

Torah sweets

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KI SEITZEI - THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ALL THE MITZVOS

A Rabbi and a taxi driver were once awaiting entry into Heaven. An angel examined the cabbie's record, and then said, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter." Then, it was the Rabbi's turn. The angel perused the Rabbi's life deeds and proclaimed, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter Heaven."

"Hold on a minute," says the rabbi, "that man before me was a taxi driver – why did he get a silken robe and golden staff?"

The angel replied: "Well, that's simple. While you preached, people slept – but while he drove, people prayed."

We live in a society that likes to "project" and predict what someone is supposed to earn or accomplish in a specific field. We also live at a time where we are inundated with systems that offer us rewards for investments. As such, both attitudes may hinder us from seeing the optimal way to look at Mitzvos.

This week's Parsha, Ki Setzei, contains the most Mitzvos of any Parsha, 74 to be exact (according to the **Sefer Hachinuch**). Is there a common denominator between all these Mitzvos? There is also a famous *mashal* (parable brought in the Midrash) about a king who wanted to have a gorgeous garden planted. However, he refrained from telling his workers which plants he liked the most and would pay the most for because he wanted to have a variety and was afraid that if his attendants knew his preferences, they would only give the plants he liked (and there would be something missing in the beauty of this garden. The *nimshal* is that Hashem didn't tell us the reward of different Mitzvos. He just let us know that an easy Mitzvah of sending away the mother bird and a difficult Mitzvah of honoring parents have the same reward of long life so that we give all the Mitzvos the same honor. **Rabbi Gabi Fried** asks: what is the depth of this parable and the takeaway for us?

The **Ohr Gedalyahu** explains that if one looks at Mitzvos as instruments to get credit, much like a child who goes to the arcade to get points so he can get his toy, then it makes sense to figure out and commit to the Mitzvos that have the greatest return. Yet, if we understand that the goal of keeping Mitzvos is coming closer to Hashem and connecting to Him, then it's not about the reward system, but about doing all the different things necessary to make us more holy and perfect. This is the common denominator between all the Mitzvos. Hashem doesn't need the garden for His sake; He wants us to be that beautiful garden. As such, He concealed the reward from us so that we realize that the greatest reward is *sheleimus* (perfection). If we have a lot of Mitzvah X and not enough of Mitzvah Y, one will be like a dwarf whose body parts are disproportionate. According to the Torah, that's a *ba'al mum* (disabled and deformed person).

Rav Shlomo Heiman, ZT"L, makes an incredible observation that connects the final idea in last week's Parsha and the first one in this week's Parsha. Parshas Shoftim ended with the Mitzvah of Eglah Arufah, wherein a dead body is discovered, and the elders must come and measure the distance to the nearest town. A big deal is made about a murder during peacetime; so too, when a person goes out to war (the first Mitzvah in Ki Setzei), one must weigh every situation and treat people properly. Whether we are talking about a *Ben Sorer Umoredh*, the wayward son, who gets killed because he is trending toward becoming a wicked person, or whether we are discussing the ideas of human dignity or making a fence on our roofs, we must care about others.

All the Mitzvos contribute to making us more well-rounded and holier individuals. As we approach the end of the year and think about becoming better in our relationships with Hashem and others, let's examine how we approach Mitzvos so that we can upgrade their performance for the new year.



**"YOUR WORK LEAVES ME IN A SPLENDID POSITION.
ISN'T THAT ENOUGH REWARD FOR YOU?"**

HAFTARAH HONEYCOMBS BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN KI SEITZEI – DON'T FEAR THE REDEMPTION

This week's Haftarah features a beautiful Pasuk. Hashem tells us about the ending of our Galus (exile). The Pasuk (Yehahyahu 54:4) states: "*Fear not, for you shall not be ashamed, and not be embarrassed; you shall not be put to shame, for the shame of your youth you shall forget, and the disgrace of your widowhood you shall no longer remember.*"

The **Metzudas Dovid** writes that people have a negative perspective on Mashiach coming, as there is a fear. When the Second Beis Hamikdash was rebuilt, the Jews were under Persian/Modai rule, and not engaged in self-governance. In the present time, we are living in our own land, Eretz Yisrael, but still combating the countless enemies in the surrounding areas. Furthermore, we face pressure to adhere to the world's opinions. Why do we have to go out of Galus – so that we can have more challenges?

This is a very big misunderstanding about what the world will look like when Mashiach comes. In the Messianic era, we will not have any enemies to contend with. Unlike today, we will have complete rule, as all the nations will be subjugated to the Jewish nation. Today, living in Israel is still considered living in Galus. This is what is meant when the Pasuk says, "Don't fear."

There is another reason why people don't want to go out of Galus: they don't want to have their hearts broken. The Metzudas Dovid writes that people think that the redemption won't be permanent. Something will transpire that will cause us to be expelled again, so the people would rather stay put where they are. This is a source of embarrassment to the Jewish people because we still have so much to work on. On that, the Pasuk says, "don't be embarrassed" because the next redemption will be the ultimate one. All these words about being embarrassed/shamed are referring to quelling this concern. However, there is one more incredible thought from the **Yismach Moshe** that we need to discuss. (SEE CONCLUSION ON PAGE 2) →

The Yismach Moshe gives another reason why people don't want to part from Galus. Many people are cut off and disconnected from Yiddishkeit. They feel they don't have a relationship with Hashem or the Mitzvos, so why do they need a redemption? These people don't want the Geulah - they don't feel they're missing it in their lives. The end of the Pasuk addresses those people when it states: *"forget the shame of your youth and the embarrassment of your widowhood."*

When someone is a widow or widower, they won't necessarily be embarrassed by that reality. It's very painful and uncomfortable, but how is embarrassment a relevant feeling? Most people understand that it's a sorry state to be in and aren't so callous as to shame someone who lost a spouse; so what does it mean? Instead, the Yismach Moshe discusses a husband who runs away, as it states in Eichah (1:1): *"How has the city that was once so populous remained lonely! She's become like a widow!"* This refers to a lady whose husband runs away with another woman or simply quit on the relationship. The woman is still married because her husband has not given her a *get* (bill of divorce) but it's very embarrassing to be in limbo land knowing full well that he left.

The Gemara (Berachos 58b) states that a widow's pain subsides after 12 months, as Hashem made a blessing of *shikcha* (forgetfulness) wherein the traumatic memories don't hurt as much. This is in stark contrast with a woman who is still married but her husband is not around. How does she face those in her community who wonder what happened to her spouse? Does she tell them he ran off, or does she make up a white lie to spare herself the shame? The embarrassment of youth might be even greater if he runs away right after the wedding. The couple's relationship had just started, and the hopes were high.

The Pasuk teaches us that Hashem promises that He will come back to us. We won't feel embarrassed anymore. If we feel fully cut off, it's not true, as we are NOT cut off. It might be an embarrassing state to be in for someone who is distant from Torah and Mitzvos. However, one is never fully or forever separated from Hashem in the sense of a divorce.

The Yismach Moshe tells us that this should give us hope and awareness that no Jew is ever cut off from Hashem. One may have a healthy or an unhealthy dose of guilt, but that shows that the relationship is still there. There may be much embarrassment that the Jews are carrying around because they feel like they're not connecting to Hashem and the Torah properly. Hashem promises us that in the Final Redemption, He will reinvigorate the relationship between Him and us.

SUGAR RUSH ON THE 613 MITZVOS BY RABBI ELI REIT
MITZVAH # 225 - GALUS FOR AN ACCIDENTAL KILLER

Someone who kills accidentally must go out of his city to a designated city, *"Ir Miklat"* (city of refuge), as the Pasuk (Bamidbar 35:25) states, *"he shall dwell there until the Kohen Gadol dies"*. He must remain there until the Kohen Gadol dies. Beis Din must enforce this. If the killer ends up dying in the *Ir Miklat*, he must be buried in that city. A reason for this Mitzvah is to impress upon us the severity of murder. Even someone who killed accidentally must endure this punishment of exile, which is somewhat like a death penalty (see the *Sefer Hachinuch*).

ELUL, AGAIN

The month of Elul is now in full swing. It is possible that one of the many thoughts that cross our minds is: I went through quite a few Eluls in my life; have I changed much? How will this year be any different? How do we deal with such emotions of *yiush* (despair) during this time? Rav Yitzchak Blazer, ZT"l, offers an inspirational thought. It is known that the blowing of the shofar confuses the Satan, thus somewhat minimizing his ability to prosecute us on Rosh Hashana. He thinks that it may be the shofar signaling the arrival of Mashiach which will result in his demise.

Although he has heard the shofar for many years, still he thinks that maybe now, after so many years, the Jews have repented fully and Mashiach will arrive. It would therefore mean that one who despairs thinking that he hasn't really changed is worse than the Satan, who does not give up hope on us doing Teshuvah. If the Satan has faith in us, we should surely have faith in ourselves and realize our inner strengths and abilities. This year, B'ezeras Hashem, we will make a real change for the better.

THE VALUE OF EVERY ACT

We must realize that at times one small act can affect the entire destiny of an individual. Rav Itzele explained this with a mashal. There was a fellow who was traveling by train to reach a faraway city. However, he had enough to pay for a ticket that would get him only up to the stop before the destination. Had he had a few more dollars, he would have been able to afford a ticket that would allow him to remain on board until his destination. Having no choice, he had to disembark prematurely, leaving him stranded in middle of nowhere.

The same applies to actions. Sometimes it may be one seemingly insignificant deed that may tip the scale from being counted as a non-Tzadik to be considered a Tzadik. Thus, the negligence of that one small act may leave him in dire straits for eternity. Let us therefore wake up in the days of Elul and strengthen our outlook on the value of our actions, and not allow opportunities to slip through our fingers.

HOW MUCH TESHUVAH?

While every improvement one makes each year, week, and day makes a tremendous difference, one must still realize that there is always room for more improvement and growth. This is illustrated in the following incident, related by an eyewitness. The *Sefer Even Yaakov* relates: "When I studied in the Yeshiva of Slabodka I noticed the great Gaon and true Tzadik Rav Yitzchok Blazer (Rav Itzele) who was davening Mincha on erev Rosh Hashana. When he reached the bracha of *Selach Lanu* (asking forgiveness) he cried immensely and moaned and sobbed out loud. It was obvious that he was surely not crying because he was asking for life or a livelihood. Rather, he was crying because he felt that perhaps he had not cleansed his soul enough during the days of Elul."

This was even though he would not speak at all for the entire Elul until after Yom Kippur (because of fear of speaking sinful speech). It once even happened that his young daughter got hurt, and when he was notified, he did not break his custom; rather, he wrote down instructions on what to do. Additionally, throughout the year he would be involved only in Torah and Mitzvos. Yet, he cried like a baby, asking for forgiveness on erev Rosh Hashana. This is because he was trying to purify himself before Hashem. If this Tzadik felt lacking in purity, how much more so should we feel that longing to become pure.

We should therefore inspire ourselves this Elul, realizing that there is a lot of work that must be done and not be complacent with our current spiritual level and standing. Let us aspire to use the special time to the fullest.

THE LEARNING IN THIS MAGAZINE IS DEDICATED AS A COMPLETE AND SPEEDY
REFUAH FOR LEEBA MIRIAM GEULAH BAS LEAH

SUGARY SAYING BY RABBI MENACHEM LOMNER

"Learn something extra in the merit of a relative's Neshama (soul)."

The Mitzvah of *yibbum* (Devarim 25:5-10) is one of the hardest Mitzvos for us to wrap our minds around. For a better understanding, ask your local Orthodox *mekubal* and see what you can get out of him. One thing is for sure, though: when a brother marries the widow of the deceased, there is a continuation of his family, and that gives merits to the *neshama* of this person.

The neshama lives forever in the greatest of pleasures, enjoying the Divine Presence of Hashem. However, the neshama cannot build any more than it built by doing Mitzvos during his lifetime. The only way to build more is if others build for him. Others who do Mitzvos in the merit of a neshama send it *"peckalach"* (packages). This is something done when saying kaddish for one who was *niftar*. We should also learn some extra Torah in their merit, which goes a long way.



Parshas Ki Seitzei numerically has the most Mitzvos of any parsha in the Torah. It's fair to say that a theme here is Mitzvos. **Rashi** gives us an insight into this because it's hard to understand the connection between all the Mitzvos. The Torah (Devarim 22:7-12) states: if you are in the woods and you come upon a bird's nest, chase away the mother bird, and then take the eggs (or the chicks) that are in the nest - but chase away the mother bird and then take it. That is a Mitzvah, and it comes with long life. Then, the next Mitzvah is Makeh. When you buy a house, put a fence on the top of the roof so that someone does not fall off the roof and die. Make sure you put a guardrail.

The next Mitzvah is "not to plow with an ox and a donkey together." The reason for that is that since the ox chews its cud, so the donkey is going to be jealous and think, "how come he got food, and I didn't?" The answer is, of course, because the ox has multiple stomachs, and he keeps bringing it up and chewing it and sending it back down. The Mitzvah after those states: "do not plant grapes and wheat together." It's followed by the Mitzvah of "not wearing wool and linen together." Finally, the last Mitzvah in this set is Tzitzis, to put on a four-cornered garment. What's the progression here?

Rashi (Devarim 22:8) comments: "When you build a new house, [you shall make a guard-rail for your roof]. If you have fulfilled the commandment of "sending away the mother bird" you will eventually build a new house and fulfill the commandment of the guardrail, because one commandment leads to another commandment. You will have a vineyard, a field, and fine clothes. Therefore, these passages are juxtaposed." What's the order here? It can't be a reward because if I send away the bird, I get a house, and then, in the end, I only get nice garments. Those cannot be worth as much as a house. It's also not based on the difficulty level of the Mitzvah, because not wearing Shatnez is easier than getting on top of the roof and building a fence.

In truth, the progression is that Mitzvah is commitment. Hashem gives us Mitzvos as relationship-building tools. The Mitzvos help us build a relationship with Hashem. The first Mitzvah on the list is in no-man's-land, and it doesn't cost anything. There's no commitment. If we show Hashem that we are willing to do that, He will give us the opportunity to bring Him into our home and put a railing on our roof.

If we do that, then Hashem will tell us how to run our business. Some folks "let" Hashem into their house but not into their businesses. Then, it says, don't plow with two animals together. Hashem tells us how to do business. Finally, if we accept that, then Hashem will tell us what to wear (Tzitzis). If we show through Mitzvos that we want to be close to Hashem, He will come more into our lives and grant us more opportunities to get a greater commitment.

Rav Matisyahu Salomon, ZT"l, the mashgiach of Beis Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, was an incredibly busy person, always involved in communal affairs. Some even say that he would spend twenty hours on most days between his learning and helping the community. Sometimes, things were very stressful, and he and his family just needed to take a break. There was a wealthy man who owned a nice bungalow house about three hours from Lakewood and offered it to Rav Matisyahu any time he wanted. On one of his trips up there with his family, he got an unnerving phone call. He had just spent three hours in the car, and he was about to arrive when the person on the other end told him that there was a certain widow who was planning on getting married that night but was getting cold feet. He was nervous. "I can't just risk speaking to her on the phone. The stakes are too high," he thought. Immediately, before even stepping out, he turned around and headed back. Due to his involvement, the couple got married that night.

One time, there was a certain person who spent many years learning in kollel, and it was his dream to one day become a rebbe in a yeshiva. This was about twenty years ago, when getting such a position was much more difficult than it is today. Finally, this person got a job, and they hired him for Elul Zman. After the Zman was over, they told him that they didn't think he was a good fit for the yeshiva and informed him that he wasn't invited to return for the winter Zman. Somebody called Rav Matisyahu and explained that this person had worked so hard to get a job, and now that he had finally gotten one, the yeshiva administration wasn't even giving him a chance.

Rav Matisyahu didn't know this person. Nevertheless, he felt that he should at least be given a fair chance, so he called the administration and said that if they gave this person a proper chance, he would come down every week to give a class to the boys (something that would help increase their student enrollment). Despite a very busy schedule, he made the time to help another person because he felt that everyone should be given a fair chance.

Comment: In this week's parsha, Ki Seitzei, we learn many laws about our responsibilities toward our fellow Jews. For example, if we see someone's ox (or, in today's terms, find someone's car keys or phone), we have a responsibility to return it to them. Rav Matisyahu understood that if he did nothing, that woman may remain a widow the rest of her life or that young man's life dream may get crushed. When somebody desperately needs our help, just standing by and saying, "It's none of my business" isn't an option.

AVARECHECHA B'CHAYAI BY R'MICHAEL SPZILZINGER
KI SETZEI- DIRECTED DESIRE

"Tinah Bni Libcha Li, V'Einecha Drachai Titzorna - Give your heart to Me, My son, and let your eyes observe My ways." (Mishlei 23:26)

Give Your Heart to Me

Hashem created us with natural urges and tendencies. Shlomo Hamelech is guiding us in this Pasuk to channel them in serving Hashem and to distance ourselves from the allurements of the world. "Give your heart to Me!"

Many people look at activities as falling into three categories. I must stay away from what I may not do (Aveiros), there's what I am obligated to do (Mitzvos), and then there's a whole big gray area of what is not forbidden, and I can do if my heart desires. What Hashem wants from us is to recognize that there is no gray area. There are activities that I can use to enhance my relationship with Hashem and grow closer, the details of which are to my choosing. If I involve myself in "pareve" activities that are just for my own self-indulgence, then they create more of a disconnect between me and my creator.

Lo Sasuru: Dovid Hamelech writes about himself (Tehillim 38:10): "Hashem, all my (natural) desires are focused on Your direction". To him, even the experience of physical pleasure was an act of awareness of Hashem. What Shlomo Hamelech is stressing in our Pasuk above is that the two fundamental agents to this are the heart and the eyes. He is playing off the Pasuk we say in Shema - "Lo Sasuru Acharei L'Vavchem V'Acharei Einiechem - do not stray after your heart and your eyes." **Rabbeinu Bachye** points out that the next words - *Asher Atem Zonim Achareihem* - indicate that the heart and eyes seduce a person just like a Zonah entices a man.

Connecting to the Parsha: The Torah, recognizing the slippery slope towards Aveirah, places many safeguards to prevent *Giluy Arayos* (immorality). This is especially because the inhabitants of Eretz Canaan were especially steeped in promiscuity and perversion. It is for this reason that, with a knowledge of the passion of battle, the Torah gave a prescription of how a man should deal with being faced by a Yefas Toar. Rather than submit to her advances immediately, he must take an approach to process how he really feels, giving him a path to converting her and ultimately marrying her if that was what he truly and deeply wanted.

Takeaway: The greatest battle is not against our desires, but over the direction in which we channel them.

Self-reflective question: How can I transform a routine or pleasurable activity into an act of Avodas Hashem?

KI SETZEI – BEFORE YOU TELL YOUR SPOUSE

Summary: We have discussed that humility cannot only be a mindset, but it also must manifest in the actions that one does. The Ramchal specifically pointed out the domains of speaking, walking, and sitting. Now, we will discuss how the rest of one's movements need to be infused with humility.

The Ramchal writes: "Regarding those who diminish themselves, Chaza; said: 'whoever diminishes himself for the sake of Torah in this world is made great in the World to Come' (Bava Metzia 85b). And corresponding to this they said (Yalkut Shimoni, Yechezkel 361): '[Hashem said] I shall remove the turban and lift off the crown [the humble will be uplifted, and the high will be humbled]' (Yechezkel 21:31) - whoever is great in this world will be small in the World to Come'. We also learn the opposite: if one is small in this world, his time of greatness will be in the World to Come." (Mesilas Yesharim, Ch. 22)

People sometimes confuse wanting to make a difference with being a big shot in this world. However, it's important to get it right, because we are learning that how a person conducts himself in this world determines his place in the World to Come. From the Ramchal's usage of sources, we see that someone who de-emphasizes one's ego for the sake of Torah and Hashem is far more effective in terms of eternity than one who gets the short-lived spotlight in this temporary life.

The Ramchal adds: *"And Chazal said: 'Man should always learn from the mind of his Creator; for behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, ignored all the mountains and heights and caused His Shechinah to abide upon Har (Mount) Sinai' (Sotah 5a). This was because of Har Sinai's lowliness. Likewise, they said: 'for the remnant of His inheritance' (Michah 7:18) - for him who makes himself a mere remnant' (Rosh Hashana 17b). (ibid, Chapter 22)*

Rather than giving the Torah on one of the great mountains in the region, such as Tabor and Carmel, Hashem chose to give it on the modest and "not overly impressive" Har Sinai instead. He also chose the humblest man, Moshe, to be the one to bring it down. This is why Pirkei Avos (1:1) opens by saying that Moshe accepted the *Torah MiSinai* – from Sinai (wherein the correct grammatical prefix should be *B'Sinai* – on Sinai). The commentators explain that the prerequisite to receiving Torah is humility. One who has an ego imposes their viewpoints on Torah, trying to make it conform to what they believe. The proper attitude is to look at ourselves as a blank slate and tell the Torah, "Etch yourself on me".

The Ramchal tells us that we should look at ourselves as "leftovers" – we don't need the platform or podium; if our message and ideas need to be heard, Hashem will make sure it happens. To be continued next week, B'Ezras Hashem.

MILK'N'HONEY FROM JERUSALEM, BY RABBI JONATHAN TAUB
KI SEITZEI - THE MEASURE OF BELIEF

The parsha concludes with the Mitzvah to remember what Amalek did to us. This is preceded by the commandment to have honest weights and measures. **Rashi** comments: "If you have been deceitful with measures and weights, you will worry about your enemies." Yet, when the Torah recounts the story of the attack (Beshalach), we read (Shemos 14:7-8): *"Is Hashem among us or not?"* Amalek came and battled the Jewish people in Rephidim. It seems clear from the juxtaposition of the phrase, "Is Hashem among us or not?" to the start of Amalek's attack, that the reason for the battle was the lack of trust and belief in Hashem. How can Rashi say that the cause is "If you have been deceitful with measures and weights"?

The **Netziv of Volozhin** (Maamar She'er Yisrael, section 8) explains that the reason for lack of Eemunah and that of dishonesty in weights and measures are two sides of the same coin. When one lacks belief in Hashem, one will try to increase his wealth in dishonest ways. If he really believed, he would know that he cannot affect what he is meant to receive by one iota. Everything is according to a Divine plan, down to the last cent. One gains nothing by fraudulent actions. With this in mind, we understand why Chazal (Bava Metzia 49a; Bechoros 13b) refer to one who is deceitful in business dealings as *mechusar emunah*, untrustworthy, which can also be understood as lacking belief. One who tries to become wealthy in a dishonest manner shows that he is lacking emunah in Hashem.

Taking this one stage further, our Rabbis extrapolate as follows. The Torah states (Vayikra 19:36): *"You shall have correct scales, correct weights, correct dry measures, and correct liquid measures."* The word for a dry measure is *hin*. This can also mean "yes." As such, Chazal explain that we are being exhorted that your "yes" should be a "yes" and your "no" should be a "no." We should keep our word! One who does not keep his word is also demonstrating a lack of emunah. So, weights and measures and sticking to one's word are two sides of the same coin. May we be honest with our words and business dealings. If that is the case, Hashem will save us from those who can do us harm.

In this parsha, we are commanded to remember what happened with Miriam. The Pasuk tells us (Devarim 24:9) *"Remember what Hashem, your G-d, did to Miriam on the way, when you were leaving Egypt."* **Rashi** tells us that if we want to be careful not to get Tzara'as, we should be careful not to speak derogatory talk. We can motivate ourselves in this regard by remembering what happened with Miriam when she spoke to Aharon about Moshe. What was Miriam's mistake? What happened to Miriam in the desert?

According to Rashi (Bemidbar 12:1), Miriam was standing next to her sister-in-law Tziporah when Moshe and Tziporah's son, Gershon, came running over to tell them that Eldad and Meidad were prophesying in the camp! Automatically, Tziporah said, "Oh no, I feel bad for their wives; if they are starting to prophesize, then they will end up separating from their wives as Moshe did to me!" Miriam heard this, and it bothered her. She loved Moshe and Tziporah. She could not understand why Moshe would do something so radical. She was also a prophetess, and she stayed married to her husband, Kalev. Miriam decided the best thing to do was to speak this over with her older brother Aharon, who also loved Moshe and Tziporah. Miriam went to Aharon and shared her genuine concern for her younger brother and sister-in-law. What did Miriam do wrong?

There are seven general rules to speaking Lashon Harah le'toeles, purely for a constructive purpose: 1. You yourself must have seen what happened, 2. What happened must have been wrong, 3. There cannot be any exaggeration, 4. You must love the person you are speaking about, 5. You must want to help the person you are speaking about, 6. You cannot cause any damage to the person you are speaking about, 7. You must have already tried to go directly to the person who made the mistake and tried helping that person correct their mistake before you can discuss how to help them with someone else.

Miriam's mistake was that she spoke ABOUT Moshe instead of speaking TO Moshe. If Miriam had gone directly to Moshe, he could have explained to her that his level of prophecy was different than what she or Aharon experienced. Right after telling us what Miriam said to Aharon, the Pasuk (Bamidbar 12:3) tells us that Moshe was the humblest man who ever lived. **Harav Samson Raphael Hirsch**, ZT"L, tells us that that's why Miriam thought his level of prophecy was on the same level as hers and Aharon's; because Moshe was so humble, he never spoke to anyone about his unique relationship with Hashem. As such, how can we apply this message to our marriages?

Being vulnerable with our spouse is key to connection. Although our words can bring us closer to our spouse, having an open and vulnerable conversation about our feelings should not include Lashon Harah. There may be times when we feel we need to unload something to our spouse and the laws of toeles apply. Nonetheless, we need to be very scrupulous with what we do and don't say. For example, there may be times when we can share the details of an incident without revealing enough information for our spouse to guess the person who hurt us.

Just being aware of the rules of toeles can help us to be a little more careful with our speech. We want our marriages to be filled with Kedusha, and Hashem sees every moment of effort we put in. Watching what we say can be challenging, but the dividends are worth the effort. May Hashem bless us with success and shine the light of Shalom Bayis into our homes!