



Dayan Yehonoson Hool

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Parshah

THE SANCTITY OF THE JEWISH HOME

When the Torah relates in this week's *parsha* that Moshe Rabbeinu counted the Jews in the wilderness, it lists the head families of each tribe, who were ultimately the forbearers of the whole of Klal Yisroel. To each family name, the letter ה was added at the beginning of the name and the letter י was added at the end. Thus, the descendants of Reuven's oldest son, תנוך, are referred to as משפחת התנוכי, and the descendants of his second son, פלוא, are referred to as משפחת הפלואי, and so on for all the other families in Klal Yisroel.

Rashi explains that Hashem added the letters of His Name at the beginning and end of each family's name, to testify that they were genuine Jews. The nations of the world wondered if all the children born of Jewish mothers in Egypt were really the children of Jewish fathers. If the Egyptians had complete domination over the Jews themselves, they claimed, surely they must have had full control over the Jews' wives too. So Hashem added His Name to each family to testify that none of them were born of Egyptian fathers. Incredibly, every one of the Jewish women in Egypt remained unviolated by the Egyptians.

Actually, there was one exception. The Torah tells us that there was a man travelling with Klal Yisroel who was born of a Jewish woman, but his father was Egyptian. He was the notorious blasphemer, as described at the end of Parshas Emor. Rashi there, quoting the *medrash*, tells us that his mother was the only one out of the whole of Klal Yisroel who was violated by an Egyptian. What caused this to happen? Rashi says that the name the Torah gives for her alludes to the root of her downfall. "Shlomis bas Divri." She was a woman who spoke to all and sundry, saying "Shalom to you" and "Shalom to you," to whoever she met. Chatting with everyone she met and being over familiar in an immodest manner, led her to disaster.

All others though, had Hashem's Name added to their family name to attest that their children were of pure lineage.

But why did Hashem add this particular Name, ה-י, to all the Jewish families?

Rashi quotes the *possuk* in Tehillim (122):

שבטי י-ה עדות לישראל

Klal Yisroel are referred to as שבטי י-ה, which is a testimony that they are all of distinguished Jewish lineage.

The reason for this is that, as the Gemora (Sotah, 17a) tells us,

איש ואשה, זכר, שכינה ביניהם

If a husband and wife are meritorious, the Shechinah dwells together with them. Rashi there explains that Hashem's Name is embedded in the Hebrew terms referring to man and woman, with the י in the man's name, איש, and the ה in the woman's name, אשה.

So, the letters of this Name of Hashem combine when a man and woman live together in holiness and purity. That is why Hashem added the letters of this Name to each family in Klal Yisroel, to testify that their children are all of impeccable lineage, and are worthy of the Divine Presence.

But that leads to another question. Why are the letters reversed, with a ה at the beginning of the name of the family and a י at the end?

The *navi* Yeshayahu declares:

כי ביה ה' צור עולמים (ישעיהו, כו:ד)

The *gemora* (Menochos, 29b) interprets this verse to mean, "For Hashem created worlds with the name ה-י."

The *gemora* goes on to say that this world was created with the letter ה, whereas the World to Come was created with the letter י.

As we saw earlier, the word אשה has the ה of Hashem's Name in it, whereas the word איש has the letter י of the Name in it. A woman is more closely involved in building the marital home in this world, and the man is more closely involved in building their home in the Next World. It is for this reason

that the *gemora* (Bava Metzia, 59a) advises a man to pay careful attention to his wife's opinion regarding worldly matters, but for the husband to provide leadership when it comes to spiritual pursuits.

The *gemora* (Bava Basra, 16a) tells us that the only antidote to the *yetzer horah*, the evil inclination, is the Torah itself. But the *mitzvah* of learning Torah applies primarily to men. What remedy are women, who are not enjoined to learn Torah, provided with to overcome the *yetzer horah*?

R' Yaakov Galinsky *zt"l* related that he once met R' Wolf, the famed educator of Bnei Brak, coming out of the Chazon Ish's abode, and he told him that he had posed just this question. The Chazon Ish, he said, had replied, "The antidote that women have to the *yetzer horah* is the *mitzvah* of *tznius*, modesty." Modesty in dress, behaviour and action is a trait that women must acquire, perhaps more than men, in order to overcome the *yetzer horah*.

One woman in Egypt failed, by acting immodestly. But every single other woman in Klal Yisroel rose to the occasion, and thus Hashem testifies, by adding His Name to every family, that the Jewish marital home is worth of השראת השכינה. Moreover, says R' Galinsky, He places the ה at the beginning, rather than the י, to show that it was particularly in the merit of the righteous women of Klal Yisroel that were built the foundations of the Jewish nation, the שבטי י-ה. And as it was then, so it shall be that through the virtues of the righteous Jewish women we will merit the final redemption.

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2. The mitzva of *yerusha*, inheritance, is in *Parshas Pinchas*. It states that all the inheritance goes to the sons and not to the daughters. How can people nowadays apportion their inheritance different to this?