

Ki Seitzei 2013

1.

Why longevity specifically by kivud av v'eim and sheluach hakan?

Nachlas Tzvi page 498

"You shall surely send away the mother (bird) and take the young for yourself, (sheluach hakan) so that it will be good for you and will prolong your days." (22, 7)

"שלח תשלח את האם ואת הבנים תקח לך למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים."

Why does the Torah guarantee longevity for performing the specific mitzvahs of kivud av v'eim and sheluach hakan? There is a concept related in the Mishna in mesechas Sota (8b) called מדה כנגד מדה (measure for measure). Longevity is granted to a child who respects his parents based on the aforementioned principle. Meaning, **since this child respected his parents, he will live for a long amount of time in order that his children will respect him as well, measure for measure.** How then is one assured longevity for the seemingly insignificant act of sending away the mother bird? Rashi writes that **one who builds a house and also performs the mitzvah of sheluach hakan will perform other mitzvos as well.** This shtims (coincides) with the Mishna in Avos (perik four) which says מצוה גוררת מצוה, one mitzvah leads to another mitzvah. **These mitzvos will prolong his life.** He will buy a new house, resulting in another positive ripple effect of his performing another mitzvah, of building a fence around his roof in order to prevent people from falling. The net result is that the Torah provides one with long life in order that he can perform more mitzvos.

There are additional answers that are offered as well. The Gra (Chumash Hagra pages 316-317) explains that there are very few people who completely exemplify חסד (kindness) and גבורה (strength). Many people are able to excel with one of these attributes because it is in their nature. However, they aren't tzaddikim. One who excels in both is considered a tzadik. Performing kivud av v'eim requires חסד. The reason for this is simple; when ones parents get old the child must be merciful towards them. Sheluach hakan requires גבורה. The reason for this is obvious; taking children from their parents is cruel. Since Avraham exemplified חסד, his גבורה was therefore tested. The akedas Yitzchak was the ultimate test of Avraham's גבורה. The pasuk therefore states (Berashis 22, 12) that Hashem only knew after the akeda that Avraham was a God fearing individual. **One who properly performs both of these mitzvos truly mastered both חסד and גבורה. When one masters both, he shows his sincerity and completeness of serving Hashem. Since it is so difficult to do both, one who does so should surly be rewarded with longevity.**

The Maharal (Gur Arya) explains that when one performs kivud av v'eim and sheluach hakan, he understands the essence of the world and what it is about. Understandably and logically he should get longevity. Performing kivud av v'eim essentially requires one to acknowledge and contemplate that he wouldn't be here had it not been for his parents. Sheluach hakan also requires one to be merciful and recognize the essence of this world.

2.

Fences

Penenim Meshulchan Gevoah pages 176-177

“If you will build a new house, you shall make a fence for your roof, so that you will not place blood in your house if a fallen one falls from it.” (22, 8)

"כי תבנה בית חדש ועשית מעקה לגגך ולא תשים דמים בביתך כי יפל הנפל ממנו."

The Gemara in Chulin (136a) relates that “you shall make a fence for your roof” comes to exclude a Shul and a Beis Medrish. The roofs of Shuls and Yeshivos aren’t obligated to be fenced. What is the explanation of this Halacha? Even though Shul’s and Yeshivos aren’t called a house and therefore wouldn’t be obligated to have a fence, nevertheless a potential danger must be dealt with. Just as it is prohibited to dig and leave an open hole in a public domain, so too, one must eliminate the potential danger of a fenceless roof. So why is it that the roofs of Shuls and Yeshivos are exempted from being fenced? The Chazon Ish explains that fenceless roofs aren’t in the category of potential dangers or stumbling blocks that the Torah obligates us to guard. Anything that is the norm to be careful about; the Torah didn’t require us to guard ourselves from. This is why it is permissible to climb a tree or to build a roof, even though the roof is fenceless, because it is the responsibility of the climber and builder to be careful of a potential danger. According to the aforementioned explanation it would be fitting for all fenceless roofs to be permitted, not just the roofs of Shuls and Yeshivas. But, the roofs of houses the Torah insightfully designated a specific obligation to be roofed. Therefore, only what the Torah obligated, we must abide by.