

גליון מס' 13

"משכן" מוקדש לרפואת האדמו"ר
ר"ף רבי יאשיהו יוסף פינטו שליט"א.

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Mishcan

The Rout To Emuna

Love is the Whole Story ?!...

* My son came into the kitchen this evening, while I was preparing dinner, he gave a piece of paper with a few things written on it...

I wiped my hands on the apron and read it, here is what it said:

For mowing the lawn - \$5...
For making my bed this week - %5...

For babysitting my baby brother - \$10... For a good grade at school - \$5... For cleaning the yard - \$5... for cleaning my room this week - \$10...

I watched him stand there and wait, and thousands of memories rushed through my head.

I took the paper, turned it over and wrote:

For the nine months I carried you inside me - Free of charge!

For the nights I sat next to you, took care of you, prayed for you - Free of charge!

For the times and the tears and the costs throughout the years - Free of charge!

For advice and knowledge and the costs of your Torah studies - Free of charge!

For the toys, the food, the clothes

and wiping your nose - Free of charge!

My son, when you sum all these things up, the total price of my love is - Free of charge!

He finished reading and tears filled his eyes. He looked at me and said:

"Mother, I love You"!!!

He then took his pencil and wrote down in big letters:

PAID IN FULL!!!

Everyone in this world wants to be loved...

The biggest rating in the Torah's own "Hollywood" is love...

Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rivka, Jacob, Rachel and Leah...

The entire book of Bereshit is like the deepest romantic novel, every couple gives us a different perspective on connection, giving, relationship and love.

Among other things we found...
In Adam and Eve: Spousal Jealousy to fatal levels - as the Midrash tells us Eve would rather kill Adam than for him to marry another woman. In Abraham and Sarah: Strength and authority from the wife - in all that Sarah hath said unto

thee, pay heed unto her voice. In Isaac and Rivka: Secrets and hiding in a relationship - her actions when she stole Isaac's blessings for Jacob - trickery and concealment. In Jacob, Rachel and Leah - unconditional self-sacrifice.

It is not a secret that the love institution is "bankrupt" in our generation.

Today at the "market of life" we find two main forms of love:

They are known as conditional and unconditional love.

We will call them "receiving love" and "giving love".

We will explain:

Receiving Love - This is the desire to get close to fellow people and enjoy them. Like a fisherman loves the fish he eats.

Giving Love - This is the desire to help fellow people and improve them. Like a doctor treats his patients.

Both of these forms of love present disadvantages:

The fisherman kills his fish in the name of his love for them.

The doctor stays healthy and strong as opposed to his poor patients.

In both cases the doctor and the fisherman can share feelings of empathy for the fish or the patient, but they don't really live through the sorrows of others.

The fisherman can cry with the fish but still kill and eat it!

At a higher level the doctor can cry with his patients or use phrases like: "I can see you are in pain... I can hear it is hard for you"... And still the doctor sits high, and the patient is alone in his battle.

And this is without even mentioning that the patient made an effort to set an appointment, and the more famous and effective doctor it is, the difficulty to visit him grows. The patient needs to adjust his schedule to match the doctor, despite his pain and suffering. And when the patient gets the diagnosis, the doctor will usually "play it self" and end up really scaring the patient regarding his chances and the next course of action.

Listen, let's be real, we all sin in the name of love, whether it is in our home or outside of it.

Between us,

how many times did your husband come home and expressed sorrow or stress... And you sat there nodding or even replying with... Yes... Yes... My back hurts too!... And that's if you even feel like talking... If it comes at a bad time for you, you will avoid it or ask nicely... "nicely"... "Darling, let's save it for the evening"!... And in your heart you're thinking... "Grow up!" and "A cold is not labour pains!"

Or...

"Children are happiness"...
Wow you are crazy about your children...

Let me remind you a rough day from the normal life of a mother... And if she's a working mother then... "Mommy"!!!!...

You come home after a hard day and your son is a mood like: No! No! No! And No! In conclusion - No!

Everything is a battle - shower, teeth, clothes, sleep... Sleep is good for you, my son!... Six in the evening feels like midnight... And the teenagers... Oh my... The "big" children, or children who think they are big... All of a sudden all the education you put your efforts in: Values, conventions, private teachers... And this rude kid ignores you right in front of your eyes... Honestly... How much do you love him then? You will answer I love him but I am angry! So what is love? Just hanging in the pantry of your memory? How does it manifest itself?

There are situations when "mommy" wishes to disappear: I remember several instances when I begged the merciful Father to show me the moon with a quick flight, a spaceship, even for just a couple of hours.

So child,

Be sweet, give me a hug and a kiss and love will live between us.

So what is love?

From the other side of this page you probably already yelled -

giving!

And it is the correct Jewish term... But what type of giving? A word, a thought, an intent, an action... What kind of giving is it? And how much? At my expense? At the expense of others? At whose expense?

In short... Who writes the check?

We could also learn from the doctor and the fisherman that the level of empathy towards another is very superficial and consists and focuses on - "me"!... That can maybe manage to make a little space... If at all, for the grief and happiness of others.

"And Ya'akov loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy young daughter... And Ya'akov served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, because of the love he had for her."

Wow... This charming couple: Jacob the Father's choice and the beautiful Rachel. The only couple the big love of which the Torah tells us clearly. Although the best husband title goes to Elkanah, Channah's husband.

"Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Channah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart bitter? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?"

Elkanah is the caring husband, a husband who sees his wife, is right there with her... feels her and is with her at her hardships... And the most beautiful thing about him is how he sees Channa's heart... "Why is thy heart bitter?"

And still the most loving husband title goes to Jacob Our Father, as it is said: "Because of the love he had for her." The Torah did not tell of Elkanah's "love" for Channah... Let's face it, Rachel did not have an easy life with her husband. Jacob had three more wives beside her, and she fails to bear children, which leads to an argument between them: "Give me sons" and Jacob answers Rachel: "Rachel my love, I have children, the problem is with you! Start praying!"

So what is hiding behind Jacob and Rachel's story?

What makes this relationship unique, and makes their love stronger even than actual giving?

Care and concern in actions, words and thoughts, like Elkanah gave Channah.

In parenthesis we can't forget to praise the winner of the love of the Lord category. The Almighty called Abraham "Abraham who loves me". So kudos to Abraham.

So we're back at our question, what is love?

Before we get to the definition we should take one more thing into consideration, the sacred Torah commands us to Love Your Neighbor as Yourself.

We can learn from this passage that if you want to know how to love the other, you should first learn to love yourself.

What is loving yourself?

Buy yourself some Gucci and Prada? Or maybe a mani-pedi every couple of days?... A

personal assistant? Who folds laundry too... It's a dream, admit it!... Ok, let's not be so materialistic... Maybe go study? A personal coach?... As you see I can continue and describe more and more types of self love. But obviously that is not what we mean.

Love as described by Rabbi Isaac Arama, who commentated on the book of Bereshit. He describes and defines love as:

The unity of lovers as if they are one object.

To turn from two into one, from separated to united, to be connected to each other - that is love and that is its special power.

Rabbi Menachem ben Shlomo, one of the greatest commentators on the Talmud, adds: Love does not only mean physical contact and unity, but a more internal bonding, unity in mind and a common desire.

As he defines it:

Love is closeness of knowledge and equality of desire.

Can you understand that?

We were gifted with wisdom, understanding and knowledge: Wisdom is the idea, understanding is the plan, and knowledge is the implementation.

So closeness of knowledge means a compromise between the two - coming together of two different implementations. And equality of desire. You can equate the two desires - since desire is the basis for the shared path. The implementation will never be exactly the same

between to different parts, since each has different qualities and skills.

Closeness of knowledge and equality of desire: Jacob Our Father is 77 years old when he arrives at Harran. He is old!!! A good as his genes are, we must admit that age takes its toll. No botox can help a 77 year old... And this 77 year old meets a pretty young woman, so beautiful that the Torah says of her that she was beautiful of form and appearance. Rachel Our Mother is the model for a perfect woman... Delicate... Gentle... Beautiful... Modest... Smart and more.

And boom! There's a spark... And this love crosses every obstacle.

How so?

We all know how hard a marriage is to maintain... So to manage to withstand so many challenges, ones that are beyond comprehension, and receive the Torah's title for lovers, what is the secret to their love?

Did Jacob Our Father fell for Rachel's beauty? Can it be the beauty which eventually fades? We know that everybody meets their end... May we all live till 120, Lord willing... But we know that a 77 year old knows the truth about how "charm is deceitful and beauty is vain". And as old age sets upon him, a man knows where he is going, especially a holy man, who knows about women and relations.

Of course there was something else there. A certain uniqueness that answers the definition of

love: When two become one, closeness of knowledge and equality of desire. This couple knows that they can fulfill their unique destinies. Each one of us has our own destiny, and the shared destiny with the world. Since the tree of knowledge and the first man's sin, we are all here in order to find our remedy in this world. The famous question why am I here? What is my real purpose?

This couple knows they came for a shared remedy, and without their unity the world can never be the same. So what did Jacob Our Father come to remedy that could only be done with Rachel?

All sins in the Torah are not punishable by death, except for worshipping foreign gods, incest and murder. Abraham Our Father corrected the worship of foreign gods - He was born to a foreign god worshipping father. Isaac Our Father corrected murder - He was sacrificed at the altar. Jacob Our Father corrected incest - 77 years he prepared for his big moment and the day of his marriage he thinks of Rachel but is with Leah! Oh my! What a disappointment.

Jacob Our Father prepared for his big correction for years. To correct the world in the Lord's kingdom. To sanctify himself and reveal the sanctity of the Lord in the world: Rachel is the symbol of this reveal - The revealed scripture - The Chasidic method - Going out and bringing every Jew closer to the worship of the Lord. Leah - she is the symbol of the hidden world, the secrets of heaven. Evidence of that we see when Rachel goes out on

her father's orders to the well and shows herself, while Leah hides in her home. We could not find anywhere in the story that anyone seen Leah.

Jacob Our Father wanted to discover the lord and his kingdom through Rachel's correction,. But the Almighty showed him that Leah's correction, the hidden one, is just as important. The secrets of heaven are important in our world as well.

Jacob Our Father had to correct both aspects in order to fulfill his mission in this world.

So see it in your mind... Closeness of knowledge and equality of desire - We are a couple that knows our mission in this world, and not only do we know it, we are ready to work together to complete this goal whatever it takes.

You, my darling, are facing your "mission". A divine mission, a purposeful mission, a sublime mission... You found the part that will complete your mission on your way to the finish line... How can Jacob Our Father refuse to work 14 years for his mission?

If I gave you a detailed description of your life's path: Your parents... the waiting... The pairing... Your children... And knowing this is what you came to this world for, not just any world - your world! How would you act?... Just disappearing into thin air is not an option - You can't waste precious time chasing your destiny... Time is short and work is plentiful.

A cracked bucket is also destiny. A famous fable:

A water carrier had two buckets which he used to carry on both sides of a pole on his shoulders. One of the buckets was cracked, and while the other bucket always carried the full amount of water to his master's house, the cracked bucket would arrive half full. For two years this predicament would happen every day.

The water carrier transferred only a bucket and a half worth of water to his master's house. Of course, the full bucket was proud of its achievements, it was perfect for the goal for which it was created. But the cracked bucket was feeling shame and guilt because of his imperfection, and miserable since he could not provide more than half of the amount it was supposed to. After two years of what seemed to be a complete failure in the eyes of the cracked bucket, it turned to the water carrier and said: "I am ashamed of myself and I want to apologize"... Why? Asked the water carrier. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I could only manage to carry half the amount of water for these past two years, due to the crack at my side which had the water leaking all the way up the path to your master's house. Because of my shortcomings, you need to do all of this work and don't get fully compensated for your efforts." The Bucket answered.

The water carrier felt sorry for the old and cracked bucket and said: "While we make our way back to the master's house, I want you to notice the wonderful

flowers growing by the side of the path"... Indeed, while they were coming up the hill, the old cracked bucket noticed the wonderful flowers by the side of the path, and it encouraged it a bit, but at the end of the path it still felt bad, since half of its content had dripped out again, so he once again apologized to the water carrier.

The water carrier said to the bucket:

"Did you notice that the flowers only grow on your side, but not on the side of the other bucket? That is because I always knew about the crack and leak and took advantage of it. I sowed flower seeds on your side, and every day when we came back from the river, you watered them. For two years I have been able to gather these beautiful flowers and decorate my master's house. If you were not the way you are, he would have none of this beauty.

It is true, you are not Jacob Our Father, nor Rachel, and often not only that you feel you're not fixing anything, but rather spoiling everything. But my sister you have a destiny unique to you! And there is no one in the world who can fulfill it as well as you can! No one! "There are no two identical apples"... Similar, but not identical.

Going back to the love issue, I want you to approach the issue knowing that: "I am unique, I am a creation sent into this world in order to complete a sublime mission which only I can complete. Just me! This will help you to develop the most basic love, which is self love.

And suddenly the wait, the delays... Jacob Our Father got to Haran at 77 years of age... Until then he was getting ready for his destiny, and so are you! And when you got there: Your husband, you're right! He's not perfect but he is the chosen one to complete the mission and fulfill your destiny with you, he helps you get to the finish line. Your children are the way they are because they help you get to the finish line in this race.

So loving yourself means getting closer in knowledge and equalising the desires inside you, it is yours! How do you get your mind and desires closer to your goal, without internal objections, meaning how do you accept your life? It is simple! Just explain it to them... Think to yourself and introspect... Move all parts of you closer and closer to the goal until there are no more internal objections. How will you know when these objections are solved? The moment you can be present, without wishing to disappear. When you are happy to be present! So the internal dialogue can be a little awkward, it will go something like this: What do we want?... We are here to settle on a shared path, speak, discuss, explain, share, share your process with the Lord. And that is what this passage means: "May he grant peace upon us and upon all his nation Israel". Who are "us"? All of our parts. And that is the basis for all the love in your life, first you need to learn to love yourself.

Then you can expand your love to your husband, your children, your parents and the world in

general.

Let me share with you what is written in "Pele Yoetz" by Rabbi Eliezer Papo in the chapter on self love, in my own words:

By the nature of creation, the Almighty created you loving yourself. To save your soul from danger you will give everything you have and more, obviously. If you are not careful with your body and soul, you are probably lacking in intellect. That is how this holy man puts it.

What is he actually saying? That you have an obligation to know yourself! Know your body - strengths and weaknesses. Know your soul - know your needs, desires, disappointments, and your journey. Today with all the technology, who takes the time to think to themselves? Who is really close with themselves?... Everyone is lonely and cannot sit alone. This is a bit from the daily psychology of our society. It is hard these days to look inside. Everything is possible except for looking inside. The problem is if you don't look inside yourself, in your soul, in your spirit, your desires, your love, your hardships, your disappointments... How will you know yourself? And the most harmful thing when you don't know yourself is that you cannot connect to others! Meaning you cannot reach love - when two become one! From separated to united... Closeness of knowledge and equality of desire.

When you settle your inner truth, you can go through the same process with your husband regarding your children's

education, bring your minds together - compromise! And equalising desires means what kind of home are we looking for? And it is true regarding the entire journey - calculating routes. Most failures of today's education, which is called a postmodern education in professional terms, are created due to unplanned paths, sometimes created by lack of time - because of the chase after money by both partners, or lack of internal connection of a person to themselves, which makes it hard to connect to their partner. It leads to a lack of closeness and equality of desires. Ultimately, it hurts all aspects of life.

Remember how we talked about giving and asked how much you need to give?... Who pays the check?

Before we answer that... In the Talmud and the Midrash we find two stories that demonstrate this idea:

The first one tells about King Solomon, who one point lost his title and resorted to begging. He met one man who recognised him as the dethroned king, and invited him to his home for dinner. He presented him with the best food, and throughout the entire evening talked about the days when Solomon was still king, which obviously made Solomon very sad.

The following day, Solomon was invited to another person's home. The king asked his host: "Will you offer me similar accommodation?" The second host made it clear that he only has some vegetables. The dinner was indeed pretty poor.

Throughout the meal, the host encouraged Solomon and spoke to his heart. When King Solomon retook his throne, he said:

"A vegetable meal where love is, is better than a well fed ox meal where hate is."

The second story is from the Talmud, and tells about a man who gives his father fine meals but will eventually end up in hell, while another makes his father work really hard but will reach heaven.

How so?

One man would serve his father with well fed chicken. One day his father asked him where he gets such fine chicken. His son answered disparagingly: "Old man! Shut up and eat, like dogs do". That man fed his father great meals, but because of this terrible treatment, he will end up in hell.

Another man worked at a flour mill. One day his father got called up to work for the king. The man said to his father: If something happens in the king's court, you could be punished or whipped. Work for me, and I will go in your stead. This man made his father work hard, but did it to protect him, and he will reach heaven.

We mentioned earlier how we all sin in the name of love... And many times we give and give but not in the right way and all of it goes to waste... But as opposed to us, the King of Kings, the Almighty doesn't make mistakes when giving.

How does the Lord work in his world, how can we give correctly?

King David says in Psalms:

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him."

Another example from the Torah is when the Almighty adds another promise to Jacob and says:

"I will go down with thee to Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again; and Yosef shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

In both of these examples we find the Lord's way to give in our world, as opposed to the fisherman's inferior love or the doctor's love, who sits high above the patient, the Almighty gives without any disadvantages, the Lord loves without holding back.

Call me and I answer, without waiting for the appointment. Deliver him, and honor him - even though I am the giver and deliverer, I do it in your honor and appreciate you... Give charity with a smile. And most importantly, I will be with him in trouble - I come down with you to your troubles, I have empathy and sympathy, and from my place with you in your trouble, really there with you at the lowest point, from there I will pull you up, pull you out of your troubles.

They tell of the fifth Admor of Chabad, that during one of his receptions, his assistant noticed the Rebbe sweating a lot! He asked: "Rebbe, why are you sweating so much? You are just sitting and talking to people"?

And the Rebbe answered: "To

help the person before me I first need to be with him in his trouble: Remove my clothes and put his on, then to help him out of his trouble, I need to take his clothes off and put mine back on."

And that is amazing!!!!... There is no such perfect love as the Lord's love!

And by the way, this is true for us for example in education: it is known that if you want to educate with a smile, you need to come down to your child's desire, not argue, and from there pull them towards your desire. And it is true to all aspects of life.

Who can help love? A well known parable.

Many years ago all the thoughts and feelings took a vacation on a distant island, where they had a lot of fun.

Suddenly they were informed of a storm approaching, and everyone was ordered to leave the island. All emotions ran to the lifeboats, except for love.

Love had many more things to do on the island. But when the clouds turned black, it realized it should also leave.

There were no lifeboats left, and love looked around hopefully and searched for help.

Greed passed love by in a luxurious ship, and love asked to be saved.

"Oh no, my ship is full of very expensive products, there is no room for you", greed answered.

Then, arrogance's ship appeared and love yelled towards it asking to be saved.

"Oh no, you will smear mud all over by ship", arrogance answered.

Some time after that, sadness came by in a small boat, and love asked for help again.

"Oh no, I am very sad and would rather be alone", sadness answered.

After several more minutes happiness came by in a boat as well, but didn't even answer

love's call since it was so elated it didn't even notice what is happening around.

Love started feeling lonely and impatient when someone called: "come, love! I will take you with me!". Love did not wait to see who it is and did not ask any questions, it was relieved and jumped into the stranger's boat.

When it arrived at its destination, love came off the boat and met with peace and asked: "do you know what feeling helped me when no one else did?"

Peace smiled and said: "It was not a feeling, it was time!"

"And why would it help me?" love wondered.

Peace smiled and answered, "because only time knows your true greatness and everything you are capable of"...

And that is true for us as well, we can only understand how to truly love with time, so we can't wait too long to learn to love!

* Well known parable.

