



MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 4:27 PM

Vol. 17 Issue 3

By Rabbi Meir Weiss

WHAT IS DRIVING YOUR DECISION?

Parshas Chayei Sarah

In this week's Parsha, Avraham sends Eliezer to find a wife for Yitzchak. Eliezer replies to the command by asking Avraham, "Perhaps the woman I find will be unwilling to come back to *Eretz Cna'an*, what should I do in such an event?" Rashi comments that the word 'אויל' "perhaps" is typically spelled with a *vav*, but in this case it is spelled without the *vav*. Thus the word can be read 'ל' "to me". The Medrash explains that this hints to the fact that Eliezer had a daughter and he was hoping that it would be possible for his daughter to marry Yitzchak if his mission didn't work out.

In the parsha, the discussion between Eliezer and Avraham is recounted twice, once when it occurred, and once more when Eliezer asked Besuel and Lavan to let Rivka return with him. Eliezer retells this conversation he had with Avraham. The spelling of the word 'אויל' is missing the *vav* only in the retelling of the story later in the parsha. When the conversation first occurs, the spelling is regular. The commentators are puzzled. Why is the spelling not changed the first time around. Isn't that when the side discussion of Eliezer's daughter would have occurred? Why is it only hinted in the retelling of the conversation?



The Dubnoh Maggid explains that the reason it belongs later is because initially Eliezer needed to ask Avraham what would happen in such an eventuality. So at that time it was an innocent question. Later however, when trying to secure the shidduch for Yitzchak, he should not have told Besuel that perhaps the girl won't want to return with him. By doing so he opened the door for them to refuse his request. Chazal are telling us that the only reason for him to retell that detail was because he preferred that they wouldn't agree to send Rivka, and perhaps his daughter could take her place. Others explain that, on the contrary, Eliezer was trying to persuade Besuel to agree to send Rivka. He was telling him how wonderful Yitzchak is, so much so that he had wanted Yitzchak for his own daughter! This was retold by Eliezer to convince Besuel to send Rivka with him to marry Yitzchak.

Continue on the other side

MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler gives a different answer which adds an insight into human nature. He explains that when we have a personal interest, something to gain in an endeavor, we often cannot see how it affects the things we do. Earlier in the parsha, when Avraham initially spoke with Eliezer, the question that Eliezer asked was at a time when he thought there was a possibility of his daughter marrying Yitzchak. What he didn't realize was that this question, which seems innocent, was really coming from his unspoken, almost subconscious desire to have Yitzchak for his daughter. Eliezer was blinded by what he was looking to gain, and he didn't realize the true source of his "innocent question". That is why the word is spelled normally during the initial conversation, because he didn't realize it was anything but innocent. Later in the story, as he told Besuel what transpired, he had already seen the miraculous nature of his trip. The journey was miraculously short, the sign he asked Hashem for was instantly fulfilled, and he immediately found a member of Avraham's family. At this point it was clear to Eliezer that Rivka would be the wife of Yitzchak. He had no more thoughts that perhaps his daughter would be chosen. Only when he didn't have a vested interest, no underlying ulterior motives, was he able to see his own actions with a clear perspective. Now, in the retelling, he recalled what he asked Avraham and realized that the question was motivated by what he hoped to gain, and was not an innocent question. This is why the word is given an unusual spelling at the later point, because only then did he realize what was really behind his question.

We see from this insight how a person can be affected by ulterior motives without even being aware that they are a factor in his decisions. A person might make a decision with the intent of doing something positive, but may really be driven to do so by a less than noble concern. This is one of the reasons why it is important to follow the dictum of the Mishna, "עשה לך רב" make a Rav for yourself. We need to seek the guidance of our Rabbis before making important decisions in our lives. The objective perspective that they bring to the question at hand, coupled with their infusion of Torah knowledge which contains the will of Hashem, make them the best arbiter of life's many choices.

CHAYEI SARAH **SHABBOS ZEMANIM**

Friday, November 13

4:27 pm - Candle Lighting
4:30 pm - Mincha/Maariv
4:45 pm - Shkiya/Sunset

Shabbos, November 14

8:15 am - Shacharis
8:39/9:15 am - Latest Krias Shema
4:05 pm - Mincha
שלוש סעודות
4:45 pm - Shkiya/Sunset
5:40 pm - Maariv
5:57 pm - 72 minutes
6:30 pm - Masmid
7:30 pm - Rabbi Reisman