prohibition - mocking a slave who has come to the land of Israel. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein ztl.** pointed out that with regard to the general prohibition against verbal abuse, the rabbis take a very harsh approach, comparing verbal abuse in the form of humiliation to spilling blood ([Bava Metzia 58b)](https://www.sefaria.org/Bava_Metzia.58b?lang=he-en). Furthermore, the more sensitive and emotionally vulnerable the person abused, the more severe is the violation. It is for this reason that there is an additional prohibition against abusing a stranger, and yet another in our case. If you say something bad about a person who has "thick skin," he will just go on as if nothing has occurred. But if you speak about someone who is very sensitive, you can destroy his whole world. Thus, in terms of the damage caused, it is more severe to mock someone who is sensitive. Correspondingly, it is also a more severe violation on the part of the person abusing if the victim is affected by what he says. The moral turpitude displayed is of a much higher order. People often tend to mock those who are weak. The Torah goes out of its way to emphasize how problematic this is, providing an additional prohibition against abusing the stranger, and yet another against abusing the slave who has fled to the land of Israel. The Torah teaches us that we need to go out of our way to help such people, doing whatever we can to enable them to thrive. The attention paid to the escaped slave teaches us to have this special sensitivity, raising our already high moral standard for those in need.  **לֹֽא־תָבִיא֩ אֶתְנַ֨ן זוֹנָ֜ה וּמְחִ֣יר כֶּ֗לֶב Don’t bring an Esnan Zona or Mechir Kelev (23:19)** – Why is the Mechir Kelev such a problem? The **Oznayim L’Torah** explains that the dog is the animal that shortens the life of a person (See Bava Kama 79) and causes women to miscarry. Dogs, especially wild ones, attack people indiscriminately and thus, one should not raise them in his home if the home is not on the border. The Mizbeiach is supposed to bring life to the world (hence no metal in its formulation) and therefore using a Mechir Kelev is antithetical to its purpose.    **לֹֽא־תָבִיא֩ אֶתְנַ֨ן זוֹנָ֜ה וּמְחִ֣יר כֶּ֗לֶב Sale of a dog (23:19**) - What is so terrible about the Dog that makes its exchange value disqualified from being able to be brought on the Mizbeiach? **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin ztl.** explains that dogs are the biggest spies on their friends -- the other animals. When a dog is sent out, the dog betrays the animal kingdom by giving away the location of the other animals to the hunter. This is a mussar to us, we should not be spies.  **כִּֽי־יִקַּ֥ח אִ֛ישׁ אִשָּׁ֖ה וּבְעָלָ֑הּ When a man finds a wife (24:1)** – The Talmud (Berachos 8a) seizes on the word Matza noting that at Jewish weddings they used to dance asking Motza or Matza. The former (Motzai) being quite dangerous (U’Motzai Anee Mar MiMaves)while the latter (Matza) being of the style “Matza Isha Matza Tov” being positive. **Rav Pinkus Ztl.** notes that when one constantly reviews his or her match to see if s/he is “a good fit”, the experience is Mar Mimaves. Hashem engaged the Jewish people differently: He noted “matza Chein BaMidbar” he found what he was looking for, even without all the adornments he expected and never looked back.  **כִּֽי־יִקַּ֥ח אִ֛ישׁ אִשָּׁ֖ה וּבְעָלָ֑ה**ּ **When a man finds a wife (24:1)** – The Talmud (Berachos 8a) seizes on the word Matza noting that at Jewish weddings they used to dance asking Motza or Matza. The former (Motzai) being quite dangerous (U’Motzai Anee Mar MiMaves)while the latter (Matza) being of the style “Matza Isha Matza Tov” being positive. **Rav Pinkus Ztl.** notes that when one constantly reviews his or her match to see if s/he is “a good fit”, the experience is Mar Mimaves. Hashem engaged the Jewish people differently: He noted “matza Chein BaMidbar” he found what he was looking for, even without all the adornments he expected and never looked back.  **כָ֨תַב לָ֜הּ סֵ֤פֶר כְּרִיתֻת֙ וְנָתַ֣ן בְּיָדָ֔הּ If she does not find favor in his eyes he should write her a Sefer Krisus (24:1)** – Rabbi Akiva famously declares that merely finding a nicer wife is grounds for divorce. Why? **Rav Aryeh Levin ztl.** explained that the Gemara (Shabbos 25b) notes that the sign of wealth is an Isha Na’ah B’Maasim to which the **Maharsha** comments that such a wife is she who does not ask for lavish expenditures. If he finds a better one – i.e. one who does not ask for as much, then it is a Chessed letting this one go for a husband more likely to fulfill her needs.  **נָקִ֞י יִֽהְיֶ֤ה לְבֵיתוֹ֙ שָׁנָ֣ה אֶחָ֔ת וְשִׂמַּ֖ח אֶת־אִשְׁתּ֥וֹ אֲשֶׁר־לָקָֽח He shall be free for his home for one year and gladden his wife whom he has married (24:5) – Rashi** cites the position of **Onkelos** who notes that the responsibility is not to be happy WITH his wife but rather to make his wife happy. **Rav Pam Ztl.** deduced a critical lesson from this point. He noted that sometimes young men start to feel worried that perhaps the great Metziah they thought they had found in their spouses is indeed not as great as advertised. This can lead to tremendous questions in Shalom Bayis. Therefore it is crucial for one to remember his job is to make his wife happy. If he does so, then the respect and dignity he accords her will be reciprocated and he will be happy with her too.  **נָקִ֞י יִֽהְיֶ֤ה לְבֵיתוֹ֙ שָׁנָ֣ה אֶחָ֔ת וְשִׂמַּ֖ח אֶת־אִשְׁתּ֥וֹ אֲשֶׁר־לָקָֽח He shall be free for his home for a year and gladden his wife (24:5) - Rashi** quotes **Onkelos** who explains that he will gladden his wife and one who says he should be happy WITH his wife is mistaken. **Rav Pam ztl.** noted that there is a deep message here. Sometimes couples think that the job of a marriage is to be happy together. But that is not the message of marriage. To have a successful marriage one needs to place his focus on making his wife happy. Not that he be happy with her. This is the key to a successful home.  **זכור את אשר עשה ה' אלקיך למרים Remember that which Hashem did to Miriam (24:9)** – What is the point of remembering the sin of Miriam? The Chofetz Chaim noted that the issue is one of Lashon Hara even when unintentional. **Rav Schachter Shlita quoted Rav Kook ztl.** who noted that Lashon Hara is not one of the mainstays of the faith so how could it be a reference to one of the 6 Zechiros? Rav Kook answered that belief in Nevuas Moshe as the supreme Novi IS one of the main Ikkarei Emunah and that became apparent at the time of the sin of Miriam. We need to remember the lesson of Adon HaNeviim learned here. If that is the case, then everyone who violates a Mitzva should be Chiyav Misa? **Rav Schachter quoted Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** that this is the case when Moshe is speaking in form of a Novi – that the Toras Nevuah is a Horaas Shaah. If it is a Din L’Doros it is worse – but it has a set definition of punishment.  **זכור את אשר עשה ה' אלקיך למרים Remember what Hashem did to Miriam (24:9) – Rav Aharon Lichtenstein ztl.**asked how it was possible that Miriam who had done such great things throughout her life was to be remembered for her single failing? Why was that ok? He explained that people often think of a scale on which we are judged, where as long as you are more or less alright, you will do fine. As long as you have more points on the positive side than on the negative, you have nothing to worry about. The Torah is telling us that this is not enough. Even one failure can be critical. One needs to strive to abide by God's word totally and completely, in all one's actions, and not just be on the right path in some general sense. We learn from Miriam the importance of every action, and how important it is to remain focused on our service of God. He added that there is also a more positive correlate. We generally say that the reward for good deeds is greater than the punishment for bad ones. As such, every action taken in the right direction, every fulfillment of a mitzva, merits tremendous recognition from God.    **וְאֵלָ֕יו ה֥וּא נֹשֵׂ֖א אֶת־נַפְשׁ֑וֹ He risks his life for it (24:15) - Rashi** explains that the day laborer takes major risks during the day for his daily wage. Therefore, you must pay it on time. **Rav Aryeh Finkel ztl.** commented that it must be the power of the investment that makes its payment so significant. Therefore, if a day laborer takes risks for Parnossa, what kind of risks must a Ben Torah take in order to demonstrate his value of the Torah?  **כִּי־יִֽהְיֶ֥ה רִיב֙ בֵּ֣ין אֲנָשִׁ֔ים When there will be a fight between people (25:1) - Rashi** explains that perhaps one should say that no peace comes from fighting. What is Rashi is trying to say? **Rav Yaakov Meir Schechter Shlita** explained that when people disagree, each side thinks s/he is in the right and puts effort into trying to prove just that, so the other side will just drop it in the name of peace. However, no good comes from that perspective. Therefore once sides are drawn, don’t try to offer mussar from one perspective.  **אַרְבָּעִ֥ים יַכֶּ֖נּוּ לֹ֣א יֹסִ֑יף You shall give 40 and no more lest you cause him to perish (25:3) –** The Talmud learns from and accords the Rabbis tremendous honor because they had a verse that encouraged 40 lashes and they interpreted 40 as 39 (See Makos 22b). The question needs to be asked for in regard to the laws of Shabbos we find that the Mishna lists 40 and we interpret the Melachos as 39 as well. However, no credit is given there to the Rabbis for their incredible power of interpretation. Why not? **Rav Chaim of** **Brisk** was quoted as noting that the Lomdus was not the thing deserving of praise – it was the mental exertion in order to alleviate the suffering associated with even one less makka.  **לֹֽא־תַחְסֹ֥ם Do not muzzle an ox when he is threshing (25:4)** – What is the connection between this Mitzva and the one of Makkos mentioned in the previous Possuk? Why are they together**? Rav Shmuel Brazil Shlita** suggests that the ox here refers to the animalistic soul of the person. When the animalistic soul overtakes the person and causes him to sin (Dash B’Akeivav), he should not be stopped from davening or learning. Even if he has done terrible Aveiros he is still special in the eyes of Hashem and desirous to Him.  **וְעָֽלְתָה֩ יְבִמְתּ֨וֹ הַשַּׁ֜עְרָה אֶל־הַזְּקֵנִ֗ים** **And the Yavamah shall go to the gates to the Zekanim (25:7)** – Why are the Zekanim involved here at all? And why does he need to state that he does not want to marry her – and why? **Rav Yaakov Ettlinger ztl.** explained that when the Yivama goes to Bes Din, she asks them to criticize and encourage him to choose not to be selfish and to perform Yibum instead. To that the Yavam responds that he is not motivated by selfishness toward the future child born – he does not care for the woman herself. However, not to embarrass her, he provides an alternative explanation for his actions.  **וְנִגְּשָׁ֨ה יְבִמְתּ֣וֹ אֵלָיו֘ לְעֵינֵ֣י הַזְּקֵנִים֒ וְחָֽלְצָ֤ה נַֽעֲלוֹ֙ מֵעַ֣ל רַגְל֔וֹ  His Yevama shall come forward to him in front of the Zekanim and remove his show (25:9)**– The Achronim disagree as to whether one must engage in Chalitza or whether a woman who does not desire to remarry can refuse to undergo Chalitzah. The general assumption is that the difference of opinion is whether Chalitza is a Mitzva or a matir. **Rav Eizel Charif ztl.** suggested that in this case, where the Torah specifies so many required details about the reading of the Possukim etc. as commands, that this must be a Mitzva. **Rav Schachter Shlita** thought that the proof was not absolute. Rather, the Torah was specifying what to do if one WANTED to engage in Chalitza. If one wanted to do so, then these are the rules.  **זָכ֕וֹר אֵ֛ת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂ֥ה לְךָ֖ עֲמָלֵ֑ק Remember what Amalek did to you (25:17)** – What is the purpose with all of the remembering if, in the end, we cannot act on the Mitzva – for there are numerous preconditions to the mitzvah of destroying Amalek. Why waste the time reviewing this one? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explains that one needs to constantly recall even the heinous Avairos in order to serve as a deterrent from them as well. If we do not speak of the obvious, we run a risk of taking the serious Avairos too lightly.  **אֲשֶׁ֨ר קָֽרְךָ֜ בַּדֶּ֗רֶךְ  Who cooled you (25:18) - Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel ztl** noted the famous comparison to a kettle which when heating water needs to be consistently on the flame because if it is not, the water will never boil. Rav Nosson Tzvi noted that the same is true for us -- if we are not constantly involved in learning, we too, can be cooled down. He added that this is a constant battle in our lives -- especially in the arena of spiritual growth -- to work not to be cooled down.  **מִתַּ֖חַת הַשָּׁמָ֑יִם לֹ֖א תִּשְׁכָּֽח: From under the heavens (25:19) - Rav Kook ztl.** noted that when Amalek is to be destroyed it is from under the heavens -- because in Shomayim, Hashem sees a purpose in everything he created. Kol D’Avid Rachmana L’Tava Avid. The Gemara in Gittin notes that Haman’s children learned Torah in Bnei Brak. Thus, there are descendants that can have a purpose. Rav Schachter quoted that the students asked Rav Soloveitchik about the Nazis and whether it is possible to accept anything good from them. Rav Schachter noted that in general, in the next generation after intense antisemitism there is a general uptick in the descendants of the aggressor to join the Jewish nation -- whether at the time of the Churban, Amalek or even Germany. He explained that when the next generation wants to understand why the earlier one was so opposed to the Jewish nation, they fall in love with it. Either way, Rav Soloveitchik was initially outspoken against finding anything good from the Nazis but later reportedly accepted that history bore out that the need to accept those reparations proved that it was ok to accept.  **מִתַּ֖חַת הַשָּׁמָ֑יִם From beneath the heavens (25:19) - Rav Yosef Carmel Shlita** noted that the war against Amalek can take place on two planes – a maximalistic plane and a minimalistic plane. The maximal approach is the one that obliterates Amalek from beneath the heavens. This is a war of annihilation of evil after which, world peace will be achieved. This style requires a Melech and a command. However, until that point, there is a form of erasing Amalek  in the form of fighting the elements of Amalek that are in our own midst. The main ability of Amalek to be a dangerous enemy of ours was related by the Torah before its account of the episode of Amalek’s attack. Our nation asked: “Is Hashem in our midst or is He not?” (Shemot 17:7). Overcoming that doubt is an important feat. The salvation of sorts that it brings, even if it is subtle, is considered a miracle that is fit for the times of exile.  **Haftara:**  **רָנִּ֥י עֲקָרָ֖ה לֹ֣א יָלָ֑דָה Sing out barren one who has not given birth (Yeshayahu 54:1) – Rav Dovid Feinstein ztl.** explained that when Am Yisrael was exiled, Yirushalayim was like a barren women, deprived of children. Still, the Novi wants Yirushalayim not to be despondent because she should have confidence that her future will be bright. Rashi (Eicha 1:7) cites a Midrash that in Galus, the Jews were exceptionally scrupulous in observing Shabbos, Yom Tov and Shmittas Kesafim. Our enemies taunted us for not keeping the Mitzvos in Eretz Yisrael and doing so when it was “too late.” But when it comes to our relationship with Hashem, we are not “too late” – we are early in preparing for the future.  **רָנִּ֥י עֲקָרָ֖ה לֹ֣א יָלָ֑דָה Rejoice O Barren One (Yeshayahu 54:1)** – Bruriah (See Berachos 10a) explained to a certain heretic that the intention of the possuk here was that the Jewish nation should rejoice that its future would not go to Gehinnom like those of the other nations. **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** explained that the beauty of a nation that raises the next one is that there is hope in the next generation and a sense of the next generation’s appreciation of the unique status it is accorded based on the pillars upon which it is built. The Jewish child is acutely aware of this and is appreciative of the status.  **וְזַרְעֵךְ֙ גּוֹיִ֣ם יִירָ֔שׁ And your children will inherit many nations (Yeshayahu 54:3)** - The Midrash (tanna D’Bei Eliyahu Zuta) notes that Geulah happens in the merit of Pru U’Revu. As it did in the past so it will in the future. **Rav Melamed Shlita** explains that whether we were speaking of the slavery in Mitzrayim or the after-effects of the Shoah, believing in the future and building it through the creation of the next generation, is the guarantee that we WILL experience Geulah.  **כִּי־מֵ֥י נֹ֙חַ֙ זֹ֣את לִ֔י**  **For this is like the waters of Noach to me (Yeshayahu 54:9)** – By referring to the Mabul as Mei Noach, it sounds as if the Navi blames Noach for a role in its coming**? HaRav Shimon Schwab ztl**. explains that Noach was held somewhat culpable since he had the opportunity to Daven for the people of his generation and did not do so. Perhaps this is why some judge Noach derisively – for not seizing on the chance to Daven on behalf of his people.  **כִּי־מֵ֥י נֹ֙חַ֙ זֹ֣את לִ֔י**  **For this is the waters of Noach to me (Yeshayahu 54:9) - Rav Eytan Feiner Shlita** once recalled the comment of **Rav Yaakov Weinberg zt”l** who observed that Noach’s Ark encompassed the entire future of the world within. For with the whole world being destroyed, the future of mankind remained safely ensconced inside the Teivah of Noach. Not coincidentally, though, the word teivah not only means “Ark,” but “word” as well. Every word which escapes our mouth holds the potential of either building or breaking lives. The future of the world rests no less than at the tip of our tongue.  **כָּל־כְּלִ֞י יוּצַ֚ר עָלַ֙יִךְ֙ לֹ֣א יִצְלָ֔ח וְכָל־לָשׁ֛וֹן תָּֽקוּם־אִתָּ֥ךְ לַמִּשְׁפָּ֖ט תַּרְשִׁ֑יעִי  Any weapon sharpened against you will not succeed and any tongue that will rise against you in judgment you will condemn (Yeshayahu 54:17) – Rav Pam ztl.**explained that lest one think that greatness in Torah depends on a photographic memory or extraordinary powers of concentration that are gifts from Hashem, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the great Chachamim are great because they treasure every morsel of Torah that they receive. By appreciating a depth to a new insight, one guarantees that its impact will be felt for a long time and will be able to withstand scrutiny from the outside. |