

# Fascinating INSIGHTS

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### Natural Love

A father has a special love for a child that a child doesn't have for the father.<sup>1</sup> This is because, as R' Baruch Halevi Epstein<sup>2</sup> (1860-1941) writes, Adam was created from the ground so he didn't have a father. As a result, there was no feeling of love of a son to a father.

<sup>1</sup> See Sanhedrin 72b.

<sup>2</sup> In his Sefer the Tosefes Bracha. His father was the author of the Aruch Hashulchan. R' Baruch Epstein was a student at the Volozhin Yeshiva under his uncle, the Netziv (who became his brother-in-law after being widowed and remarrying his sister). During the Nazi occupation of Pinsk, the Jewish hospital, where Rabbi Epstein was a patient was burned down, and he perished in the fire. He wrote the commentary Torah Temima on the Torah among other Sefarim.

However, Adam did have a son. Consequently, there is the love of a father to a son naturally.<sup>3</sup>

With this, he explains why the Torah doesn't command fathers on raising their children and feeding them rather we just find that it is a father's obligation to teach his son Torah, a craft and so on.<sup>4</sup> But the Torah itself doesn't command this. However, in the Ten Commandments, children are commanded on honoring their parents.<sup>5</sup> Why? Because the love of a father to a son is rooted in nature, there doesn't need to be a command on that. However, the love of a son to a father is not and therefore needs to be commanded.

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### Eternally Unified

In one of the Sheva Brachos for a Chassan and Kallah we say **יוצר האדם**. Doesn't it seem more appropriate to say this when a baby is born, since this baby was just formed?

We know that a husband and wife are one just as Chava literally came from Adam's body as it says **אשר לקח** מן האדם לאשה.<sup>6</sup> In fact, one who is not married<sup>7</sup> is only half—**פלגא דגופא**.<sup>8</sup> This is in accordance with what Adam<sup>9</sup> said **עצם מעצמי**.<sup>10</sup> In a similar vein, the Gemara uses the

<sup>3</sup> The Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim 3:49) tells us we are commanded on the eighth day to give Mila to a son because the love of a father to son is still weak then. If he would wait longer, he may not do the Mitzva of Mila to his son because of his love and pity.

<sup>4</sup> Kidushin 29a.

<sup>5</sup> We know that it is forbidden for a child to call one's father or mother by their name (see Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, 240:2). So what is one to do if his father's name is Shalom and he wants to greet him Shalom when he enters their house? Or let's say his mother's name is Mazel-Tov (not an uncommon Sefardi woman's name) and he wants to wish her Mazel Tov for some simcha? The Sefer Chut Shani says he should say it in a way that it is recognizable that he is blessing them and not that he is calling their name (Shaarei Toras Habayis, Hilchos Hamtzuyos Babayis, volume 2, p. 74).

<sup>6</sup> Breishis 2:22-3. See Eruvin 18a.

<sup>7</sup> The word **כלה** is rooted in **כל** since one possess everything after he is married as Chazal (Yevamos 62b) say one who is not married lives without simcha, bracha etc.

<sup>8</sup> The Alshich (Ki Sisa, Taamai Minhagim, p. 374) says this is why only a half-Shekel was given as it was an atonement for the **עגל** (Yerushalmi Shekalim 2:3). Since the women didn't sin, only half was necessary. We also see this idea by Nadav and Avihu where they are considered one person as it says about their death **וימת** (Bamidbar 26:61), not **וימתו**. This is because they never got married. So  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  is 1. In fact, the word **כלה** shares the same root as **כלה**, to finish, as in **כאשר כלה** (Breishis 18:33), since she completes the man.

<sup>9</sup> R' Avigdor Miller in Career of happiness, p. 99. This explains (Mishlei 18:22) **מצא אשה מצא טוב**, one who has found a wife has found goodness, since **היות האדם לבדו**, it is not good for man to be alone.

<sup>10</sup> In a letter dated Wednesday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of Adar Sheini (1796), R' Akiva Eiger (1761-1837) wrote (Igros R' Akiva Eiger,

phrase אשתו כגופו<sup>11</sup>. We say יוצר האדם in the Sheva Brachos because only after one gets married is he a complete person.

Chava is the Kallah of Adam and Shabbos is our Kallah. The same material that Shabbos is constructed of is also in Adam and Chava. On Friday night, we say רזא רזא דאחד...<sup>12</sup> Additionally, in Mincha on Shabbos we say אתה אחד ושמן אחד. Thus, Shabbos is the idea of unity. In fact, there are 39 Melachos that we are forbidden to do on Shabbos. What has the Gematria of 39? י-ה-ו-ה אחד. This is because it is a day of just us and Hashem as we are unified with Him.<sup>13</sup>

The same is with a husband and wife as they are in essence one.<sup>14</sup> This is just as we are the Kallah of Hashem and submit ourselves completely to Him.<sup>15</sup> Another comparison is that that on Shabbos, which is a Kallah, we don't do מלאכה yet it is the מקור הברכה, source of blessing, as we say in Lecha Dodi. Likewise, with our wife (Kallah) as it states that bracha is found in one's house because of one's wife.<sup>16</sup>

When does this oneness begin and end? We know that 40 days before the formation of an embryo a בת פלוני לפלוני Heavenly voice says בת קול, our Neshama's oneness with our spouse begins even before birth.<sup>17</sup> Before a child is conceived, a Neshama in heaven is divided in two. One half is formed into a male soul while the other half is formed into a female soul. The two souls are then sent to this world where they are conceived by two women, one of whom bears a baby boy and the other a baby girl. When the right time comes, the two parts of that Neshama find each other and there is a reunion of souls.<sup>18</sup>

Not only is the oneness with our spouse before birth but even after death and as it says in the Kesuba בחיי

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109, s.v. (אולם) that after his wife died he was overwhelmed by pain and sorrow. "I became dangerously weak. I couldn't eat or drink. My stomach couldn't hold anything for long and I could barely retain enough food to be required to recite a Bracha Achrona. I couldn't sleep and I had to seek medical care. I am thankful to Hashem for healing me slightly, but I still can't daven without my thoughts being disturbed and confused. I can't learn even a simple sugya in depth."

<sup>11</sup> Brachos 24a.

<sup>12</sup> Nusach Sefard.

<sup>13</sup> Another comparison of Shabbos and a Chosson and Kallah is that in the Shabbos Shemoneh Esrei there are seven Brachos just as there are Sheva Brachos by a Chosson and Kallah.

<sup>14</sup> Also, a woman submits herself to her husband as her obligation to honor her husband precedes that of her parents.

<sup>15</sup> This explains why being Jewish follows the mother since the idea of a mother is that she gives herself over completely (Devarim 7:4, Rashi) and as in בעלה רצון עושה (see also the previous footnote).

<sup>16</sup> Baba Metzia 59a.

<sup>17</sup> See Vayikra Rabba 29:8.

<sup>18</sup> If for example a wife is three years younger than her husband, her half of the Neshama was sent down three years later. Through marriage they become reunited.

ויצאה אשתו עמו<sup>19</sup>. ובאחר מיתה<sup>20</sup>. This is in accordance with his wife shall leave with him.<sup>20</sup>

This is illustrated in Parshas Chayei Sara as the מערת המכפילה was called so since it was doubled with couples<sup>21</sup>—showing that a couple is together eternally. For this reason the title בנין עדי עד, building for eternity, is given.<sup>22</sup> This also explains why the Parsha of מערת המכפילה is the introduction to the Parsha of the Shidduch. Since marriage continues after death, it is an eternal bond and is therefore derived from Efron where it talks of death.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, they were buried together. Now we can understand on a deeper level why the word ולבכותה<sup>24</sup>, grieve over Sarah is spelled with a small כ since Avraham didn't cry fully over the death of Sarah because he knew he would be with her eternally.

A woman sent her son to R' Shneur Zalman Dober<sup>25</sup> with the following question: Her husband who passed away was a great person with superb qualities and exalted character traits. He was well-liked by people as his house was always opened for hospitality. He would feed people happily for free and would tolerate all types of people. He was a true *yerei shamayim* and designated times for learning Torah. This widow withheld herself from getting remarried because she feared that when *techias hameisim* comes she won't return to her husband. She wanted to know who she will be with at that time of *techias hameisim*. He answered that the Zohar says that a woman who marries two men returns to her first husband in the future.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of the books, *Fascinating Insights* and *Incredible Insights* in addition to being the host of *The Fascinating Insights Podcast*. His writings, some of which have been translated into Hebrew, German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

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<sup>19</sup> See Zohar 2:102b. There are other versions, such as ובתר חיי and so on, but they all connote the same idea.

<sup>20</sup> Shemos 21:3. See Ohr Hachaim Breishis 29:32-5, s.v. עוד.

<sup>21</sup> Breishis 23:9, Rashi.

<sup>22</sup> The phrase בנין עדי עד yields a Gematria of 270, the number of days in a nine-month pregnancy. Incidentally, It says in regard to ער ואונן that what they did was רע בעיני ה' as they wasted their seed, which could make a woman pregnant (Breishis 38:7-10, Rashi in 38:7). Is it any surprise that רע has a sum of 270? (Tangentially, the terminology of בנין עדי עד in בנין עדי עד is sourced in [Breishis 2:22] which it says by Chava).

<sup>23</sup> Kidushin 2a. The Gemara derives from a *Gezera Shaveh* of קידה from Efron that one can acquire a woman in marriage through money. At the outset, this would seem to be an incongruent comparison because there it is talking about death whereas marriage is the beginning of life.

<sup>24</sup> 23:2. See also Baal Haturim.

<sup>25</sup> שו"ת מצב הישר 1:7, published in Vilna in 1881.