



Parsha Encounters

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Parshas Ki Seitzei – Rabbi Yitzchok Broyde

The Best Insurance Policy

"Ki Sivneh Bayis Chadash V'asisu Maakeh L'gagecha."

When one builds a new house (or moves into one), he is required to build a fence to prevent someone from falling off the roof. This Mitzvah is written immediately after the mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan (sending away the mother bird). Rashi explains the connection of these two mitzvahs as follows. If someone fulfills the mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan, he will be rewarded by meriting to build a new house and subsequently fulfilling the mitzvah of Maakeh. Rashi explains further that this is due to the principle of Mitzvah Gorreres Mitzvah; one mitzvah leads to another. Furthermore, if one then fulfills the mitzvah of Maakeh he will merit to plant fields, vineyards and buy new clothes. He will then be able to fulfill the mitzvah of not plowing with klaiyim, or wearing shatnez.

The Be'er Yosef explains that we learn from Rashi that the reward for the mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan is not the new house, rather it is the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of Maakeh. Since one needs a house in order to fulfill the mitzvah of Maakeh, Hashem therefore gives him a house with which to fulfill the mitzvah. The same is true with the fields, vineyards and clothing. They are not the reward in and of themselves. Rather, the reward is the mitzvah one can fulfill with these materialistic acquisitions. It follows therefore, that if one does not fulfill these mitzvahs, then the house, clothing, or property will not stay with him since their

whole purpose was to enable him to fulfill these mitzvahs.

The Be'er Yosef writes further that this concept is also hinted to in the Targum. The Targum translates Maakeh as Tika, meaning a vessel or pouch that holds something inside of it. The basic understanding would be that the Maakeh contains the people that are on the roof, preventing them from falling off. However it can also be understood as explained above; that the Maakeh is the safeguard of the house itself like a wallet or pouch which safeguards one's money. Through the fulfillment of the mitzvah associated with these objects they remain with their owner and are not lost or destroyed.

It is interesting to note that the medrash says that the mitzvah of Shiluach Hakan is a segulah for having children. The medrash says that this is hinted to in the words V'habonim Tikach Lach, "and the children you may take for yourself." This can perhaps also be inferred from the chazal quoted above that the reward for Shiluach Hakan is building a new house and making a Maakeh, as the primary reason one builds a new house is to accommodate a growing family.

If we use all of our possessions for the sake of fulfilling mitzvahs, this is truly the best insurance that they will remain with us, and that Hashem will give us a Shefa of Beracha.

Rabbi Broyde learns full-time at the kollel.