



Parashat Reeh 5771 - #200

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*** Mazal Tov!!!- This is the 200th Parashah Sheet!!! ***

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On the Parashah...

Why did Moshe Rabbenu Desire so Strongly to enter Eretz Yisrael?

[Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Parashat Re'eh]

Moshe Rabbenu yearned to enter Eretz Yisrael. Our Rabbis ask in the Gemara (Sotah 14a): "Why did Moshe desire to enter Eretz Yisrael? Was it to eat the fruit, or to be satiated from its goodness?!"

The Tur (Orach Chayim 208) cites a version of the blessing recited after eating the fruits of "The Seven Species," as follows: "Ve-Nochal Mi-Piryah Ve-Nisba Mi-Tuva - we shall eat from its fruit and be satiated from its goodness." The Tur objects, based on the above Gemara,

because this version stresses the fruit of Eretz Yisrael, rather than the Land, from which it comes. And it is the Land that we must covet, so that we may fulfill the Mitzvot which are linked to it (The Torah Temimah on Devarim 3:25 also raises this issue). The Bach (ibid. and in Mishnah Berurah #50) shudders at the Tur's opinion, vehemently stressing that one must understand the sanctity of the fruits of Eretz Yisrael: The Divine Presence rests its holiness over the entire Land of Israel. The mountain, the hills, and the even fruits of Eretz Yisrael are imbued with the Divine Presence! The Chatam Sofer also refers to the fruit of Eretz Yisrael as "its holy fruits" (Chidushei Chatam Sofer on Sukka 36a).

The Gemara explains why Moshe Rabbenu desired so much to enter Israel: "Rather he said: Israel has been commanded many Mitzvot, and they can only be fulfilled in Eretz Israel. I wish to enter the Land so that all of them will be fulfilled through me." We must understand what Moshe Rabbenu is saying. Some people are not accurate in their reading of Chazal's words, and deduce from here that the importance of Eretz Yisrael is not inherent but comes from its unique Mitzvot: Shemita, Terumot and Ma'asrot, etc. Maran Ha-Rav Kook explains in the last chapter of the introduction to "Shabbat Ha-Aretz" that the Land is not holy on account of the Mitzvot. On the contrary, the Mitzvot are a product of the holiness of the Land. The Land is in and of itself holy. There is a halachic expression: "Mitzvot dependent on the Land." The Mitzvot are dependent on the Land, i.e. the holiness of the Land. There is no such opposite expression of the "Land dependent on the Mitzvot." It does not exist, not in the Torah, not in Chazal, not in the Rishonim and not in the Acharonim. Fortunate are we who possess the holiness of the Land, and from it, the Mitzvot.

If so, how do we understand the Gemara's statement about Moshe Rabbenu? Answer: The "goodness" which he desired is not in the physical sense but in the spiritual sense! Usually people understand Moshe Rabbenu's words in the Gemara to mean: "I wish to enter the Land so that I will be able to fulfill all of the Mitzvot there," but that is not what the words say. This is an error. He was not concerned about himself as an individual. Rather he understood the holiness of the Land, and its ability to perfect the Mitzvot. Moshe Rabbenu therefore desired to lead the Nation of Israel into Eretz Yisrael in order to attain this supreme spiritual level of fulfilling the Mitzvot there.

Rav Aviner on... Matchmaking Talk – Part 2

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

Is it permissible to wed a young woman who talks non-stop?

Certainly. After all, she just doesn't want to differ from our Sages' dictum (Kiddushin 49b) that ten measures of talk descended to the world, and nine were taken by women and one by men. It creates a pleasant atmosphere of talk in the house.

Is it permissible to wed a young woman who is taciturn?

If you both sit and are silent, then apparently neither of you is talkative. You therefore have to prepare topics for conversation. Does that seem artificial? Where is it written that it's forbidden to be artificial? The head-covering, the shirt, and electricity are artificial. A lot of things are artificial. Even the Talmud did not descend ready-made from heaven. The Rabbis put it together in their wisdom based on the word of G-d. The young woman will learn to talk. These are things that you learn.

Is it permissible to wed an impoverished young woman?

It's recommended. A wealthy girl is accustomed to a lavish way of life, and when she doesn't have it, she suffers. She may not make demands, but she still suffers. By contrast, a poor young woman is used to living modestly and won't suffer from it. Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah once asked his father about two matches that had been suggested to him: A wealthy young woman and a poor one. If he married the wealthy young woman, he'd be able to learn Torah in peace but would not be able to give her everything she wanted, while if he married the poor one she would already be used to living modestly but he would have to worry about earning a living. Maran Ha-Rav Kook told him that he should decide by himself. In the end, Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehuda decided to wed the poor young woman (Tzvi Kodesh, pp. 152-157).

Is one allowed to wed a girl who is not pretty?

Certainly. After all, the chapter of Mishlei that we sing on Shabbat night, "Eshet Chayil", states: "Grace is false and beauty is vain. A woman who fears Hashem is the one who shall be praised" (31:30). If you marry a pretty young woman, you won't be able to sing "Eshet Chayil"... The philosopher Walter was asked: "What is beauty?" and he replied: "It depends on whom you ask. If you ask a black man, he will respond: 'A black woman'. If you ask a Japanese man, he will reply: 'A Japanese woman'. If you ask a bull, it will reply: 'A cow'. If you ask a toad, it will reply: 'A female toad'. And if you ask a philosopher, he will answer 'Incomprehensible gobbledygook'."

We learn in the Talmud (Ketubot 16b-17a): "What should one sing as he dances before a bride at her wedding? Beit Hillel said: 'What a lovely, righteous bride!' Bet Shammai asked them: And if she is lame or blind, should you say, 'What a lovely, righteous bride?' The Torah says, 'Distance yourself from a lie' (Shemot 23:7). Beit Hillel replied, 'According to what you say, if someone made a bad purchase in the marketplace, should his acquaintances praise or disparage it when speaking to him? I would say that they should praise it.' Based on this our Sages said, 'One should always attune himself to his fellow's concerns.'" Maharal comments that beauty and truth are subjective. The groom doesn't love his wife because she is beautiful. She is beautiful because he loves her.

Is one allowed to wed a woman who limps?

Where is it written that it is forbidden to limp? Even our Forefather Yaakov limped for a while.

And if she's missing a finger?

That's nonsense. It makes no difference. She doesn't put on Tefillin.

And if she's missing a hand?

What's the problem? But how will she take care of a baby? What - are there no husbands with two left hands?

Is one allowed to wed an angry woman?

That's a virtue. With an angry wife, you'll learn humility, and thanks to her you'll win a place in the World-to-Come.

Is one allowed to marry a disorganized woman?

Why not? You keep things organized and that way you'll learn humility. One time a woman wrote me that her daughter was disorganized, and that in all her life she had never seen such disorganization as with her daughter. Whenever she would go to her daughter's for a visit, she would find pots lying on the floor with food from the preceding Shabbat that had already gone bad, and also, the whole house was sticky. It was literally Sedom and Amorah after they were overturned. She asked me to write a letter about the value of cleanliness and order, which she would then pass on to her daughter. I wrote it and I gave it to her. One day I was invited to the daughter's house, and in the middle of the meal the daughter told me: "You wrote a letter to my mother about cleanliness and order, and she gave it to me. Only then did I

[Rav Aviner] notice that her house was an indescribable mess. Until then I hadn't noticed, because that house was so full of love and joy..."

Is it permissible for a groom and bride to marry when their fathers have the same name?

Certainly. This prohibition is mentioned in the Testament of Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Chasid (#23 and brought in Pitchei Teshuvah, Even Ha-Ezer 2:107 and Yoreh Deah 116:6). There is a dispute whether the Testament of Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Chasid only obligates his own offspring or everyone. The Noda Bi-Yehudah (Second Edition, Even Ha-Ezer #79) wrote that this "prohibition" is not mentioned in the Gemara and it is not possible to add prohibitions which are not found in the Gemara. The Rebbe of Sanz did not agree, and said that everything in the Testament of Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Chasid applies to everyone (Shut Divrei Chaim, Even Ha-Ezer #8). Some authorities advise in such a case that one of the fathers add to his name, and then there won't be an issue. Maran Ha-Rav Kook wrote three responsa on this subject at the beginning of Shut Ezrat Cohain (#5-7). He says that being particular about this issue only necessary when someone is suggesting a match, because it is possible to suggest many other people. If the couple meets on their own, however, it is different because it is not easy to meet someone to marry. Maran Ha-Rav Kook also said that this does not apply in Israel, since the merit of Eretz Yisrael protects one from such spiritual matters. He mentioned the Gemara in Berachot (44a) that there was one city in Eretz Yisrael called Gufnit that had eighty pairs of brothers who were cohanim married to sisters, who were the daughters of cohanim. We see that they were not worried about "pairs" (a spiritual concern) since they were in Eretz Yisrael. In general, one who is not concerned about such matters is not affected by them. Furthermore, if a couple has an inclination and desire to marry, there is no concern. In sum: There is nothing to worry about. If you add a name, then there is no problem according to all opinions.

And we can mention that when they were writing the Tana'im for Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski, who is solely referred to as "Chaim," the question arose as to how to write his name since he was given other names at birth: "Shmaryahu Yosef Chaim." The Chazon Ish said: Who said that we should reveal his other names? They didn't have to do so! As is known, Ha-Rav Kanevski is the son-in-law of Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, and Ha-Rav Kanievski's mother, the wife of the Steipler, was concerned that the other side would be particular about them having the same name, and she therefore brought up the issue at the Tana'im. The Chazon Ish, however, was not concerned since the son-in-law and father-in-law each had additional names – Ma'aseh Ish vol. 7 pp. 130-131.

Does one have to wed the daughter of a Torah scholar?

One should marry a Torah scholar's daughter (Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha-Ezer 2:6). Alternately, she, herself, can be like a Torah scholar. Once, children were like their parents, so much so that our Sages said that one who marries a woman should check up on her brothers (Baba Batra 110a). Nowadays, when siblings aren't identical, we don't insist on this point. The main thing is that she herself should be steeped in Torah wisdom. The Chassidim are more strict regarding marrying the daughter of a Torah scholar, and the non-Chassidim are less strict. All the same, the traits of the woman herself are what is most important, for a person marries his wife, and not his parents-in-law, however important and great they may be.

Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Spouses during the Resurrection of the Dead

Q: If a woman was married to two different men during her lifetime, who will she be with after the Resurrection of the Dead?

A: There is an answer to this question in the book "Piskei Teshuvah" of Ha-Rav Avraham Pitrovsky (#124). He quoted the book "Shut Matzav Ha-Yashar" on the Zohar that there was a young woman who was married to a wonderful man who died at a relatively young age. The young woman did not want to marry again. She said, "Why should I get married to someone else? During the Resurrection of the Dead I will be married to my second husband, and my first husband is dearer to me than anything. I prefer to remain a widow all of my life and then be married to my true soul-mate." There is a similar question in the book "Ha-Techiya Ve-Ha-Pedut" (question #6) of Ha-Rav Sa'adia Gaon: how will I find my wife during the Resurrection of the Dead? Ha-Rav Sa'adia did not want to answer since it is forbidden to answer a halachic question before someone who is greater than him in wisdom. Since this is a question of the Resurrection of the Dead, Moshe Rabbenu will be there and it is therefore forbidden for me to answer. If there are questions that arise now - what can we do? We have to answer them. Questions that have to do with the future, however, we leave for Moshe Rabbenu and the other prophets. It therefore seems that the question in "Shut Matzav Ha-Yashar" cannot be answered, but this was before the Zohar was revealed. After the Zohar was revealed, our question was answered. Regarding a Jewish servant, the verse says, "If he arrives by himself, he leaves by himself; if he is the husband of a woman, his wife leaves with him" (Shemot 21:3). This means that he enters the Resurrection of the Dead with his wife – his first wife. There are commentators who explain that the meaning of the Zohar is that she will return to her true spouse, i.e. the most successful marriage (see note in Piskei Teshuvah). Thus, she will return to the marriage which was filled with the most love, fraternity, peace, and friendship.

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