



# Judicious Jewelry

Even prior to knowing *Rivka Imeinu's* identity Eliezer gifts her with two pieces of jewelry. The Torah relates that he gave her a nose ring weighing a *beka* and two bracelets weighing ten gold shekels (*Bereisheet* 24:22). Rashi comments that the weight of the nose ring hints to the half shekel that the Jews would give in the future, who's weight was a *beka* and the two bracelets hint to the two *Luchot* upon which were written the *Aseret Hadibrot*. What is the inference here and why does Eliezer give this jewelry to Rivka without even knowing her identity?

The *Maharal* explains that as soon as Eliezer saw Rivka, he perceived instinctively that she would be the mother of the Jewish people. He therefore did not want to delay even a moment to give her this

jewelry that symbolized her role as the progenitor of our nation. The message, learns Rav Goldstein in *Shaarei Chayim*, is how careful one must be to grab a moment of opportunity without delay. Moreover, he notes that Eliezer emphasizes actions over words to express his intent by first giving her gifts and then speaking to her. Similarly, when one is travelling it is best to physically turn towards Yerushalayim in *tfilah* or at the very least to focus one's heart in that direction. In doing so, one's desire is conveyed concretely.

Many commentators appreciate these two pieces of jewelry as symbols of a Jewish marriage. Rav Rebibo in *Minchat Michael* points out that the value of a *beka* is half a shekel. Each partner in marriage must view himself or herself as a half, ready to learn and grow from the "other half". When one views himself as complete, he is reticent to expand and actualize his full capacity. Two wholes will never achieve wholeness together. Likewise, the two



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bracelets that reflect the two Tablets relay a message for marriage. It is not enough to be proficient in the laws between man and Hashem, one must also invest in *bein adam lechavero*; giving to another, developing the relationship to ensure a happy, satisfying marriage.

The *Kli Yakar* questions the following imbalance in Eliezer's message through his gifts: a *beka's* value is half while the two bracelets seem joined together to create a whole. He reconciles this with the following injunction. Living an earthly existence will never fill one's absolute desire, the only thing that will bring a sense of completeness is a life of Torah.

Rav Friedman in *Shevilei Pinchas* finds deep meaning in the *Kli Yakar's* insight. He cites the well-known gemara; Rabi Yochanan taught that the joining of marriage partners is as difficult as the splitting of the Sea (*Sotah 2a*). The *Maharal* understands this to mean that just as it is a miracle to take something that was once whole (the water) and split it into two, likewise, it is a miracle to take two separate entities and join them into one. Rav Friedman teaches from the *Zohar Hakadosh* that really the souls of man and woman were created as one in heaven. Only once they descended to earth did they split into two with the goal of reuniting as one. This coming together is miraculous, akin to the splitting and rejoining of the Sea. The profound message of the jewelry is thus, the *beka* reflects the two halves of the soul down on this earth which must fuse as one in the realm of marriage creating an integrated thorough oneness. ■

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