

CREATING THE SETTING TO ADDRESS THE OBJECTIVE

YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Ki Seitzei Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Yahrtzeit: 15th of Elul

In Memory of: **Moshe Ben Yosef Kalatsky • Yitzchok Eliyahu Ben Dovid Waitman • Yisrael Ben Tzvi Hirsch Spiegel**

Mazal Tov to **Rabbi Yosef & Ruthy Kalatsky** on the upcoming marriage of **Eliyahu** to **Penina** daughter of **Martin & Rifka Rappaport**

Tizku Livnos Bayis Neeman B'Yisrael

Initiative As Catalyst

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1. *Midrash*: One *mitzvah* engenders another.
2. *Rav Chaim* of *Volozhon*: Performing a *mitzvah* in the spirit of Purity engenders one to do another.
3. Multiple positive and negative commandments are juxtaposed in the portion of *Ki Seitzei*.
4. Example: Seeing a mother bird nesting on her chicks or eggs, one must send off the mother before taking the chicks or eggs.
5. This is followed with a *mitzvah* of putting a parapet on one's roof when building a house.
6. Next: The negative commandment not to plant wheat near a vineyard.
7. Next: The negative commandment not to plow with an ox and donkey together.
8. Next: The positive commandment of putting fringes on a four-cornered garment.
9. *Midrash*: When one *mitzvah* engenders another, G-d provides the financial to create the context for the *mitzvah*.
10. *Gemara*: All is predestined except for fear of Heaven.
11. Free choice is the area for which man is allotted to dictate.
12. One's choice will determine the degree of capital that G-d will provide,
13. *Gemara*: One's material allocation is set from *Rosh Hashana* to the next *Rosh Hashana*.
14. G-d includes in that allocation the material means to be able to execute the *mitzvah*.

Is Liability Attributed to G-d's Agent

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1. There is a *mitzvah* to make a parapet on one's rooftop.
2. If one falls to his death due to a lack of an enclosure, there is liability to the homeowner.
3. The text of the verse reads, the one who falls that will fall.
4. *Sifri*: The one who was destined to fall (die) will fall.
5. There is a negative reflection on the homeowner because he was used as the medium to implement the death of this individual.
6. There is a dictum in *Chazal*, G-d brings detriment through those who are culpable.
7. Why is the homeowner any less than the executioner of the Court who has no liability for being the agent to take one's life?
8. *Ramban*: If the Bondage in Egypt was preordained by G-d at the covenant between the parts, why were the Egyptians held accountable?
9. He explains if the Egyptians had instituted the Bondage, as G-d's agent there would be no liability.
10. The bondage was precipitated by the Egyptians due to their insecurity and hate for the Jews.
11. The executioner as the agent of the Court is functioning as G-d's agent, there is no negative side.
12. There is a degree of culpability to the homeowner despite the fate of the one who falls because it is due to his irresponsibility for not providing the parapet.

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The Delinquent Debtor is Basis for Disqualification

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1. An Amonite or Moabite who convert to Judaism are considered illegitimate Jews.
2. They didn't extend bread and water on the way when you left Egypt.
3. And they commissioned Bilaam to curse you.
4. *Ramban*: The claim against them is they are indebted to the descendants of *Avraham*, who saved the life of *Lot*, their antecedent.
5. *Avraham* rescued *Lot* from the 4 mightiest kings and from *Sodom*.
6. Had they the capacity to be appreciative, they would have offered their hospitality.
7. *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh*: Although *Moav* sold bread and water to the Jewish people, they had given to them gratis without payment.
8. It was a ploy to draw the Jews into the clutches of The Moabite women.
9. *Midrash*: An example of liability is when one does not do an act of kindness with someone who is not in need of kindness.
10. *Amon* and *Moav* became illegitimate when they did not offer their bread and water to the Jews in the desert.
11. The Jewish People were fully self sufficient at that time; they had Manna and wellspring.
12. If *Amon* and *Moav* had felt indebted to the Jews for their existence they would have not used the sale of the water and bread as a ploy to ensnare them.

Hour-Long Video: Mindful of the Landscape Assures Victory

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Defrocking the Prince To Perceive Him As A Commoner

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Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Ki Seitzei



Yahrtzeit: 15th of Elul

In Memory of: **Moshe Ben Yosef Kalatsky • Yitzchok Eliyahu Ben Dovid Waitman • Yisrael Ben Tzvi Hirsch Speigel**

Mazal Tov to **Rabbi Yosef & Ruthy Kalatsky** on the upcoming marriage of **Eliyahu** to **Penina** daughter of **Martin & Rifka Rappaport**

Tizku Livnos Bayis Neeman B'Yisrael

The Effect of One's Behavior

"If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son, who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother, and they discipline him, but he does not hearken to them, then his father and mother shall grasp him and take him out to the elders of his city and the gate of his place. They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is wayward and rebellious; he does not hearken to our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' All the men of his city shall pelt him with stones and he shall die."

Mishna: This child assumes the status of the "rebellious" son only when he steals from his parents to buy a certain measure of meat and wine to satisfy his desire. In order for him to be considered liable for the death penalty, he must be between the age of thirteen and

thirteen and three months. When his parents become aware of his errant behavior, they take him to the Court and he is given lashes. If he repeats this behavior and his parents take him again to the court, he is judged as a "rebellious" son and is put to death by stoning.

Gemara: Although this child had only stolen a small amount of money to purchase the meat and wine to satisfy his desire, he is put to death because "It is better that he should die in an innocent state than in a more liable state." If this behavior should continue to satisfy his addiction, he will consume the assets of his father and ultimately even resort to murder to support his addiction.

"But if there will be a man who hates his fellow, and ambushes him and rises up against him, and strikes him mortally and he dies..."

Rashi: Because of the initial hate that he had for his fellow, he waited in ambush for him to commit murder. From here, we see that if one transgresses a less severe *mitzvah*, it will cause him to transgress a more severe *mitzvah*. Since he was in violation of the negative commandment which forbids one to hate one's fellow Jew, it ultimately caused him to shed blood.

This is the reason the verse predicates the act of murder with the mention of "a man who hates his fellow." The *Torah* is teaching us that it is not the hate itself that festers within the person that ultimately causes him to commit murder, but rather, when one transgresses the negative commandment of harboring hatred against one's fellow, it creates an intense negative spiritual energy that leads one to ultimately commit murder based on the principle of *aveira goreres aveira* (one sin brings to another).

Similarly, the rebellious child who initially violates the commandment of "Thou shall not steal..." is drawn to gluttonous behavior that will ultimately lead him to commit murder. We see once again the actualization of the principle of *aveira goreres aveira* (one sin brings to another).

"You shall be holy (*Kedoshim t'hyu*)"

Midrash: Since the essence of "holiness" is something that is removed from the physical, the Jew should remove himself from the things that are permitted to him. One should therefore only partake in what is necessary to maintain his existence and refrain from excess.

Ramban: A person can behave in the most detestable manner within the context of everything that is permitted. A person can live as a hedonist and be fully indulgent in everything that is permitted and have no relevance to holiness. If one should live in this manner, he will be in violation of the positive commandment of "You shall be holy."

Ramban: The child who steals from his parents to indulge in the meat and wine assumes the status of the "rebellious child" because he violated the positive commandment of "You shall be holy." The rebellious child not only violated the negative commandment of stealing which precipitated the cycle of "*aveira goreres aveira*," but he also violated the positive commandment of "You shall be holy."

The *Torah* specifically states that the laws of the rebellious child pertain only to a child that is between the age of thirteen and thirteen and three months. If he would behave in this manner after this age, he is not put to death. Based on the principle that he should die in a more innocent state rather than a more culpable state, why should he not be put to death at any age? His behavior at any age should indicate that he has developed an addiction that will lead to murder.

At the age of thirteen, when the male enters adulthood he is free of sin because prior to that time he was not liable as a minor. However, at the beginning of his adulthood, when he is meant to advance and secure his spirituality, if he violates commandments that pertain to a "rebellious child," it will have an irreversible and destructive effect on his spirituality. It is only because his spirituality was not initially secured that the principle of "*aveira goreres aveira*" would have the most serious tragic effect.

G-d's Unlimited Beneficence to the Jew

The *Torah* delineates a number of commandments that are presented in succession.

Midrash: The reason the *Torah* presents these *mitzvos* in succession is to teach us the principle of "the performance of one *mitzvah* draws one to perform another *mitzvah* (*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*).

When one performs a *mitzvah* it creates a dynamic that draws the individual to perform another *mitzvah*. In addition to the spiritual dynamic caused by "*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*," it is also the mechanism through which G-d provides the individual with the material context to perform the next *mitzvah*. Most *mitzvos* that a Jew performs requires a physical setting in order to actualize them.

"If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the road... You shall surely send away the mother...and you will prolong your days. If you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof...You shall not sow your field with a mixture,...You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey..."

Midrash: If one performs the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird to take its young or its eggs, one will merit prolonged days. The juxtaposition of the next *mitzvah* that is mentioned teaches us that the previous

mitzvah that was performed will cause another *mitzvah* to come about, namely, the *mitzvah* of building of a parapet on one's roof.

How is one to fulfill this *mitzvah* if one does not have the means to build a new house?

G-d will provide him with the means to build a house so that he may fulfill the *mitzvah* of building a parapet. We see that the performance of a *mitzvah* not only presents the opportunity for one to perform another *mitzvah*, but G-d also provides the material setting to perform that *mitzvah*.

There is a negative commandment of not planting grains adjacent to a vineyard. If one does not own a vineyard or a wheat field, how can one perform this *mitzvah*?

G-d will provide him with the field and vineyard to allow him to fulfill this *mitzvah*.

There is another negative commandment that one is not permitted to plow a field by working two species of animals together such as a donkey and an ox. If one does not have a donkey or an ox, G-d will provide him with the ox and donkey to fulfill the *mitzvah*.

We see from the juxtapositions of the various *mitzvos* the principle of "The performance of one *mitzvah* draws one to the performance of another." At each juncture of this process, G-d will provide the material means to facilitate the fulfillment of that particular *mitzvah*.

Midrash: Whenever the *tzaddikim* supplicate G-d, they ask that G-d should grant their request gratis (matnas chinam). *Tzaddikim* understand that in essence they cannot ascribe their achievements to their own efforts because G-d is the One who provides everyone with the ability, context, and means to do anything.

When one performs a *mitzvah*, G-d says that He owes nothing to anyone and He is not obligated to reward a person for his achievement. If one circumcises his son, it is only because G-d provided him with the son to be able to perform the *mitzvah* of circumcision.

Therefore, when *Moshe* beseeched G-d to allow him to enter into the Land, he asked that G-d should allow him to do so gratis since he understood that all his merits and achievements cannot be credited to himself.

Despite the fact that *Moshe* was the greatest Jew to ever live, he understood that G-d did not owe anyone anything. G-d provides the context as well as the

means to fulfill a *mitzvah* based on the principle of "*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*."

Gemara: Everything is predestined, except for the fear of heaven. One only has the choice to do the Will of G-d or not; anything outside of this is predestined. One's innate capabilities, financial status, and physical setting are all areas that are unaffected by one's choice since they are predestined. However, one's choice precipitates physical settings to be able to perform the *mitzvah*.

If this is so, seemingly the house that needs a parapet or the child that needs to be circumcised is a direct consequence of one's actions and initiative. If this is so, then seemingly G-d does owe the individual reward.

This is similar to an employee and employer relationship in which the employer agrees to pay the worker an outstanding wage for a simple task. Although the employer is bound by the agreement; nevertheless, entering into this contract is clearly a confirmation of the generosity of the employer.

One's reward for the performance of a *mitzvah* is so overwhelmingly great and surpasses anything that the individual provides for the *mitzvah*. G-d owes nothing to anyone because the actual framework of the agreement is provided for by G-d.

Prioritizing One's Life

"If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother..., and they discipline him, but he does not hearken to them, then his father and mother shall grasp him and take him out to the elders of his city and the gate of his place. They shall say to the elders of his city..."

Gemara: The child assumes the status of the "rebellious" son only after he steals from his parents to buy a measure of meat and wine to satisfy his desire. When his parents become aware of his errant behavior, they take him to the Court and he is given lashes. If he should repeat this behavior, and his parents take him again to the court, he is judged as a "rebellious" son and is put to death by stoning.

Mishna: The incident of the "rebellious son" never actually happened and will never come to be. It is

because it is not possible to meet all the criteria that are set forth by the *Torah* to establish the child as a “rebellious son.”

Mishna: If this is so, why is the portion of the rebellious son stated in the *Torah*? It is for the purpose to delve into it and to receive reward for its study.

Rabbeinu Bachya: If the purpose of this portion is to provide the individual with the opportunity to study *Torah*, then why is this subject matter chosen regarding the *mitzvah* of studying *Torah*?

Rabbeinu Bachya: There is a special lesson to be taken from the portion of the rebellious son. We learn to what degree one must be dedicated to G-d and demonstrate one’s love for Him.

The *Torah* describes in detail a situation in which a mother and father take their son to the Rabbinic Court to be prosecuted and reprimanded for his glutinous and defiant behavior. They take their son to receive the punishment of lashes, despite the fact that it is severe and debilitating. They also understand the consequence of their decision - that he will be put to death if he repeats this behavior.

Although their child’s errant behavior could have been dismissed and attributed to immaturity or a phase in his life, they chose to heed the directive of the *Torah*. The parents understood that if their child’s behavior should continue he will ultimately consume their assets and he will resort to murder to support his habit.

In the case of the rebellious child, the parents take their child to be put to death and thus suppress their natural love for their child because of their love for G-d. Their love for G-d supersedes everything else that they value and cherish.

Rashbah: The parents’ initiative regarding their child is the equivalent of *Avraham*’s demonstration of his love for G-d through the *Akeidah*. Just as *Avraham* was willing to sacrifice his son as an offering for the sake of G-d because of his overwhelming love, so too do these parents give up their son because of their love of G-d.

The *Akeidah* was the most difficult of the ten tests that were presented to *Avraham* our Patriarch. The test was meant to see if *Avraham*’s love for G-d would surpass his love for his most beloved child *Yitzchak*, who was born to him in his old age. As difficult as it was, *Avraham*

was able to subordinate his own understanding and conflicts of interest to do the Will of G-d.

Similarly, the lesson to be learned from “rebellious son” is that every Jew must be willing to sacrifice for the sake of G-d by submitting to His Will despite the personal consequences. Whenever the *Torah* dictates a certain course of action, then one must adhere to it.

This is the meaning of the statement in the *Mishna* “to delve into it, to receive reward.” Very often in life, one may be confronted with situations in which he must make a decision; however, because of one’s own conflicts it is difficult to choose the proper direction.

There is an expression, “Nothing stands in the way of one’s will.” If one truly desires and values something, he will not have difficulty pursuing it to any length. No sacrifice is too great for the one who wishes to fulfill his desire. Thus, if one truly loves G-d and wants to do His Will, then nothing will interfere with that objective.

One of the negative commandments of the Ten Commandments is, “You shall not covet your fellow’s house; you shall not covet your fellow’s wife, his manservant, his maidservant...”

Bais Halevi: If the *Torah* prohibits one from taking an action such as stealing, one is able to control himself not to do so; however, regarding coveting something that is not his own, because it is an emotion that rests in one’s heart, how can one control this feeling?

He explains it with an allegory. If one overwhelmingly desires something that he sees is on the other side of a river that is frozen, he will start to walk across the river to attain what he desires. However, if he senses that the ice under his feet suddenly begins to crack and there is a possibility of him falling through to his death, he will immediately lose all interest in what he desired.

Why is this so? It is because at that moment the individual values his life more than anything else.

Similarly, if one values his relationship with G-d and continuously desires to cleave to Him, one will not desire something that is forbidden to him because he understands that pursuing this desire will cause him to become distant from G-d, which is contrary to his primary desire.

Pirkei Avos: “Consider three things and you will not come to sin: From where you came, to where are

you going, and before whom you will stand to give a judgment and reckoning...”

If one prioritizes his life in this manner and establishes it as his principle, then anything regarding one’s spirituality will not be considered to be too difficult.

Honesty and Truth, the Guarantors of Existence

“A perfect and honest weight shall you have...so that your days shall be lengthened on the Land that Hashem, your G-d gives you. For an abomination of Hashem....who do this”

The *Torah* juxtaposes to this the portion, the portion of *Amalek*.

Rashi: If you falsified your weights and measures, you should be concerned that the enemy will come upon you as it states, “The scales of deceit are considered an abomination to G-d...the deliberate ones will come and bring disgrace.”

We learn from the juxtaposition of the portion of *Amalek* that if one falsifies weights and measures he becomes vulnerable to the enemy.

Gemara: “The signet of G-d is truth.” The only way one could have relevance and a relationship to G-d is to emulate His signet of Truth. As it states, “He is the faithful G-d and He has no iniquity.”

If one falsifies weights and measures, he is behaving in a manner that is contrary to G-d’s signet. Thus his dishonest behavior is considered an abomination to G-d. Consequently, the individual’s relationship with G-d is severed, and he becomes vulnerable to the archenemy of G-d, who is *Amalek*.

“*Amalek* came and battled Israel in *Rephidim*.”

Midrash: The reason the *Torah* identifies the location of the battle with *Amalek* is to allude to the cause of the vulnerability of the Jewish people to *Amalek*. The

word “*Rephidim*” alludes to the fact that the Jewish people’s *Torah* study and *mitzvah* observance was done in a haphazard manner. As a result of not being fully engaged in the *Torah*, the Jewish people became vulnerable to attack.

The *Torah* in its essence is identified as “truth.” King Solomon writes in Proverbs regarding *Torah*, “Acquire truth, do not sell it.” *Torah*, which is G-d’s wisdom, is the absolute essence of truth. When one detaches from the *Torah*, he becomes vulnerable to *Amalek* because he has distanced himself from truth, which is the signet of G-d.

Midrash Tanchuma: Mankind was given the obligation to render justice because G-d wants that there should be “justice below,” as it states, “If there is justice below (on the terrestrial level) there is no need for Justice from above (Divine Retribution).”

However, if mortal justice is not meted out properly and truthfully, then G-d will introduce His Divine Justice, which is tragic and devastating. No one is perfect enough to withstand Divine Justice because there is no mercy. Thus, a judge who is corrupt is culpable beyond the financial loss to the defendant, because he is the one who has precipitated Divine Justice upon existence. This principle of justice does not only pertain to the court system, but also within the life of every Jew.

The honest weight and measures is also considered to be justice. If one is dishonest in this area, it will also activate Divine Justice. Consequently one becomes vulnerable to the attack *Amalek*.

There is a positive commandment to give one’s fellow the benefit of the doubt. If one performs this *mitzvah* properly, it is considered that he had rendered a proper judgment. However, if one does not give the benefit of the doubt to his fellow when he should, he will bring about Divine Justice.



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