

INSIGHTS from the SEDRA

Insights from the Sedra is a project of the Scholar's Kollel of Great Neck. It aims to provide several questions and answers about the Sedra, culled from various commentaries, including the following: Baal Haturim, Darash Moshe, Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, Torah Treasures by Dov Furer, Wellsprings of Torah by Alexander Friedman, and Kol Dodi by Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Great Torah Lights by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman, Something To Say by Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser, The Vilna Gaon, Growth Through Torah by Zelig Pliskin and The Call of the Torah.

**INSIGHTS from the SEDRA for the year 5783 is being dedicated by
Ruvane & Stephanie Vilinsky in memory of Tzvi Ben Yakov & Shimon Ben Pinchus z"l**

כי תצא למלחמה על אויבך

"When you will go out to war against your enemies..." (21:10)

Metaphorically, the war mentioned in this verse is the war we wage against our base instincts, our *yetzer hara*. "When you go into war against your enemies," – when you wage war against your *yetzer hara*, "Hashem, your G-d will give you victory" – because he who takes the first step in purifying himself, receives help from Above. "And you will take captives," – you will recapture the "prisoners" that the *yetzer hara* cunningly has taken from you, meaning, all your sins will be converted into merits. For according to *Chazal*, *teshuvah*, repentance, has the power of turning sins into merits. (Shelah, *Iturei Torah*)

איננו שמע בקול אביו ובקול אמו

"He does not listen to the voice of his father and his mother." (21:18)

According to the *Talmud* (*Sanhedrin* 71b), the laws of the *unruly and rebellious son* only apply if the voices of the mother and father are equivalent. If the father and mother differ in their ways and the son is witness to this kind of fighting between them, it is unfair to judge him for he is not at fault for having become *unruly and rebellious*.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky points out that the behavior of parents within the home is the most fundamental educational lesson that a child receives. When a child sees his father and mother acting in a manner that is totally consistent with the beliefs that they profess and which they urge him to follow, then there is reason to assume that this child will follow in their paths. But if all he sees is fighting and hypocrisy, not only will he not follow them, but we have no right to judge him for he is not at fault. (*Parsha Anthology*)

ובערת הרע מקרבך וכל ישראל ישמעו ויראו

"And you shall banish the evil from your midst and all of Israel will hear and be afraid..." (21:21)

Rav Menachem Mendel of Vorka writes that before one offers remonstrance in an attempt to improve the behavior of others, let him first make sure that he has banished all evil from himself.

Only then will others hear and accept what he says. Our verse hints to this principle, for first it speaks of banishment of evil *from your midst* and only afterwards does it say, *and all of Israel will hear and be afraid.* (Torah Anthology)

הקם תקים עמו

“Lift it up with him...” (22:4)

Sfas Emes noted that the greater the effort that one makes on behalf of another, the more positive will be the effect that this *mitzvah* has on one’s character development. This is alluded to in the verse where we read that one is *to lift it up with him*; i.e. by providing assistance to a friend, one *lifts* oneself up as well. *Chazal* pointed this out for when they commented (*Vayikra Rabbah* 34:10): The pauper does more for the wealthy man than the wealthy man does for the pauper.

(Torah Anthology)

וכתב לה ספר כריתת

“And he wrote her a bill of divorce...” (24:1)

QUESTION: Why is the bill of divorce document called a “*get*”?

ANSWER: The word גט – *get* has the numerical value of twelve. It is called a *get* to allude to the fact that it should be written in no more than twelve lines. Though the number twelve can be reached by many other combinations of Hebrew letters, the combination of ט-ג was selected because throughout the entire Torah, there is no word in which the letters *gimmel* and *tet* are together. Since this document is the Torah-prescribed method of separation, it is appropriately called *get* because these two letters are always separated from one another in the Torah and represent the opposite of unity and peace.

(Likutei Sichot)

זכור את אשר עשה עמלק

“Remember what Amalek did to you...” (25:17)

Why is the command of remembering the viciousness of *Amalek* written in singular, and not “*Zichru...lachim...*” etc., in plural?

Amalek attacked the Jews when they camped in *Rephidim*. The word “*Rephidim*” is related to the root word of “*pirud*” – disunity and separation. When the Jewish people are not united, it is possible for *Amalek* to creep in. Therefore, the Torah says in singular, “*Zachor*” – remember – what *Amalek* did *lecha* – to you – to stress that *Amalek* attacked when there was disunity and when everyone was concerned only about himself. By remembering this, all will live in harmony and thus prevent a renewed attack by *Amalek*.

(R’ Simcha Bunim of P’shischa)

SHABBAT SHALOM!

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