



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

RAV KEHILLA, NOFEI HASHEMESH
MAGGID SHIUR, DAF YOMI, OU.ORG
ROSH BAIS MEDRASH ENGLISH SPEAKING PROGRAM MACHON LEV

Keeping Our Father Happy

בנים אתם לה' אלוֹקֵיכֶם - לא תתגודדו... כי עַם קדוש אתה (יד:א)

You are children of Hashem... do not rip out your hair anger... because you are a holy nation.

One is prohibited from expressing too much agony and inflicting pain upon oneself, because we are the children of Hashem. What is the connection of being children of Hashem and the prohibition on inflicting pain on oneself, because we are a holy nation. Moreover, is there any association between the p'shat explained above and the drash on the pasuk, from which we derive - לא תתגודדו - (Yavamot 13b)? Don't be separate groups, rather be united.

Rashi on the pasuk explains that since we are a refined people, we cannot walk around

with ripped hair and cut bodies. The Ramban disagrees and expresses that this pasuk relates to one who is in mourning while Rashi's suggestion would apply at all times. Ibn Ezra posits that since God loves us more than a father loves a son, then we should not be upset at anything that we experience. We should understand that all is for the good, even if we cannot comprehend it. We have a certain trust in Hashem and so we cannot overdo any mourning.

The Ramban believes that the underlying message of this commandment is that if we over react by mourning, it reflects that we think this is the end of life, but we need to believe that there is a transition to the world to come. Over- reacting for the loss of the body, is a reflection of disbelief in the afterlife. If we truly believe that the dead soul is in a better place, then we would not mourn endlessly. Chazal in their infinite wisdom established a routine of mourning, shiva, shloshim and eleven months, so that one can focus on the event, but not wallow forever. To be able to ease the pain over time.

The Shem M'shmuel expands upon the Ramban's explanation, in the name of his father (Avne Nezer and Iglei Tal). One may believe in the afterlife of the soul, but why can't I mourn the loss of the body? We need to understand the body is a temporary container of the soul. It is a mitzva to take care of the body when the soul is within it, but afterwards, it loses its significance. There is a concept of *kavod habriyot*, but respect for

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the living precedes respect for the dead. The purpose of this mitzvah is to focus on the soul (nefesh) and not on the body (guf).

Now we can connect the *p'shat* and the *drash*. When do people get into arguments and separate (אגודות)? When they focus on the body- on externals. When they are jealous of physical things. If we focus more on the *nefesh*, on spiritual matters, then we would not engage in disputes and we would refrain from forming different and separate groups אגודות.

May we be able to live up to our title as being “banim L’Hashem” and make our father happy by acting as unified brothers! ■

Jonathan Rosenblum, DPM

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