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The Lonely Man

In the sixth *perek*, the *Mishnah* explains that one should not abstain from engaging¹ in the *mitzvah* of *pru u'rvu* (having children) if he has not yet had children. The number and gender of the offspring necessary to fulfil the *mitzvah* is the subject of debate in the *Mishnah*.

The *Gemara* (61b) is particular in the wording of the *Mishnah* and explains that all that the *Mishnah* allows one to abstain from, once he has had “children”, is the *mitzvah* of *pru u'rvu*; however even if he has had children, he should not refrain from having a wife. The *Gemara* cites the following *pasuk* in support of this directive: “It is not good for Man to be alone”² (*Bereshit* 2:18).

Ha'Emek Davar explains the above *pasuk* is not stating that there needs to be a male and female for reproductive means, because this is a common necessity for all creatures. The *pasuk* is rather referring to the need for a spouse and helper in all aspects of one's life, as the *pasuk* continues: “I will make a compatible helper for him” (“*ezer kenegdo*”).

Ha'Emek Davar continues that each person has his unique character traits each with their strengths and deficiencies. The *ezer kenegdo*, one's ideal partner, will have contrasting character traits specifically “designed” to help and improve each other. By extension, points of conflict or tension more often than not reveal opportunities for growth and improvement.

While one's partner may be the ideal person for this endeavour, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* expands the need for social interaction for personal growth. There is a *Mishnah* in *Negaim* (2:5) that deals with the ability of

a *kohen* to inspect the *tzara'at* affliction of another, which reads as follows:

כל הנגעים אדם רואה חוץ מנגעי עצמו

The literal translation is: “a person may see (or inspect) anyone's afflictions (even relatives), other than his own”. However, punctuated differently it would translate: “All afflictions that a person sees outside (i.e. in others), it is from his own afflictions.” In other words, if one is bothered by a particular trait or characteristic of another, it is a sign the he himself is suffering from that problem.

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* explains that a person left in solitude is likely to believe he is righteous and without flaw. With the above secret known, our interactions with others enable us to develop an entire program of self development and improvement. Where should I start? Just ask yourself what really bothers me about so-and-so. That is likely to be a good starting point.

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* adds more. He explains that if one is bothered by another during his *tefillah* he should not ask, “Why did *Hashem* bring this person to disturb my *tefillah*?” Instead he should view the experience as *hashgachah pratit* (divine providence) intended to drive him to strengthen his *tefillah* and *avodah*.³

Thus there is a simple solution for those endeavouring in personal growth and looking for guidance. We need just open our eyes. Every interaction provides vital indicators of where we are lacking and what we must improve. If that shift of focus is taken, then every stress turns into guidance, every frustration dissolves into relief and every moment becomes an opportunity to come closer to *Hashem*.

David Bankier

¹ See *Tosfot Yom Tov* (s.v. *mi'piryah ve'rivyah*).

² The *Ben Yehoydah* quotes a difficulty posed by the *Iyun Ya'akov*: How is the *Gemarah* bringing this as a proof for the importance of having a spouse even if he has had children? At that point in *Bereshit*, *Adam* had not yet had children! He answers, that the reason why it is brought is because the *pasuk* itself explains that Man required a spouse not just for

reproduction, but rather because “I will make a compatible helper for him” (as this article continues to explain). Alternatively, the reference to *ha'Adam* refers to mankind as apposed to *Adam* in particular.

³ The *Ba'al Shem Tov* adds even more, explaining that even if someone is witness to another person sinning, the fact that he witnessed it means that there is some element of that sin in him.

This week's issue is dedicated
for the *yahrtzeit* of:

ישראל בן זעליג ע"ה

Revision Questions

יבמות ה': י' - ח' - א'

- Complete the following phrase and explain: (ה': י')
- " _____ אין אחר _____ כלום, בין בתחילה, בין באמצע בין בסוף
 " _____ בזמן שהיא בתחילה _____, באמצע ובסוף _____"
- Regarding the previous question, on what point does R' Nechemiah argue? (ה': י')
- If one is forced to perform *yibum*, is the *yibum* valid? (א': י')
- If one had relations with in *issur arayot be'shogeg*, can the woman still marry a *kohen*? (ב': י')
- Explain the debate regarding a daughter of a *kohen* who was a *gerusha* and got engaged (*kiddushin*) to a *kohen*, whether she can eat *trumah*? (ג': י')
- Regarding the previous case, when does everyone agree she can eat *trumah* and when does everyone agree that she cannot? (ג': י')
- Can a *kohen gadol* marry a widow from an engagement? (ד': י')
- If a *kohen* got engaged to a widow and then was elected to be a *kohen gadol* can he still marry her? (ד': י')
- If a *kohen's* brother dies (without children) leaving a wife, and this *kohen* performs a *ma'amar* and is then elected to be a *kohen gadol*, can he complete the *yibum*? (ד': י')
- Explain the debate whether a *kohen* can marry an *aylonit*. (ה': י')
- Explain the debate between *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* regarding the requirement of *pru u'rvu*. (ה': י')
- According to R' Yochanan ben Bruka who is commanded to perform the *mitzvah* of *pru u'rvu* and what is his source? (ה': י')
- If a *kohen* marries a *chalutzah* can the servants that she brought with her eat *trumah*? (Be specific) (ו': י')
- If a *kohen* marries a *bat Yisrael* can the servants that she brought with her eat *trumah*? (ב': י')
- If an *yisrael* marries a *bat kohen* can the servants that she brought with her eat *trumah*? (ב': י')
- According to R' Yosi if a *bat Yisrael* that marries a *kohen* is widowed while pregnant (with no other children), can her servants eat *trumah* and why? (Be specific) (ג': י')
- Which five people prevent a *bat Kohen* from eating *trumah*? (ד': י')
- If a man had two wives, one of which was the daughter of his brother, and both he and the wife that was his brother's daughter were killed, but we are unsure who died first, what is the law regarding the remaining wife (with respect to *yibum/chalitzah*)? (ד': י')
- Which people: (ה': י')
 - "לא פוסלים ולא מאכילים"?
 - "פוסל ומאכיל"?
- Describe a case how a *kohen gadol* can invalidate one from eating *trumah*? (ו': י')
- Can an *arel* eat *trumah*? (ח': י')
- Can an *arel's* wife eat *trumah*? (א': י')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday
Between mincha & ma'ariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat
10 minutes before mincha
Mizrachi Shul

Audio Shiurim on-line!

- 613.org/mishnah.html
- www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Finding Yevamot a little complicated?

Get the learning aids on-line at:

www.mishnahyomit.com

Next Week's Mishnayot...

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | שבת קודש |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 3 rd September י"ג אלול | 4 th September י"ד אלול | 5 th September י"ה אלול | 6 th September י"ו אלול | 7 th September י"ז אלול | 8 th September י"ח אלול | 9 th September י"ט אלול |
| Yevamot 8:2-3 | Yevamot 8:4-5 | Yevamot 8:6-9:1 | Yevamot 9:2-3 | Yevamot 9:4-5 | Yevamot 9:6-10:1 | Yevamot 10:2-3 |

