“When you go forth to battle against your enemies, and God your Lord delivers them into your hands, and you carry them away as captives, and you see among the captives a beautiful woman and you desire her and wish to take her for yourself as a wife.” Devarim 21:10-11

WE ARE CAPABLE

The Torah only allows this dispensation in order to quell the yetzer hара. If the Torah did not allow a permissible manner in which to marry this woman, the person would marry her in an illegal manner.

Rashi from Kiddushin 21b

The great Rabbi Yechezkel Abramski, the author of the Chazon Yechezkel on Yeushalmi, used to deliver a class on the parashah of the week every Friday night. This class was unique, however, in that it was given to a group of young students who did not know much about their Judaism. Every Shabbos, on Friday night, these young people would gather at his home, and he dedicated some of his precious time to teach them fundamentals of our faith based upon the Torah reading of that week.

The week of our parashah arrived, and Rabbi Abramski struggled all week long about how to deal with teaching the topic of the woman taken captive in war. How could he explain this difficult topic to these students? These youths came from backgrounds with limited appreciation of Torah philosophy, and the Rabbi was concerned that they not walk away with misunderstandings. Even as he went to shul on Friday night, he still had no idea of how he would deal with the subject, and he davened to Hashem to enlighten him so that he would be successful. Later, as he sat at his Shabbos meal, he concentrated for a moment and suddenly felt that Hashem gave him an approach which would be effective.

As the students arrived for the class, Rabbi Abramski began to speak. “Even before you open the Chumashim, I want all of you to know that the topic we are about to study will illustrate that we are all capable and even expected to fulfill all of the commandments of the Torah. I will show you now that if the Torah feels that we are not capable of being successful, the Torah itself would not issue a command with a mitzvah which is not reasonable. In other words, if the Torah prohibits any type of behavior, this means that we are able to live and survive without that particular item. The Torah only commands that which man can fulfill. This is itself proof that we should not look for excuses as to why we think we cannot prevail. For example, when the Torah commands that the nation go to war, it then provides a manner by which a woman captive can be taken as a wife, because the Torah knows that the soldiers cannot be expected to abstain totally. Other than this case, where the Torah provides a specific dispensation, the rule is that all prohibitions are within our ability to maintain.”

With that introduction, Rabbi Abramski had the students open their Chumashim, and they began to study the law of the woman captive.

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A BALANCED APPROACH

The mitzvah of sending away the mother bird from its nest and the mitzvah of honoring one’s parents are notable in that the Torah promises length of life as a reward for their fulfillment.

When a person performs a certain
We have proven that our mitzvah observance is a fulfillment of Hashem’s will and not an expression of our own personal agenda.

If you fulfill the commandment of sending the mother from the nest, you will eventually build a new house, and you will then fulfill the mitzvah of making a fence, for one mitzvah brings another mitzvah. You will arrive at the mitzvah of planting a vineyard and owning new clothes, then you will be able to fulfill the mitzvos of monitoring the growth of plants to avoid forbidden mixtures (יהודי), and the mitzvah of tzitzis. -- Rashi

The reason for this is that it is simply not possible to provide these enormous spiritual benefits to a person while he still resides in this material world. This limitation, however, is only in place while a person views the goal of his mitzvah observance to be the very attainment of the reward which he earns. However, if a person sees mitzvos as a means to grow closer to God, then he can be given his “reward” in this world as well.

Shem MiShmuel explains that when a person fulfills the mitzvah of sending away the bird from above the nest, he can earn the privilege of building a new house, all of this in order to perform more mitzvos. The person is not eating away at the benefits of his previous mitzvos, but rather he is being provided with more opportunities to grow closer to God by being involved with more mitzvos. This is what is meant when the Mishnah (Avos 4:2) reports that “the reward for a mitzvah is another mitzvah”.

During the ten days between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur we add various prayers to our regular davening. Among these prayers is a request in the Amidah: “Remember us for life...for Your sake (יהודי), O living God”. We do not ask for life as a reward in and of itself, but rather as a means to merit further opportunities to fulfill the will of God, the Living God.
The Torah prohibits a farmer from joining an ox and a donkey together. The Ba’al HaTurim explains that the ox is an animal which chews its food two separate times. After it chews and swallows its food, it brings it up from the stomach and chews it again. The donkey does not do this. Therefore, if the donkey would be tied together with the ox, when it finished eating it would look at the ox and see it eating once again. This would cause the donkey distress, for it would have no more food at this time, while the ox would appear to be enjoying another meal. It is for this reason that the Torah forbids having these two animals bound together to pull a plow.

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 550) writes that the reason for this mitzvah is in order not to cause pain to animals. Animals, he explains, experience frustration when they are kept in the vicinity of animals other than their own species. This is certainly the case when the animals are forced to work together. The lesson for us, he explains, is that one should not assign a job to be done jointly by people who are widely diverse in their strengths and temperaments. For example, a meticulous and careful person should not work together with someone who is relatively careless and inconsiderate. Also, a person of more refined stature should not be expected to be able to cooperate and work together with someone who is gruff and rough. If the Torah is concerned that the feelings of a farm animal not be harmed, how much more so should we show forethought and sensitivity in dealing with the feelings and sensitivities of our fellow human beings.

Chid’a adds a final lesson to be derived from this episode. If we are commanded not to cause distress to animals and to people, then we certainly should be careful not to pain our very souls, our holy neshamos. We must not subject our neshamos to have to contend with impure physical indulgences and luxuries. Every thinking person should be called to action to guard against any damage that could harm his spiritual well-being.

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THE HALLMARK OF A JEW

You shall not hate an Egyptian at all – even though they cast your male children into the river. And what is the reason for this? Because they were your hosts in time of need (during the reign of Yosef, when the neighboring countries suffered from famine). -- Rashi

Sefer Da’as Chochmah U’Mussar uses a parable to illustrate this concept. Reuven rented a house. After a few years, when he decided to relocate, the owner of the house became upset, and he resisted his tenant’s move. The owner then proceeded to persecute and punish Reuven to the point that his life was in danger. When Reuven finally managed to escape and leave the house, he then turned to his landlord and thanked him for his hospitality and for having provided a roof over his head for the time during which he had lived there.

As absurd as this may seem, this is the sentiment which the Torah expects from us in considering the Egyptians and the treatment due to them. It is true that the Egyptians received full payment and more for the time in which we dwelt in their land. Our ancestor Yosef saved the country from famine. Additionally, we received no payment for our having worked there during the four hundred and thirty years of our sojourn (see Sanhedrin 91a). Aside from this, we suffered through the torturous pain and agony of abusive slavery. Yet, after all of this, we are commanded not to despise the Egyptians because they were our hosts when we needed to reside in the exile.

The lesson to be learned is that the hallmark of a Jew is an appreciation for any and all favors and benefits which he has received. If we cannot fathom how gratitude would be due in the case of the Egyptians, the Torah is coming to teach us that we must redirect our focus and accept the idea that we are indebted to those who serve as the facilitators of advantage for us, regardless of any other factors which may be present.

This insight can again be derived from another law in these same verses. “A meticulous and careful person should not work together with someone who is relatively careless and inconsiderate.”

A meticulous and careful person should not work together with someone who is relatively careless and inconsiderate.

The hallmark of a Jew is an appreciation for any and all favors and benefits which he has received.
toward us with food and drink. In fact, of the two, the Torah first mentions Ammon as being rejected, for the criticism due them was harsher in that their lack of response indicated a greater deficiency of middos, and their character was flawed.

We see that although the Egyptians physically tortured the Jews, they have not been excluded from eligibility to enter into the ranks of our nation. We are commanded to develop a sense of appreciation for any and all benefits which have been provided for us and for our ancestors. This even extends to the need to recognize the hospitality which was afforded our ancestors long ago in Egypt. The men of Ammon and Moav, however, who did not recognize the gratitude necessary due to ancestral favors, are banned forever from marrying into the Jewish nation. The reason for this contrast is that character failings of this nature preclude one from joining our association. This serves as the fundamental significance of middos. Even severe transgressions do not trigger the degree of reaction which is applied to these nations with corrupt and debased characters.

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COMPROMISING SHABBOS LEAVES US VULNERABLE

Bnei Yisrael said to Moshe Rabbeinu: “Moshe! One verse (Shemos 20:8) says, ‘Remember the Shabbos day, to keep it holy.’ And it is written (Devarim 25:17), ‘Remember what Amalek did to you.’ How can these two texts be fulfilled?” Moshe said to them: “The cup of spiced wine is not to be compared to the cup of vinegar.” - Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, Ch. 44

What is the meaning of this dialogue between Moshe and the Jewish people? What is the connection between Shabbos and Amalek? At the end of Parashas Beshalach, the Torah juxtaposes the improper effort to collect portions of manna on Shabbos with the attack of Amalek against the Jewish nation which had just departed from Egypt. Based upon this association, the Gemara (Shabbos 118b) quotes Rabbi Yehuda in the name of Rav, who says: “Had the Jewish people observed that first Shabbos properly after having left Egypt, no nation or people would have ever had control over them.” This statement implies that the threat of Amalek was made possible due to the desecration of the Shabbos.

The commentators differ regarding the mitzvah to remember what Amalek did. The Magen Avraham (O.C. 685) rules that one can fulfill his obligation by hearing the Torah reading on the morning of Purim (the final nine verses in Parashas Beshalach – the description of the initial battle of Amalek against the Jews). The Mishnah Brurah (ibid.) holds that this would be insufficient, because the mitzvah requires that we mention the need to destroy any remnant of Amalek, and the verses at the end of Beshalach do not feature this detail.

Rambam (Sefer HaMitzvos, Positive Commandment 189) expounds upon this mitzvah, and he rules that we do not have to specifically remember to destroy Amalek, but rather we must remember what they did to us and that it is considered insidiously evil such that it warrants their being obliterated. He writes: “We are to remember that Amalek attacked us without being threatened or provoked in any way. We must regularly mention this, and stir our souls to wage war against them.” The underlying problem is that Amalek aimed to corrupt and attack the Jews because they despised our religious philosophy. Our sages (BeMidbar Rabbah 21:4) inform us that it is worse to cause someone to sin than it is to kill him, for sin causes one to forfeit his share in the world-to-come, while killing someone only results in the loss of his temporal stay in this world. The main goal of Amalek was two-fold, to cause the weaker elements among us to sin, and then to destroy us totally. This is why the Torah commands us to detest Amalek deep within our hearts, and never to join with them or learn from their ways.

Now we can understand the dialogue between Moshe and the Jewish people. On the one hand, if the threat of Amalek was due to the desecration of Shabbos, it might be better if Amalek was not destroyed. Having Amalek around as a constant threat would be an ideal incentive to ensure that we observe Shabbos properly, because we would always have to be alert to avoid their being unleashed against us. Furthermore, according to Rambam, we must reinforce our hatred of Amalek to remember their wicked nature. Yet, this would be unnecessary if we could accomplish the same thing by observing the Shabbos properly. This would suffice to neutralize and overcome any possible spiritual damage Amalek could pose. This is the question the Jews asked. What purpose was there in the mitzvah to recall the incident of Amalek that was not already accomplished by the proper observance of Shabbos?

Moshe explained to the people that notwithstanding their comments, there was a need to remember that which caused the nation to be vulnerable to Amalek in the first place, and that was the desecration of Shabbos itself. The parable given was that we must realize that there is a cup of fragrant wine, with a blend of honey and spices, and there is a cup of vinegar. Moshe pointed out that there are times when the remedy to a situation can be through swallowing something sweet. Yet, there are other times
when the cure is realized only when we ingest a bitter pill. Similarly, we remember the Shabbos, which is pleasant and beautiful. However, there are times when we become lax, and we then are required to remember Amalek, which represents the consequences when the Shabbos is forgotten.

Halachic Corner

The words שמלת כלהונת - “She dresses in clothes of strength and dignity” (Mishlei 31:25) – are used to describe the qualities of an “eishes chayil”. One of the difficulties of complying with the laws of ṭ-owner is that it is sometimes not easy to find suitable clothes. Many garments for women are manufactured with the goal of being as eye-catching as possible. This often makes it hard to find clothing that is not see-through or light-tight-fitting, that has a modest neckline and a hemline that is sufficiently long. Thus, a woman must draw on her quality of רושע – persistence, strength and fortitude – to make every effort to find suitable clothes, even if she has to shop at select stores only. When a woman is particular about tznius, and makes sure that her dress is appropriate for a bas Yisrael, her clothes generate יופי - splendor and prestige. Her aristocratic manner of dress bears witness to the fact that she has consecrated her life to the service of Hashem.

Halachic Corner is dedicated by Benyomin Freeman in memory of his father Gedalia Freeman, רב בר יד התיה קפיטל אלמואל, May his memory be for a blessing.

Questions for Thought and Study

1. Why is the section concerning the הפלת הנקבה (the special service if a dead body is found between two cities) placed between two sections that discuss wars?
   See Ba’al HaTurim 21:10
2. Why is the section concerning lost objects placed after the section concerning going out to war?
   See Ibn Ezra 22:1
3. Why are we commanded to send away a mother bird before taking its young?
   See Ramban 22:6
4. When discussing why the nation of Moav is not allowed to join Bnei Yisrael, their lack of hospitality is mentioned before the fact that Moav hired Bilaam to try and destroy us. Isn’t the attempted genocide more serious than lack of hospitality? Why is it mentioned first?
   See Ohr HaChaim 23:4-5
5. How does the Torah show us that the way to truly uproot tzara’as is by avoiding יפשיר עופי (slanderous speech)?
   See Ohr HaChaim 24:9-10
6. How do we know that we have to verbally remember the incident with Amalek and not just remember it in our hearts?
   See Ramban 25:47

This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- By Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to Board of Regents member Shael Bellows and his wife Joan on the marriage of their granddaughter Emma to Noah Best; and to HTC Board of Regents member Dr. Yigal Yahav and his wife Donna on the marriage of their daughter Ariella to Beni Banbahzis, and extending heartfelt condolences to them on the loss of Donna’s mother, Sharon Wishner, שרה, past HTC Staff Member.
- Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro is not meeting in the restaurant, so we are bringing Torah to you. Please join Rabbi Ephraim Goldman over Zoom on Thursday, September 3, at 12:30 PM. Zoom info: https://zoom.us/j/99921240863 or call in +1 312-626-6799. Zoom ID 999 2124 0863.
- Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov Elementary School is seeking candidates for the following positions in the General Studies Department for the 2020-2021 school year: permanent subs and primary grades teacher assistants. Scheduled hours will be Monday-Thursday afternoons 12:45-1:00 PM. Call 773-583-5329 x402 or email resumes to rwechsler@jdbyytt.org.
- JDBY-YTT is seeking an Executive Assistant to our CEO. The ideal candidate will possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, organizational and computer skills and the ability to multitask. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habanim v’habanos of over 1350 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Executive Assistant to CEO” in the subject line. Please include several references.
- ICC Chicago seeks outstanding Early Childhood Assistant Teachers and Substitute Teachers for Fall 2020. Be part of a team of educators, social workers & specialists who support the whole child through a developmentally appropriate curriculum embracing Jewish life & complementing the home. We’re looking for those who are enthusiastic about guiding each child to their potential towards future success. Visit https://www.jccchicago.org/about/career-listings/ for more info and to apply online.
- The YU Torah Mitzion Kollel is excited to welcome the new Kollel staff members and their families to our community! Rabbi Noah and Mrs. Alexis Goldstein (Rosh Beit Midrash) and Rabbi Noah and Yaëla Whittenburg (Fellow). Join us this Sunday evening, August 30th, at 8:15 PM, on Zoom (ID:8563881575 Password: 613613) to meet the fellows and kick off a great new year of community learning!
- Keshet has an immediate opening for a full-time special education teacher in our self-contained class located at Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi (YTT). Please submit résumé to Dr. Melinda Remaly at mremaly@keshet.org or by calling 847-412-5750. For more details, please go to jewishjobs.com and enter Keshet.
"Teaching in the Throes of Unprecedented Uncertainty". Highly respected and sought-after, frum clinician, Rozi Wax, LMFT, is giving a free 1-hour Zoom workshop this Sunday, August 30, at 10:30 AM CST. Learn to find comfort in the discomfort. Email nefeshchicago18@gmail.com for the Zoom link, Share with teachers and clinicians out-of-state for this Nefesh Chicago virtual workshop.

Cheder Lubavitch Hebrew Day School is looking for afternoon teachers and assistants for our General Studies program. Competitive pay. For more info, please contact Rabbi Ilan Heifetz at theifetz@clhds.com or 773-304-7411.

Join us this Sunday, Aug. 30, at 9 PM for a virtual event for Orthodox singles in Chicago & Midwest via the app Filter Off. The app puts a fresh spin on dating and has been featured on Yahoo, ABC, & more. To RSVP, download the app from Google Play or App Store, find the event on the events tab, & enter code "ORTHODOXCHI". Get matched with up to 7 video dates within your age range! Anyone 18+ is welcome to participate. For more info, visit filteroffchi.eventbrite.com or email ojcevents18@gmail.com.

Lincolnwood Jewish Cong. A.G. Beth Israel welcomes Yeshiva Ner Naftali to our facilities for the upcoming school year. Thanks to Rabbi Neuberger and his staff for creating a warm and inviting space for his students. Thanks also to Michael Kirshner of Starr Kosher Catering for helping provide the Yeshiva with daily catered meals for staff & students. LICAGBI is blessed to have these two enterprises working within our building. We hope this will be a long and healthy relationship into the future.

Walder Science offers a hands-on Science & Robotics After School Program, live on Zoom! Starting September 8, 4:45-5:30 PM for girls, and 5:30-6:15 PM for boys. Monday and Wednesday: Explore the science of electronics while building your own electronic devices. Tuesday and Thursday: Design games, apps and websites while learning fundamentals of computer science. Visit www.walderlab.org for more info and to sign up!

The ARK is pleased to announce that its Rosh Hashanah cards are now available. As the Yamin Nora’im approach, please remember that your tzedakah provides kosher food, rental assistance and more to Chicagoland Jews in complete confidentiality and in accordance with Halachah. Contact The ARK at 773-3730-1000 or archicago.org.

In commemoration of the 1st yahrtzeit of our beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother & great-great-grandmother, Rose Gold Krupnick, ז"ל. She was a true Eshes Chayil who put all her trust in HaShem & who never said leshon hara about anyone. She was extremely gracious & a true Lady in every sense of the word. We miss her every day. ז"ל - Irwin & Deedie Gold & family; Rabbi Edward & Sara Garske & family; Israel & Esther Porush & family; Rabbi Sidney & Karen Gold & family; Joseph Gold & family.

By Evelyn & Larry Yellin in loving memory of their sister-in-law, Betty Goldberg, ז"ל, on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 11 Elul. She inspired many students in her lifelong career in Jewish education.

In hallowed and cherished memory of our beloved father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Rabbi Aaron M. Rine, ז"ל, distinguished Rabbi of Sinai Temple of Albany Park and West Rogers Park for over 40 consecutive years, commemorating his 24th yahrtzeit. May his memory be for a blessing. – His loving family.

By the Jacobson, Stein, and Aaron families in loving memory of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Irwin Jacobson, ז"ל, on the occasion of his 17th yahrtzeit on 15 Elul.

By Bill Coleman and Carole Groover in loving memory of their mother, Gertrude Bahme Coleman, ז"ל, on the occasion of her thirteenth yahrtzeit on 11 Elul. We miss her more than ever.

By Justin and Aviva Gordon; Eitan, Rebecca, Maya and Layla Gordon; Sruy, Adina, Batya Rena, Shalom Tzvi, Yechiel Aryeh, Alisa Sara, Akiva Yonason, and Shendel Rifka Isenberg; and Aharon Tzvi Farekas in memory of our beloved great-grandmother, Rose Gold Krupnick, ז"ל. She was a true Eshes Chayil who put all her trust in HaShem & who never said leshon hara about anyone. She was extremely gracious & a true Lady in every sense of the word. We miss her every day. ז"ל - Irwin & Deedie Gold & family; Rabbi Edward & Sara Garske & family; Israel & Esther Porush & family; Rabbi Sidney & Karen Gold & family; Joseph Gold & family.

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By Joseph & Renee Silberman, Dustin, Ricky, Adina and Manya, Jason and Matthew Silberman, and Estrella Levin in loving memory of beloved mother and grandmother, Mama Manya Birnberg, ז"ל, on her 10th yahrtzeit on 14 Elul. We all remember Mama Manya for her kindness, wisdom, overflowing love and strength. Her lessons and dreams live on in our hearts. May her neshamah have an aliyah.

By the Zwelling and Sorscher families, in loving memory of our husband, father and papa, Rabbi Victor Zwelling, ז"ל, on his 7th yahrtzeit on 14 Elul. May his neshamah have an aliyah. He is truly missed by all those who loved him.

By the Noble family in loving memory of Florence (Frumi) Noble ז"ל, on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 13 Elul. (Adas Yeshurun, Ohr Yisocher Chodorov)

Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les & Ethel Sutker in loving memory of Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein, ז"ל. May their memory be for a blessing.

Answers:
1. This is to teach us that enemies should not be sent out to war together. One may kill the other and blame his death on the foreign enemies that they face during the war.
2. This is to show that even when going to war, one must return any lost items that are found along the way. Even more so is this true when one is not going to war.
3. Ramban says that the prohibition not to cut off a species, which will lead to its extinction. Ramban also quotes Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim III:48) that it is an act of cruelty that causes great anguish to the mother. We send away the mother bird so she does not see to its extinction. Ramban says that we are not permitted to do large-scale destruction of a species, which will lead to its extinction. Ramban also quotes Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim III:48) that it is an act of cruelty that causes great anguish to the mother. We send away the mother bird so she does not see to its extinction.
4. This is to show the importance of hospitality, that even if all they did was lack this quality, they would already not be allowed to join Bnei Yisrael.
5. The prohibition of not having a zara' as skin affliction (be careful with an affliction) is the prohibition not to cut off a zara' as skin affliction. The next pasuk telling us to remember the sin of Miriam is telling us that to completely uproot the punishment of zara' as one must not speak leshon hara.
6. The Torah says "remember (remember) and do not forget (do not forget) to teach us that we must remember the incident of Amalek verbally."