

The CHASSIDUS PERSPECTIVE with Reb Yoel Kahn

Prepared by
Rabbi Shraga Dovid Homnick

One of the *pesukim* in *parshas Ki Seitzei* speaks of a husband writing his wife a "*sefer krisus*," a bill of divorce. The legal details alluded to in those words are actually paradoxical: On the one hand, there's "*krisus*," the severance and utter termination of marital bonds, yet "*sefer*" in the singular indicates that the *get* must be written entirely on one sheet, a display of oneness which surpasses even that of a *sefer Torah*!

The phenomena we encounter in our world emanate from a higher reality, and thus man and wife are in fact a representation of the relationship between *Hashem* and us, as exemplified in *Shir Ha'shirim*. It therefore follows that the parallels extend to marriage and divorce as well.

WILL HE REMARRY US?

The *Gemara* states that *Knesses Yisroel* argued: Having 'divorced' us, *Hashem* no longer has a legitimate basis for his continued intervention in our misconduct! *Hashem's* response to this was: "*Ei zeh sefer krisus...?*" What divorce are you speaking of? Clearly both sides have a point here, and apparently arguments can both be made that we've been divorced and that we haven't.

Another *Gemara* on this topic asserts that *tshuva* has demonstrated the capacity to override a negative commandment of the *Torah*, since it's the reason that *Hashem* disregards the prohibition to 'remarry' us, His divorcee. However, a *Midrash* addressing this point differs and posits that the law barring remarriage only applies to an "*ish*," which *Hashem* is not. Which is it then? Is *Hashem* overruling the law or was He never under its jurisdiction?

"For a divorce to take hold, the woman must obtain the *get* outside of the husband's property. How is it ever possible to find oneself outside of *Hashem's* territory when His presence is everywhere?"

Finally, the tractate of *Gittin* begins with the overly specific case of a *get* being delivered by a messenger from overseas. Wouldn't it have made sense to first establish the basic contours of the

laws of divorce and *gittin* before discussing the case of a *shliach*, particularly one from overseas? Why avoid the main issues and focus immediately on an unlikely, secondary case instead?

MARRIED FOREVER

The truth is, however, that the laws in the revealed part of the *Torah* are actually mirroring a deeper, G-dly reality, and that's the case here as well.

Matan Torah was an act of *kiddushin*. "*Asher kidshanu b'mitzvosav*," our 'marriage' was enacted and is reinforced by way of *Torah* and *mitzvos*. Conversely, *aveiros* are acts which breach the union and sever the marriage. Yet *halacha* dictates that in order for a divorce to take hold, the woman must obtain the *get* outside of the

husband's property. How then is it ever possible to find oneself outside of *Hashem's* territory when His presence is everywhere?

Making the case that we're outside *Hashem's* domain and the 'divorce' has taken hold relies on an impression created by *Hashem's* concealment, but the truth is that on the deepest level, *Hashem* is forever present and our connection can never end, except superficially. We connect with *Hashem* through *Torah* both on a *galya* (revealed) level and on a *sasim* (concealed) level, and it seems possible for that revealed connection to be broken. This is why the *yetzer ha'ra* can argue, as is reflected in the exchange depicted in the *Gemara*, that our *aveiros* don't matter anymore because we've separated, like a divorced woman. Yet *Hashem* retorts, "What divorce?" since we've never truly left His domain, which would be impossible.



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ON A TRIP OVERSEAS

This is related to the discussion of the *get* from the husband overseas, which is along the lines of another *Midrash* which states that we are merely like a widow, but our 'husband' is really overseas and plans to return. Although we technically would still not be widowed were He 'alive,' even if he had no intention of returning, the point is that the connection is so deep that He can't help but ultimately 'return' in a revealed way. This is Hashem's promise that no Jew will be abandoned, even when it can appear otherwise.

The *mishna* in *Gittin* therefore speaks of the gentiles who were the '*shliach*' to exile and 'divorce' us: While they might be tempted to believe that they were simply acting based on superior warfare and weaponry, they must acknowledge ("*b'fanai nictav*") that they are merely the messenger for a greater entity, the 'husband.' They need to concede that they are acting on something the husband 'wrote,' but He's still out there and He plans to 'return.'

REVEALING THE DEEPER CONNECTION

We must therefore remain aware that the 'messenger' isn't actually responsible for our state of exile, and that the gentiles' spiritual source is actually aware that *Hashem* alone is responsible for our fate; hence there is in fact no real 'divorce.' We must recognize that the point of the entire exile is to rouse us to *tshuva* which results in a deeper bond than before.

Thus "*sefer krisus*" is double-edged: On the one hand it seems like a divorce, yet the oneness reflected in the single sheet transcends

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that of a *sefer Torah*. The *kiddushin* at *matan Torah* were the kind of bond which can tear and appear to be dissolved, but it is through *tshuva* that we discover that the "*krisus*" is really a "*sefer*," creating an even deeper connection than before.

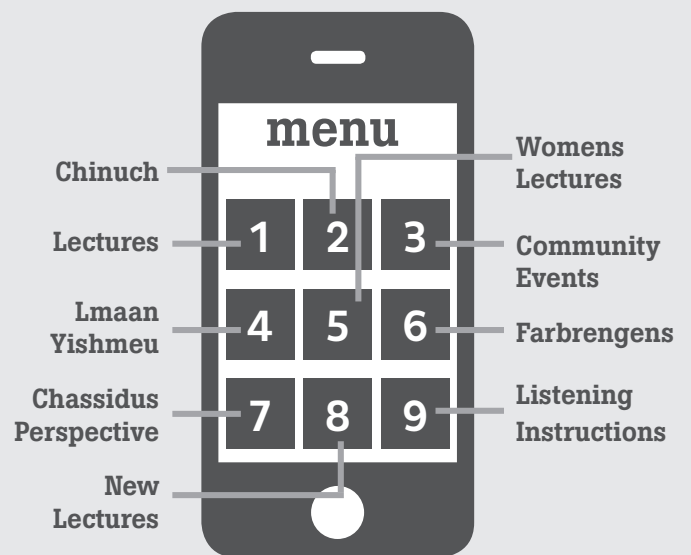
Finally, the *Gemara* which states that *tshuva* overrides the prohibition to remarry is focusing on the superficial sense that there is a divorce. The deeper truth as revealed in the *Midrash* is that none of this applies since *Hashem* isn't an "*ish*;" He's beyond the *tzimtzum* which creates the impression that divorce is possible. Thus, the *Midrash* is not at odds with the *Gemara* but instead uncovers the underlying, deeper connection. As the

Rambam's states that the *Torah* promises that we'll do *tshuva* as our exile ends, and we'll be redeemed immediately.

For further learning see 'לקוטי שיחות חלק ט' פרשת תצא ב'

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merkazanash.com
info@merkazanash.com
347.471.1770