

BS"D

## It is Not Good for Man to be Alone

*Thus he will leave his parents*

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The other day you called to tell me that you wanted to take me off of your bank account (lehorid et haIpui Koach sheli mi heshboncha). Is this really appropriate? Is this permissible? Didn't I open this account, fund this account?? Or maybe it is actually OBLIGATORY to take me off now? What really is a newly married child's relationship to his or her parents?

I think we can gain deep insights from the first couple when they set out to start their new life. In the following short but powerful text of the coming together of Adam and Eve, there is important advice for every new couple.

### **בראשית פרשת בראשית פרק ב פסוק יח - כה**

**(יח) ויאמר יקוק אלהים לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו :**

(יט) ויצר יקוק אלהים מן האדמה כל חית השדה ואת כל עוף השמים ויבא אל האדם לראות מה יקרא לו וכל אשר יקרא לו האדם נפש חיה הוא שמו : (כ) ויקרא האדם שמות לכל הבהמה ולעוף השמים ולכל חית השדה ולאדם לא מצא עזר כנגדו :

(כא) ויפל יקוק אלהים תרדמה על האדם וישן ויקח אחת מצלעותיו ויסגר בשר תחתנה : (כב) ויבן יקוק אלהים את הצלע אשר לקח מן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם : (כג) ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה זאת :

(כד) על כן יעזב איש את אביו ואת אמו ודבק באשתו והיו לבשר אחד : (כה) ויהיו שניהם ערומים האדם ואשתו ולא יתבששו :

What an amazing piece of poetry. There is really so much depth to this story, so many important facets about human nature, about the human condition.

*What do you read here? What are your questions? What are your comments? What are your thoughts?*

The first and most fundamental piece of socio-psychology here is that it is not good for man to be alone. We need each other, we need other people (see Levinas), but more than anything, we need an ezer kenegdo. We need someone to be our life partner, a person, we can grow with a person with can confide in, a person we can rely on.

Did God really think man would find such a being within the animal kingdom? Of course not! God knows what man needs, but he also knows that man needs to

appreciate the woman he will find, he needs to realize that it is not an animal that he needs – that is, his wife is not to simply serve his animal needs. Man needs an ezer kenegdo. This is no simple being.

Man realizes this and so now God is ready to perform the great miracle of creation – he is going to make a being perfectly suitable to man. Adam, after having gone through the arduous process of dating and seeing that it is not so simple to find an ezer kengdo, realizes immediately that Eve is something very special. So explains the Hizkuni:

חזקוני (בראשית ב, יח) : "לא טוב היות האדם לבדו – מתחילה עלה במחשבה לעשות לו זוג, ולא מצא פתח לעשות עד לאחר קריאת השמות כדי שיתאוו לה ויחבבנה יותר."

What then is the epilogue of this wonderful love story? The two go walking off into the sunset. But it is not written that the two lovebirds simply left together. No. The text is much more powerful than that. It is written as a directive, for all future couples.

“Al Kein” – Because of this fact, that man and wife are of one flesh, are perfectly suited to join in life partnership, they MUST now leave their parents. “YAAZOV” this not a recommendation, this is an order.

Each of us was brought into this world to take part in the wondrous endeavor we call creation. It is the endeavor to make ourselves better and make our world better. Our parents, in the best case, give us the tools to set us on our way. We begin our awareness of this great endeavor and our personal responsibility when we become of age – bar/bat mitzvah. But we still remain under of parents close guidance. This, the Torah here tells us, all changes when we get married.

YAAZOV – the newlywed couple is now whole – a single, self-sufficient entity, ready and commanded to take part in creation as an independent unit (yehida atzmait)

The two of you must now realize that your parents, your family and your friends are all here for you, but only in supporting roles (betemicha velo behachtava). No one can tell you what to do, how to do, when to do. You can and should ask for advice, but you are in no way obligated, neither to ask the advice and certainly not listen to the advice of anyone but your selves.

Is this disrespectful? Absolutely not. When the parent gives his married children advice, they can say, I understand but have decided differently. The parent must not be insulted but rather rejoice – Nitzhuni Banai, Nitzhuni Banai! Just as God rejoiced when the Sanhedrin took full responsibility for their decisions and did not rely, indeed, rejected, the voice from heaven, so too should parents rejoice when their kids have the wherewithal to make their own decisions.

You are beholden to each other and must remain beholden ONLY to each other. The reason is simple. With each other's support you will withstand any adversity. Without each other's support, halila, you will be unable to do anything (no matter how much external support you have as individuals). You must never, ever, side with your parents, your friends, or anyone – you must be beholden only to each other. Again, you can and should listen to advice, you can and should bring voices you trust into your discussions and considerations – but these voices must always remain voices of advice.

And that brings us to the closing verse – they were naked but not ashamed. You are to consult only each other. You are to reveal to each other, and to each other alone – your deepest fears, loves and desires, you are not to be ashamed but just the opposite, you are to create a single entity to actualize yourselves and fulfill your unique role in creation.

May you grow together, strengthen each other – open private bank accounts together – and conquer the world together.

Mazal Tov.