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Parashat Ekev 5771 - #199

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## Dedication Opportunities

Ha-Rav Aviner is set to publish a variety of new books in HEBREW.

You can be a meaningful partner in these projects by dedicating a book, or part of a book, in memory or in honor of someone. Payment may be made over time. Please be in touch with Rav Aviner or with me if you are interested in this opportunity.

The upcoming books are:

1. Commentary on all of "Orot" of Maran Ha-Rav Kook – 10 volumes in honor of Gimmel Elul (Rav Kook's Yahrtzeit)
2. Commentary on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch vol. 1- sources, contemporary questions, halachic discussions, etc. (there is also the opportunity to sponsor this project).

## On the Parashah... Religious ANTI-Zionists

Satmar Rebbe

Q: How should one relate to the Satmar Rebbe and Ha-Rav Elchanan Wasserman, who scorned Maran Ha-Rav Kook?

A: They erred severely in this area, but we are still obligated to honor them (Shut Radvaz 4:187. Ma'amrei Ha-Re'eiyah, p. 56. See Shut Bnei Banim 2:34).

Satmar Book

Q: I have a Satmar book with quotes against the State of Israel. Should I throw it in the garbage?

A: No. It also contains sacred words. Place it in the Geniza.

Obligation to Hate

Q: Is there an obligation to hate those Jews from Neturei Karta who visited Iran?

A: G-d forbid. One must love every Jew. But it is permissible to wage war against their opinions. They are confused.

Neturei Karta

Q: There are Rabbis from Neturei Karta who participated in a Holocaust Denial Conference in Iran, and other Rabbis called to excommunicate them. What is Ha-Rav's opinion?

A: Do not excommunicate. Those Rabbis who participated are abnormal.

Counting Neturei Karta in Minyan

Q: Is it permissible to count someone from Neturei Karta in a Minyan?

A: Of course! There is no question here.

Satmar Shul

Q: If there is no other Minyan, is it permissible to daven in a Satmar Shul, even though they are against the State of Israel?

A: Yes. Do not excommunicate people.

Praying for the Health of a Neturei Karta

Q: One of the leaders of Neturei Karta is very ill and is in the hospital. Should we pray that he dies? After all, he has blood on his hands for actively supporting our enemies?

A: We should certainly pray for his recovery. He is in the category of a confused person.

## Rav Aviner on... Matchmaking Talk

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah- Ve-etchanan 5771 – translated by R. Blumberg]

### **Is one allowed to wed a newly religious person?**

Certainly. There's no problem with it. See Rambam (Hilchot Teshuvah, chapter 7), who says that if someone becomes religious, that person is not second class. Quite the contrary. G-d loves him dearly and all his sins are wiped out. It is even forbidden to mention anything at all about his background. It's true that there is a controversy in the Talmud about what is better – a newly religious person or completely righteous person. There are advantages to both

### **Is it permissible to wed a girl who has committed many sins?**

Repentance blots out everything. Yehoshua Bin Nun wed Rahav, who was entirely corrupt from head to toe (Zevachim 116b). Yet she repented and converted to Judaism and he married her. Eight kings and prophets emerged from that match (Megilah 14a). Even the prayer "Aleinu", written by Yehoshua, contains a sentence attributed to Rahav: "For Hashem is G-d in Heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other" (Yehoshua 9:11).

### **Is one allowed to wed a girl if one of her parents is problematic?**

I cannot answer since I am biased. I have one grandfather who married the daughter of a thief and another grandfather who married the daughter of a murderer. This is not Lashon Ha-Ra since everyone knows them: The first is Yitzchak Avinu and the second is Yaakov Avinu. What fault does the young man bear and what is his sin? One must be judged on his or her own merit.

### **Is one allowed to wed a convert?**

Yes. Boaz wed a convert and the result will be the Messiah. Ploni Almoni didn't want to wed a convert, and he lost out (see Rut Rabbah 7:6, 9 and Eim Ha-Banim Semeichah, pp. 263-5). A person who converts is like a newborn baby. Is there any problem with marrying a woman who was born?

### **Is one allowed to wed a girl whose father is a non-Jew?**

The Talmud (Yevamot 45a) tells of a person who approached a rabbi and asked him, "What is the law regarding someone born of a non-Jewish father and a Jewish mother?" The rabbi answered, "He's kosher." "If so," he replied, "Give me your daughter for a wife." The rabbi answered, "No. Even if this person were as great as Yehoshu Bin Nun, I wouldn't give him my daughter for a wife, even though he is kosher." His students asked him, "So what should this person do?" and he replied, "Either he should wed a woman who similarly has a non-Jewish father, or he should go someplace where people don't know him and there he should marry whomever he pleases."

The illustrious Rav Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky expressed surprise at this idea (in his "Kehilot Yaakov" on Yevamot 4:44), stating that it seems to prove that one is allowed to hide a significant blemish, such as being the son of a non-Jew. He responds that since it was ruled that the son of a non-Jewish father and a Jewish mother is a kosher Jew without limitations (Rambam, Hilchot Isurei Bi'ah 15:3), his non-Jewish father is not considered a serious blemish that one must reveal. See the work "Ve-Ha'arev Na" by Ha-Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein (vol. 2, pp. 188-190) about a boy who the morning after his wedding is visited by an Arab who informs him that he is his father-in-law. Obviously the groom was filled with trepidation, but Rav Zilberstein ruled, based on the preceding principle, that after the fact, his wedding does not constitute a mistaken [hence nullified] transaction.

### **Is it permissible for someone to wed a girl who was born to parents who did not keep the laws of Family Purity?**

The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ha-Rav Isser Yehuda Unterman, told a story: "There was once a girl to whom two matches were suggested. The one was steeped in Torah learning, but his parents had conceived him without observing the Laws of Family Purity. The second was not steeped in Torah but he had no blemish involving the laws of Family Purity. A great rabbi ruled that the first was preferable, 'because the Torah he had learned had cleansed his blemish.' We may derive from this that the virtue of Torah overrides the blemish of not keeping the family purity laws." (from a booklet which I believe quoted the Chazon Ish).

It is further told about a father who asked the Satmar Rebbe, "My daughter was offered a boy who is newly religious. What does the Rebbe have to say about that?" The Rebbe asked, "Is he learned in Torah?" and the father replied that he was. So the Rebbe told him, "If so, there is no problem. "'G-d is the hope [Hebrew "Mikvah", also meaning "ritual bath"] of Israel" (Yirmiyahu 17:13) – Just as a ritual bath purifies the impure, so does G-d purify Israel" (Yoma 8:9). If the boy learns Torah, it is better than any Mikvah" (see the brochure "Kehilat Yisrael").

The most important principle in matchmaking is the mnemonic "Mi Va-Mi", literally "Just who are they?" but also short for "Your deeds [ma'asecha] will draw you near [yikrevucha] and your deeds [uma'asecha] will distance you [yerachakucha]" (Sefer Chupat Chatanim, Rabbi Rafael Meldola, laws of matchmaking, p. 11).

### **Is it permissible to marry a divorcee?**

A divorced woman is perfectly fine.

Obviously, one has to clarify carefully the background behind the divorce, but being divorced is not a stigma. Quite the contrary. In most cases, the woman is a great heroine. She has been through suffering that has cleansed her. She has suffered loneliness which has prepared her for true friendship. She has borne, alone, the burden of educating children. One has to marry a woman with fine character traits, and if she is divorced, so be it.

### **Is one allowed to marry a widow?**

Yes. Of course, one might ask, "Maybe she still loves her previous husband?" Perhaps, but if she has decided to remarry, that is a sign that she has moved on. It is very important to know that widows and widowers who decide to marry must remove the past from their hearts and take a new lease on life.

**Is one allowed to marry a girl who already has one or two children?** If the children are small, that is certainly very good. You will be their father in every sense of the word. It is more complicated if they are older. Sometimes this creates tension, and preliminary psychological counseling is necessary.

**Is one allowed to wed a woman older than oneself?** Where is it written that the man has to be older than the woman? People say that women mature more quickly than men, just as we see that Bat Mitzvah age precedes Bar Mitzvah age. When a couple is very young, this makes a difference, but with older couples, it doesn't.

**Is one allowed to wed a girl from a different ethnic group?**

All Jews are equal. There is no meaning to the fact that one is from one ethnic group and the other is from another. Yardsticks of compatibility include age, intellectual level, outlook on life, mentality, character, etc. Even when Israel was divided up tribally, they still intermarried. For example, Manoach's father was from the Tribe of Dan and his mother was from the Tribe of Yehudah (Bamidbar Rabbah 10:5). Only during the generation that entered the Land was a restriction placed on marital choice: when a family only had a female to inherit the land (as with the daughters of Tzelofchad), the women were asked to wed within their tribe, in order to keep land inheritances from moving from one tribe to another. Apart from that, however, there was no limitation on marital bonds between tribes (see Baba Batra 120a). All the more so in our own day, where tribal division has disappeared. We mustn't invent insignificant differences between ethnic groups.

(To be continued next week)

*Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for*

*the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships*

It is also permissible for Imma to get Angry

*We are not angels, only human beings. We sometimes unjustifiably get angry at our children, but it is not the end of the world. We also respond without thinking.*

*When we respond in anger, the anger is not at the child, rather it is at ourselves. Do not be alarmed. An infrequent event will not leave a scar on the child's education.*

*Education is not built upon infrequent occurrences, and it is not destroyed by infrequent non-education. Education is continuous toil.*

*The essence is that there is love, love in one's heart and expressions of love. And this love is equal to all of the reprimand. It also better than a flood of reproofs.*

*Love is the foundation. Without love – there is no child.*

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