

The Other Side of the Story

It was late Tuesday night when the phone rang in Leo's house. A good friend of his named Solomon was calling. "Perhaps you can help me," he said. "I'm making a wedding soon and I'd like you to recommend a good photographer."

After giving it some thought, Leo gave him the name of a man who was both an excellent photographer and also very reasonably priced.

"I've heard about him," replied Solomon, "but I was also told that he was unreliable."

"Oh, really?" Leo said, quite surprised. "What makes you say so?"

"Well, I'm told he was recently hired for a *Bar Misvah* and he first arrived after it was half over. He missed half the affair. There's no way I'd hire a person who's so irresponsible."

It's certainly a severe charge, Leo thought to himself. "Are you sure about it?" he asked. "It's a very strong accusation."

"I'm quite positive," was his reply. "The head of the band that night told me himself. Go check it out yourself."

"I sure will," Leo said. "But what makes you so sure there wasn't some sort of emergency?"

"Perhaps you're right," Solomon said, "but I just can't risk it. Besides, there's no reason in the world for coming late. He should have started out early enough so that even if his car broke down he could have taken a car service and made it on time. There is absolutely no good excuse for a photographer to walk in after half the affair is over!"

It was hard to argue with him. He had a strong point and my defense wasn't too convincing, Leo thought. Could I really recommend someone who is unreliable? Was it truly negligence on his part?

The very next day, Leo bumped into his good friend, the photographer. He brought up the subject of the *Bar Misvah* in question.

"Is it true that you arrived halfway through the affair?" he asked.

"Yes, it certainly is," the photographer answered. "But why are you asking?"

"I just recommended you for a job, and the people refused to take you. They claimed you were unreliable because you didn't come on time."

The photographer looked at Leo in disbelief and shock, and then began to tell him his story. Leo listened very carefully.

"The job was not mine at all," he began. "The photographer who had been hired for the job failed to show up. I received an emergency call in the middle of the affair to come down immediately. Despite being very busy at that moment, I dropped everything I was doing and raced down to the hall as quickly as possible."

With a hurt look written on his face, he added, "I only did it as a personal favor to them." (The Other Side of the Story)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT NASO ✪ שַׁבַּת נָסוֹ

Haftarah: Shoftim 13:2-25

JUNE 10-11, 2022 12 SIVAN 5782

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| Upstairs Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 6:55 pm | Shaharit: 4:30, 6:45, 7:45, 8:10, 9:00 am |
| Reg. Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 6:45 pm | Morning Shema by: 8:13 am |
| Candlelighting: 8:07 pm | Shabbat Class: 6:35 pm |
| Evening Shema after: 9:05 pm | Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 7:45 pm |
| | Shabbat Ends: 9:05, R"Y 9:37 pm |
| | Weekday Minhah: 7:00 pm |

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

A Message from our Rabbi

אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי־תִשְׁטָה אִשְׁתּוֹ

"Any man, if his wife will go astray" (*Bemidbar* 5:12)

In this week's *perashah* we learn about the *sotah*. A *sotah* is a woman suspected by her husband of being unfaithful. The Torah solves the problem by providing for the woman a special testing water. When she drinks the water, it will ascertain whether the suspicion was true. If she was unfaithful she will perish; if she was loyal the water will give her a blessing.

The verse quoted above has an unusual wording. The word "*ish*" is repeated. It means "any man," but if it would have said the word "*ish*" once, it would also have meant "any man," so why repeat? Rabbi Frand quotes Rabbi M. Chafetz who explains a critical point. The Torah is teaching us that sometimes the situation of a wife becoming suspect is due to too much "*ish*." The man is asserting himself and demanding a lot as a man. The man is interested more in the "*ish*" of the marriage and not enough for the "*ishah* (woman)" of the marriage. Sometimes the woman is thinking too much of herself as opposed to thinking of the man. In short, the key to a successful marriage is "selflessness," and the key to a bad marriage is "selfishness." Many people say the money issues, or "in-law" issues are the main problems. But, this is a surface analysis. If one would look deeper, one would see that the problem stems from one or both partners placing too much emphasis on him or herself.

Whenever I give a speech on the subject of *Shalom Bayit* (peace in the home) it never fails that a person comes up to me and says, "I wish my spouse was here to hear the speech." I would like to say that the person who came up to me missed the point. The above message is for each and every married person. The idea is that we should all learn

to be more giving and more caring. We shouldn't wait for our spouse to give back to us what we give to our spouse. The idea of marriage is for each person to get the most out of marriage. What is it that we seek? We want to become a more kind and a more gentle people. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Name Dropping

In our *perashah* Hashem tells Moshe to teach Aharon how to bestow the *Birkat Kohanim* – the priestly blessing. After the blessings themselves, Hashem states: “Place My name on *Bnei Yisrael*, and I will bless them” (6:27).

What is meant by the *Kohanim* placing Hashem's name on *Bnei Yisrael*? The *Ba'al Akevat Yitzhak* explains that in order to receive *berachah* (blessing) we must make ourselves worthy of that *berachah*. How does one do that? Through a clear recognition that all is coming from Hashem.

The middle section of our *Amidah* prayer is comprised of our requests. Hashem already knows exactly what we need! The point of our prayer is to impress upon ourselves that Hashem is the source of all *berachah*. Once we have done that, we are now a vessel that is capable and worthy of receiving that *berachah*.

With this we can understand our *pasuk*. The job of the *Kohanim* is to educate *Klal Yisrael* – to teach us that all comes from Hashem. They do this with the *Birkat Kohanim*. “May Hashem bless you materialistically and safeguard that blessing. May Hashem show you a shining countenance... May Hashem turn His face toward you...” Hashem, Hashem, Hashem. They place Hashem's name on *Bnei Yisrael* by teaching us from where everything emanates.

“Place My name on *Bnei Yisrael* and I will bless them.” Once we have that clear awareness that all that we have is a *berachah* from Hashem, we have readied and elevated ourselves to the level of being worthy of that *berachah*. The *Kohanim* have done their job and Hashem guarantees, “I will bless them.” (Rabbi Yisroel Ciner)

Divine Message

Parashat Naso's Haftarah contains the story of the birth of Shimshon. Shimshon's mother was childless. The Angel of Hashem appeared to her and told her that she was going to become pregnant and give birth to a son. That son turned out to be Shimshon *haGibor*. However, the *pasuk* does not only say she would become pregnant and have a son. It begins by saying “Behold you are barren and have not given birth.” [*Shoftim* 13:3]

The *Midrash* asks – why was it necessary for the Angel to tell Manoah's wife that she was barren and had not given birth. This was a fact of which she was obviously aware! The *Midrash* answers “This teaches that there had been a dispute between Manoah and his wife.” In Biblical times, they did not possess the medical knowledge or technology that we have today to determine when a couple is infertile, whether the cause lay with the husband or the wife. Manoah had told his wife “Our childlessness is your problem! You are the barren one.” She argued back to her husband, “No. The problem comes from you. You are the infertile one and the reason we do not have children.”

According to the *Midrash*, this was part of the Angel's message to the woman. The *Midrash* first says that Manoah's wife was a *Sadeket* (a righteous woman) and for that reason the *Malach* appeared to her with this Divine message rather than to her husband. The *Midrash* says that the *Malach* came to make peace between husband and wife, by presenting them with the “Divine diagnosis” of the source of the problem. “It is indeed your “fault” that you have not had children with your husband. Stop fighting about that. But you should know that now, you are going to become pregnant!”

Manoah's wife told him, “An Angel told me that we are going to have a baby.” [*Shoftim* 13:7] However, she conveniently left out from her statement to her husband the fact that the *Malach* confirmed that he had been right all those years in their argument regarding the cause of their inability to have children.

Now this seems somewhat odd. The *Midrash* says that she was a *Sadeket*, and that in her merit, the Angel appeared. We are not talking here about just your average woman on the street. We are talking about a woman who merited speaking with a *Malach*, and whom the *Midrash* calls a *Sadeket*! So then why does she not confess to Manoah that she had been wrong? Why doesn't she tell him “You know, after all these years that we have been fighting with each other about this matter, the Angel revealed to me that you were right and I was wrong!”?

The reason is that one of the hardest things to do in life is to say “I am wrong. It is my fault.” The novel idea here is that a person can be a *Sadeket*, and a person can be on the level where they merit speaking with a *Malach*, but to say the words “It is my fault. I am wrong” is a very difficult challenge.

I once gave a *derashah* entitled “The Three Most Important Words in Marriage.” I began my speech by asking “What are the three most important words in a marriage?” Some suggested “You look beautiful.” Others suggested “I love you.” I maintain that the three most important words in a marriage are “**It's my fault.**” This is very hard to do. One can be a *Sadeket*, one can speak with an Angel, and one can announce that “we are going to have a baby.” But to say “You were right. I was wrong. It was my problem”—that is very difficult. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Getting Picked

Competition is healthy.

When leaders must fill key positions or assign people to head important projects, they often pit candidates against one another. In the competitive environment that results, contenders work hard to prove their fitness, each hoping to win the lucrative appointment or potentially prestigious task.

Finally the choice is made and the name of the frontrunner is announced. Frowns and smiles fill the room as condolences are offered to the losers and congratulations to the winner, who stands beaming in the spotlight of recognition.

It is soon thereafter that the disposition of the winner changes. The big prize does not come without a price. The burden of responsibility, the pressure of meeting deadlines, and the threat of potential failure all weigh heavily on the new leader's mind.

Life is not a no-strings-attached game. Everyone wants to get picked for good things: a new job, a promotion, marriage. We Jews have already been “picked” to be the Chosen People. But all of these honors come with responsibilities that must be met.

When you start to slack off because your job is a little tough, marriage a little rocky, or Torah observance a little difficult, stop the slide and view your position in any of these situations as one of benefit and opportunity. Understand that this is true so long as you meet your responsibilities. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

One Stop Shop

A person should have full confidence only in Hashem because all the requirements to trust in someone cannot be found in anyone or anything except Hashem.

Anxiety is a result of diminished faith. Prayer and learning Torah values is a One Stop Shop to increased faith that all Hashem does is for our own benefit. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)