



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

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MAKING THE MOST OF OUR HIGH MOMENTS

In this week's parsha, we learn about the mitzvah of ma'akeh:

"When you build a new house, you shall make a guardrail for your roof, so that you shall not cause blood [to be spilled] in your house, that the one who falls should fall from it [the roof]." (Devarim 22:8)

On a simple level, this mitzvah teaches us to put a protective fence around the roof of our homes so that no one will fall and get hurt.

The Chassidic masters offer a beautiful insight. They explain that the word "gagcha" ("your roof") can also symbolize a person reaching a high spiritual place and a moment of inspiration, clarity, and closeness to Hashem.

The Torah is teaching us that when we reach those spiritual highs, we shouldn't let them slip away. We need to "build a fence" around them to protect them and help them continue influencing our lives.

But how do we hold on to those moments of inspiration?

Rashi explains that the juxtaposition of

the mitzvot of Shiluach HaKen, Ma'akeh, and Tzitzit illustrates the principle of "mitzvah goreret mitzvah" – one mitzvah leads to another. If a person fulfills the mitzvah of Shiluach HaKen, they will merit building a new home, where they will perform the mitzvah of Ma'akeh. That, in turn, leads to owning a beautiful garment that requires Tzitzit.

Perhaps this is one of the greatest ways to preserve our spiritual highs. When we do one mitzvah, instead of letting the inspiration fade, we can use that momentum to do another. Every act of kindness, every mitzvah, every positive choice can become the stepping stone to the next one. Rather than waiting for inspiration to return, we create it by continuing to move forward.

May we be zocheh to recognize every opportunity Hashem gives us, to build on each mitzvah we do, and to keep growing and bringing more light to ourselves, our families, and all of Am Yisrael.



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BUILDING THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY

Parshat Ki Tetze contains more mitzvot than any other parsha in the Torah. One of the most well-known is the mitzvah of ma'akeh: "Ki tivneh bayit chadash, v'asita ma'akeh l'gagecha" – "When you build a new house, you shall make a guardrail for your roof" (Devarim כב:ח). At first glance, this

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mitzvah is about safety. But on a deeper level, it teaches that building a Jewish society means taking responsibility before something goes wrong. The Torah teaches us to be proactive.

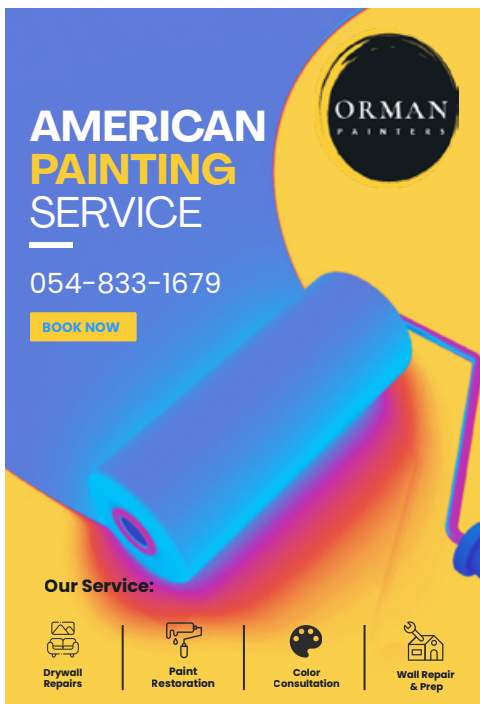
One message emerging from Ki Tetze is that a strong nation is not built only through extraordinary moments, but through the many everyday choices that reflect responsibility. Responsibility for other people, for our communities, and for the Land Hashem has entrusted to us.

This idea feels especially meaningful to me, as I hope to be able to volunteer next year with Hashomer HaChadash, strengthening Israel through agriculture and supporting my local community. Preparing for this opportunity has made me think about the many different ways people take responsibility for Eretz Yisrael. Some protect our

country by serving in the army, while others strengthen it by caring for the land, helping a neighbor, or being part of a chesed organization and take responsibility for the place they call home. Every role is different, but every role matters.

In discussing how we build a healthy society, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks beautifully noted that “we are individually and collectively responsible for our future. We each have a part to play.” The mitzvah of ma’akeh reminds us that protecting something important begins with caring enough to act. We cannot simply close our doors and ignore the vulnerabilities of others.

I know each of us can find our own way to strengthen Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael, both in moments of crisis and through the quiet acts of responsibility that shape our future together. ■



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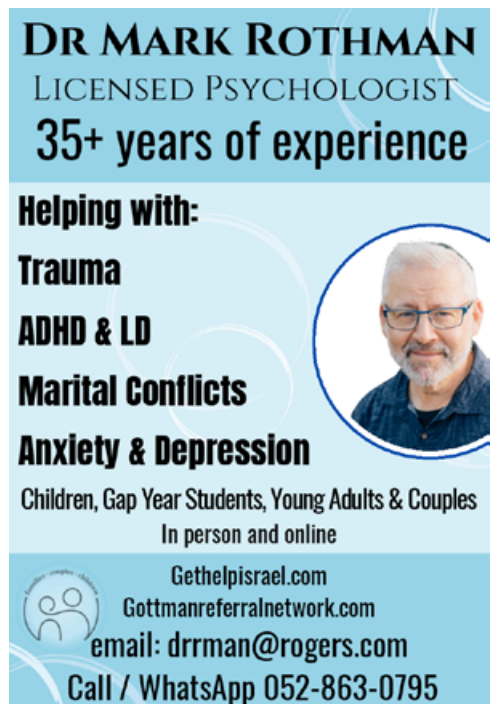
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