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PARSHA ENCOUNTERS

26 Cheshvan 5770 / Nov. 13, 2009

Parshas Chaya Sara ✍️ Rabbi Baruch Klagsbrun

Loyal Servants

Chazal inform us that Avraham Avinu was the first to call *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* by the title “Adon” – “master.” At the age of three, Avraham Avinu realized that the world neither ran on its own nor was it controlled by powers or gods. Rather, there was only one Master, who was the Master of all. By giving Hashem this title, Avraham was declaring his belief in the one Master of the entire universe. He then made it his life’s mission to spread this knowledge to as many people as possible: “*Vayikra Shom Avrom BiShem Hashem.*” Wherever he went, he preached this belief, and indeed succeeded in winning many converts to the true belief.

A second aspect of declaring Hashem as the Master of the world is the concept that if He is the Master, then we, His creations, are His servants. As such, we have the responsibility to perform His will in His world to the best of our abilities. It is our duty to put aside whatever our own wants and feelings are to fulfill the will of our Master.

A perfect example of the way an *eved* views his responsibility to do his master’s bidding is found in this week’s *Parsha*. Avraham Avinu sends his trusted servant Eliezer to Charan to find a wife for Yitzchok. We are all aware of just how well Eliezer did the job, ultimately returning with Rivka, the next Mother of *Klal Yisroel*. It should be noted that Eliezer did so despite having just been spurned by Avraham Avinu, when he suggested that Yitzchok marry his own daughter. Eliezer, who had been Avraham’s trusted servant for many years, assisted his master in spreading knowledge of Hashem, and joined him in battle, certainly had reason to expect that his proposal would be accepted. When it was refused, one could surely have understood Eliezer’s feelings of disappointment and rejection. It would have been understandable if Eliezer had performed his duties in Charan less than enthusiastically, even returning empty-handed, claiming that the girl did not want to come.

However, we find that the opposite is true. Not only did Eliezer go to Charan, he also carefully planned his strategy for finding the right girl to marry Yitzchok, and *davened* for Divine assistance to ensure the success of his mission. The Torah goes to great length when describing the events and conversations which took place during

the few hours that Eliezer was in Charan. Similarly, the *meforshim* emphasize the *chachmah* which Eliezer displayed throughout the entire mission. His actions were clearly not those of a disappointed, apathetic messenger. Eliezer obviously wished to perform his mission properly, as an *eved* fulfilling his master’s will.

It is worthwhile to note the incredible fact that Eliezer, the loyal *eved*, who plays the starring role in this entire episode, is not identified by name even once in the entire *perek*. He is called “*eved*,” or alternatively “*ish*-the man,” but never Eliezer. When he introduces himself to Besuel, he simply says “*Eved Avraham Anochi*” “I am a servant of Avraham.” He does not view himself as a separate being, with his own plans and wishes, but rather as a tool being used to perform a task. He has no self-interest. He does not even have his own identity. He is there solely to perform the *ratzon* of his master, Avraham. It was this absolute loyalty to his master that earned him the title “*Boruch*, blessed” (“*Bo Biruch Hashem*”), whereas until now he had been “*Arur*—cursed.”

When we refer to Hashem in our *davening* as “*Adon*-Master,” and by extension in the *Shem Adnus*, we should contemplate the fact that by declaring Him to be the master, we are declaring ourselves to be His servants, and are duty-bound to put all of our own interests and emotions aside, in favor of performing the Master’s will.

Rabbi Klagsbrun, a rebbi at Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi, learns with the Zichron Aharon mechanchim chaburah at the kollel.

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KRIAS HATORAH

Rabbi Pesach Gottesman

The Gemara in *Bava Kama* (82A) states that Moshe Rabbeinu established the halacha that *Klal Yisrael* should read from the Torah on Mondays, Thursdays, and Shabbosos. In addition, Ezra HaSofer instituted *Kriah* on Shabbos at *Mincha*.

Chovas Yochid vs. Chovas Tzibbur

There is a disagreement whether or not one who listened to the *kriah* but missed a few words is obligated to make it up. The *poskim* write that this question hinges on whether the *takana* of *Krias HaTorah* was imposed on the individual or upon the *tzibbur* (community). If it is a *Chovas Yochid* (an individual's obligation), then he must make it up; if it's a *Chovas Tzibbur*, then one does not have to complete the *kriah*.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (146.2) quotes the opinion of Tosafos that if there are ten other people listening to the *kriah* one may learn quietly. The *Biur Halachah* (ibid) questions how one can learn quietly when doing so will prevent him from fulfilling his own obligation. R' Moshe Sternbuch (*Tshuvos V'Hanhagos*, vol.1, 148) answers that the *kriah* is a *Chovas Tzibbur* and the individual is therefore exempt from listening. He stresses, though, that it is the *Yochid's* responsibility to be an active member of the community, and to listen the entire time. R' Shlomo HaCohen of Vilna in his sefer, *Binyan Shlomo (siman 35)*, quotes the Vilna Gaon that *krias haTorah* is a *Chovas Tzibbur* and concludes that, although one who deliberately does not attend the *kriah* is a "*shachein ra*," he is not obligated to make up the *kriah*, even if he misses it entirely.

R' Moshe Feinstein (O.C. 4,23) rules that one must hear the entire *kriah*; if one misses even a few words, one should find another *minyán* to fulfill his obligation. On Monday and Thursday it suffices to hear three *aliyos* of three *pesukim* each. The fact that the aforementioned *Biur Halachah* does not answer this question as does R' Sternbuch, implies that he also holds that the obligation is imposed on the *Yochid*. It is said in the name of the Chazon Ish that *Krias HaTorah* is a *Chovas Tzibbur* and one doesn't need to make up the *kriah*, although he himself was stringent to do so. It appears that the *minhag haolom* is to be lenient.

Talking during *Kriah*

Once the *kriah* begins one may not speak, even between *aliyos*. The *Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 146) writes that it is permissible to recite *shnayim mikrah v'echad targum*, and according to some opinions even Torah study is permitted providing that it doesn't disturb others. The *Mishnah Berurah* (S.K. 15) quotes the *Magen Avraham*, *Pri Chadash* and *Vilna Gaon* who forbid Torah learning during the *aliyos*. However, between *aliyos*, one may do *shnayim mikrah v'echad targum* along with *Rashi*. The *Magen Avraham* allows and even encourages one to read along with the *Ba'al Koreh* in order to aid in concentration. During the *kriah* of *Parshiyos Zachor* and *Parah* one must listen quietly without reading along.

Order of *aliyos*

The order of *aliyos* is Kohen, Levi, and then Yisroel. If there is no Kohen present, a Levi or Yisroel may receive the first *aliyah*. In such a situation

the Levi should not get the second *aliyah*. If a Kohen is in middle of *P'sukei D'zimrah*, he should not be called up if another Kohen is available. If there is no other Kohen he may be called up during *P'sukei D'zimra*. If he is in middle of reciting *Bircas Krias Shema*, he should attempt to leave before it is time for the *aliyah* when there is no other Kohen available. If he does not, the *Mishnah Berurah* (66,26) holds that he should be called up *Bein Haperakim* but not in the middle of a *perek*. If he is accidentally called up, he may take the *aliyah* as long as he's not in middle of reciting the *pesukim* of *Shema* or *Baruch Shem*. One should definitely not take an *aliyah* during *Shemonah Esrei*. If a non-Kohen is called up for the *aliyah* and a Kohen suddenly enters, the *aliyah* should be switched to the Kohen. Even if the non-Kohen already said *Borchu*, the Kohen should take his place, as long as the *shem* of the first *berachah* wasn't mentioned. If there is no Levi present, the Kohen should also receive the second *aliyah*.

The *Shulchan Aruch* states that a second Kohen or Levi may receive an *aliyah* after the Yisroel (meaning from the fourth *aliyah* and onwards). The *Mishnah Berura* writes however, that the common *minhag* is to not give a Kohen or Levi any *aliya* aside for Maftir or Acharon (the last *aliyah* when there are additional *aliyos* besides the basic seven). In some situations the *Mishna Berura* allows for a Kohen or Levi to get *Hosafos* other than Acharon (see M.B. 135:36). In a *sha'as hadchak* (a difficult situation), such as *Simchas Torah*, the Rema writes that a Kohen and Levi may get a later *aliyah*. The *Mishnah Berurah* (135 s.k.34) writes that in such a case it is proper to start a new cycle of Kohen, Levi, Yisroel. If a Kohen is called up for an *aliyah* and is not present, a second Kohen should ascend without being called by name. We are concerned that if a second Kohen is called, it would imply that the first one is *pagum* (disqualified). The same *halachah* applies to a Levi but not to a Yisroel. If a Kohen is called for *maftir* and is not there, a second Kohen may be called by name. If a Kohen is called and is not present, his son may be called afterwards by name because if the son is kosher, it is obvious that the father is not *pagum*.

Hosafos

The *Mishnah* in *Megillah* states that one may add on to the number of *aliyos* but not deduct. Rashi and Ran argue whether one may add *aliyos* on Shabbos and Yom Tov or just on Shabbos. The Rema writes (O.C. 282,1) that although the *halachah* is that one may add on Yom Tov, the *minhag* is not to do so except on *Simchas Torah*.

In the times of the *Mishnah*, *bircas hatorah* was only said once before all the *aliyos* and once afterwards. The *Magen Avraham* (ibid S.K. 1) quotes the Tashbatz who states that nowadays, because every *aliyah* involves extra *berachos*, adding more *aliyos* may result in the recitation of a *berachah she'aina tzericha* (an unnecessary *berachah*). The *Magen Avraham* concludes that although we don't follow this opinion, *hosafos* should only be made in necessary situations such as at a *chasunah* or *bris*.

Rabbi Gottesman is a full-time member of the kollel.