



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

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Chapter Madricha

“Wings of Compassion: Reflecting on שילוח הקן and Elul”

In Parshat Ki Tetzei we are presented with the mitzvah of שילוח הקן, sending away the mother bird. רמב"ם explains that the rationale behind the mitzvah is compassion and prevention of the deepest form of pain to a parent. He explains that since the immense love that a parent has for a child is instinctual as opposed to intellectual or a learned behavior, even an animal can possess it and it would be cruel to take the egg without sending away the mother.

Through this explanation we see that the Mitzvah of שילוח הקן is a reflection of Kibud Av Ve'am. שילוח הקן is having Kavod for other's parents, specifically mothers. Furthermore, the Torah explicitly states that these mitzvot have the same reward of long life, למען ייטב לך והוא ארכת ימים.

I believe we can learn a valuable lesson from the apparent paradox of the Mitzvah of Kibud Av Ve'am. On a superficial level, it seems that Kibud Av Ve'am is בין אדם לחברו since this is a Mitzvah between people (i.e. parent and child). However, it is interesting to note that this Mitzvah is listed among the first 5 on the לוחות.

Why is a Mitzvah on the בין אדם לחברו side? רמב"ן suggests that the Mitzvah of Kibud Av Ve'am is unique as it bridges both the mitzvot of בין אדם לחברו and together. This Mitzvah has both aspects within it.

As we just entered into Elul and are spending the upcoming month introspecting, mending our relationship with Hashem and doing teshuva I believe it's vital to view this time as the bridge between בין אדם לחברו and תשרי. We ought to work on both of these aspects in each of our lives. Oftentimes we perceive as a time to only work on our relationship with Hashem but just as Kibud Av Ve'am bridges בין אדם לחברו so too could this time period.

Shabbat Shalom!



Yehuda Sunshine

Raanana

12th Grade

Moving Beyond Hate

לֹא־תִתְעַב אֲדָמִי כִּי אֶחִיךָ הוּא לֹא־תִתְעַב מִצְרִי כִּי־גַר הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ

Do not hate an Edomite, because he is your brother. Do not hate an Egyptian, because you were a stranger in his land.

Why, as עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל is about to enter ארץ ישראל, does Moshe command them not to hate the Egyptians? Wouldn't they be justified to do so after the way they were

treated and persecuted? Has enough time really passed to have this expectation?

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks makes a very powerful statement about freedom. He says, "To be free, you have to let go of hate."

And with this idea in mind, we can understand Moshe better. Moshe declares this specifically as עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל is about to enter the land as a fully free nation. He is teaching them one of the fundamental principles of freedom; freedom is not only one of the body, but also, and possibly even more importantly, one of the mind. עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל has been physically free for 40 years from the harsh slavery and oppression in Egypt, but if they were to continue to hate the Egyptians, they would have remained psychologically enslaved to them.

In our time, 3300 years since leaving Egypt, we don't carry this anger towards

the Egyptians, yet Moshe's message is still relevant to us today. Throughout our lives, we have situations where we feel frustrated, hurt or angry with others and the lesson for us to learn is the importance of letting go. Holding on to anger can weigh us down. To really be free, Moshe teaches us the gift of letting go and the freedom it gives us.

שבת שלום וחודש טוב ■

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