



פרשת במדבר  
סיון תשפ"א

**TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOS**

**Part 1**

All men and women are invited to join us on Sunday night for a Tikkun Leil program in the Yeshivah Shule.

9:30pm with Rabbi Yossi Gordon

**Kol Yisrael - all Israel have a share in the World to come**

10:15pm-12:00am Feature Program

**The process of transmitting values to the next generation**

David Werdiger

**The grandparent-grandchild relationship in Halacha**

Yonason Johnson

**The Torah I received from my grandparents**

Panel of community sharing personal reflections, lessons and Torah values that they learned from their grandparents.

**Part 2**

All night Shiurim for men in the Kollel on a selection of interesting Torah topics

**Being Mechadesh in Torah**

Rabbi Y. Winner

**The Mitzvah of Bikurim**

Rabbi Z. Telsner

**Fascinating Psakim from some of the Rabbis we lost this year**

Rabbi M. Stern

**Kollel Semicha program panel**

Rabbi Y. Gopin & the YC Shluchim

**Likutei Sichos Shiur**

Rabbi C.T. Groner

2:00am Milchig refreshments sponsored by Mendel Schachter. Refreshments throughout the night sponsored by the Graj family.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



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**Becoming a beautiful bride**

The marriage of a Chosson and Kallah is a metaphor for the union between Hashem and the Jewish people. This cosmic marriage was forged at Matan Torah 3333 years ago and is renewed every year on Shavuos.

The concluding words of the Haftorah for Parshas Bamidbar, which is always read on the Shabbos before Shavuos, describe this marriage-bond.

וְאֶרְשֶׁתִּיךְ לִי לְעוֹלָם וְאֶרְשֶׁתִּיךְ לִי בְצֶדֶק וּבִמְשָׁפֵט וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים: וְאֶרְשֶׁתִּיךְ לִי בְאֱמוּנָה וְיָדַעַת אֶת ה'

*And I will betroth you to Me forever, and I will betroth you to Me with righteousness and with justice and with loving-kindness and with mercy. And I will betroth you to Me with faith, and you shall know the Lord.*

Many have the custom of reciting these Pesukim when wrapping the Tefillin strap around their middle finger. The wrapping of the Tefillin around the finger is like the symbolic wedding ring that unites us with Hashem.

But not all brides are alike. The Gemara asks 'how does one dance before the bride?'. Beis Hillel say that we praise every Kallah as 'a beautiful and graceful bride'. Beis Shammai challenge Beis Hillel, that this view is not always honest, asking 'What if the Kallah is blind or lame?' Instead, Beis Shammai teach that we describe each bride as she is.

The Alter Rebbe explains that amongst the Neshamos of the Jewish people, Hashem's Kallah, we find the same 2 types of bride. There is the beautiful bride and the bride who is spiritually lacking – lame or blind.

The word Kallah also means to yearn deeply כְּלָתָה נַפְשִׁי - my soul yearns longingly for Hashem. This is alluded to in Hashem's words to Chava "your desire will be to your husband". The Neshama, as a Kallah, has a deep and constant yearning to unite with her "Chosson" – Hashem, like a candle that ever-flickers upwards to unite with its source above.

The first stage of marriage is the act of Kiddushin. Whilst often translated as betrothal, it is effectively marriage itself. The act of Kiddushin is performed by the groom giving an item of monetary value to the bride. Universal Jewish custom is to use a ring.

By accepting Kiddushin, two things occur; the bride become forbidden to all other men, as she enters a unique and exclusive bond with her husband.

The same is true with Hashem's betrothal of the Jewish people. Through this betrothal, all others – meaning all other desires, materialism, physicality, - become forbidden to us, and we have the ability to unite with Hashem in an exclusive bond of oneness.

The circular ring represents an Or Makif, a transcendent, all-encompassing light, which like a ring, surrounds and encompasses all existence. Hashem betrothes us through Torah and Mitzvos which contain this light. We allude to this in the Bracha of each Mitzvah - Asher Kideshanu Bemitzvosav – using the word Kideshanu, related to Kiddushin.

It is easy for the 'beautiful Kallah' Neshama to unite in Kiddushin with Hashem. These are the Neshamos who constantly cleave to Hashem through the words of Torah and Tefillah with deep Kavanah. Concerning these Neshamos, Hashem says "I betroth you to me forever".

The spiritually-deficient bride is a Neshama which struggles to overcome the desires of the Nefesh Habehamis. They are not able to actualise the deep yearning for connection to Hashem and are instead led astray after worldly materialism and sin.

The bride who is "blind" or "lame" can still become betrothed and connected to Hashem. But she needs to take a different route to the Chuppah, which is alluded to in the continuation of the Posuk "and I will betroth you to Me with righteousness (Tzedek) and with justice and with loving-kindness and with mercy"

"Tzedaka brings redemption". Through Tzedaka and loving kindness, one redeems their Neshama from its captivity within the desires of the Animalistic soul, allowing the betrothal to take place.

But for those Neshamos which do not have the means to give Tzedaka, there is yet a third path. "And I will betroth you to Me with faith (Emunah), and you shall know the Lord".

Every Neshama possesses deep within it, a core of pure Emunah. By meditating on how Hashem's essential Being is beyond the worlds, we reveal this faith. With this, we can overcome the concealments of the Animalistic soul. The blemished Neshama become transformed to become a beautiful and graceful bride.

All of this is the Kiddushin. The finalisation of the marriage, where we become "one flesh" is the Nisuin. This is alluded to in the conclusion of the verse וְיִדְעַתְּ אֶת ה' ה'. The word Daas also describes an intimate union, as we find in relation to Adam 'knowing' Chava.

This deepest bond of the Neshama with Hashem, will be realised when Moshiach comes and the world will be filled with the "Daas" of knowing and uniting with Hashem, when the deepest dimensions of Torah will be revealed.

# The weekly Halacha analysis

## Pot plants on Shabbos and Yomtov

### Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Two of the Melachos of Shabbos which are relevant in the pot plant discussion are Kotzer (harvesting) and Zoreia (planting). Zoreia refers to planting seeds but also includes any activity which facilitates plant growth as discussed below. Kotzer is the act of detaching something which was growing from the ground.

Halacha distinguishes between an **עציץ מנוקב** pot which has holes in it, and an **עציץ שאינו מנוקב**, a pot which does not have holes in it. A pot which has holes in it is stricter and may present Torah prohibitions. Pots which do not have holes would only entail Rabbinic prohibitions and are therefore treated more leniently.

#### Picking from a pot plant

The Shulchan Aruch rules that it is forbidden to pluck a plant that was growing in a pot, even if the pot is not perforated. The Alter Rebbe explains based on the Gemora, that one who detaches from a plant in a perforated pot violates the Melacha biblically. If the pot does not have holes, this would be Rabbinically forbidden.

The presence of holes allows the roots of the plant to draw vitality from the ground. Therefore, it is considered as though one were detaching from ground itself. Even a small hole is sufficient to qualify as an **עציץ מנוקב** if it is large enough for a root to protrude. The hole does not need to be on the bottom of the pot. A hole on the side would be problematic as well. A hole which is above the roots is not of consequence.

#### Watering and enhancing growth

The Mishna Berura adds that just as one is forbidden to detach from a pot plant because of the Melacha of Kotzer, it is also forbidden to water a pot plant. Watering plants help them to grow and is a derivative of the Melacha of Zoreia, which includes any activity that increases growth.

The Poskim discuss other actions which facilitate increased plant growth. Fertilising the soil is also an act of Zoreia. Wiping dust from the leaves and straightening branches also constitute Zoreia according to some authorities.

If any of these activities were done to a plant in a perforated pot which was sitting on the earth, one would be Biblically liable. If the pot was not perforated, it would nonetheless be Rabbinically forbidden. According to the Aruch Hashulchan, actions of Zoreia are Biblically forbidden even in non-perforated pots. The distinction between perforated and non-perforated pots only applies to Kotzer.

A more relevant scenario is opening up curtains or blinds where doing so would expose the plants to sunlight. Direct sunlight is a key factor in plant

growth and could constitute a form of Zoreia. Opening a window which allows ventilation for the plant is also potentially like Zoreia.

If one's intention is for the plants to receive the light it is certainly forbidden to do so. Where one opens the curtains for light and air in the room, without intending to give light to their plants, the Poskim are generally permissive, even if the plants are growing in the ground itself. Whilst it is inevitable that opening the curtain exposes the plants to light (**פסיק רישא**), the effect of the sunlight is not immediately recognisable and no action is being done physically to the plant. This is in contrast to opening a window near candles where a prevalent wind would put the candles out and is thus forbidden.

Other Poskim are more stringent if the plants are in the ground or are in perforated-pots as this would constitute a Biblical prohibition **פסיק-רישא דאורייתא**. Harav Ovadiah Yosef writes that one should be Machmir if the pot plants are sitting on the window sill itself.

All of the above applies whether the pots are outside or indoors and even if the pot plants are in upper stories of a house or building.

#### The status of different types of pots

Wooden and earthenware pots are treated with the same status as a perforated pot, even if they do not have any holes in them. Ceramic doesn't prevent the plant's roots from drawing moisture from the ground. Wooden pots become moist from the ground and therefore do not obstruct the roots drawing vitality from the ground.

Metal, solid stone and glass pots which are impervious, are deemed as non-perforated pots (where there are no holes). There is a dispute concerning plastic pots and the practise is to be lenient. Concrete and tiles are treated like ceramic and therefore do not sufficiently interpose between the roots and the ground.

According to some Poskim, where the branches or leaves hang or extend over the edge of the pot, these plants are considered attached to the ground, even if the pot does not have holes and is made of metal. Moving such plants would have the same Dinim as moving perforated pots. Other Poskim maintain that the overhanging branches do not affect the Halacha which is solely dependent on the nature of the pot.

#### Moving Pot Plants

A perforated pot may not be removed from the ground (where it is considered attached) and placed indoors on a non-pervious floor surface or on top of a chair or table surface (where it is now considered detached). This would be considered

as Kotzer Mideoraisa.

Moving a perforated pot from a non-pervious surface (where it is considered detached) onto the earth or grass (where it is now considered attached) would constitute a Biblical act of Zoreia for the same reason.

If a perforated pot plant is hanging directly over the ground, it is still considered attached to the ground and able to draw nutrients from it. Therefore, technically, a plant in a perforated pot could be moved from hanging on a peg to the ground and vice versa as it remains "attached". Nonetheless, since this appears like uprooting and planting, it is Rabbinically forbidden. It is likewise forbidden to take a perforated pot that was on the ground and suspend it on a peg above the ground.

As these Halachos are complex and there is debate amongst the Poskim as to the status of various floor surfaces, pot plants with holes in them should not be lifted up or moved from one surface to another.

Dragging a perforated pot on the ground (in a manner that will not create a furrow) so that it remains touching the earth is permissible as it does not become detached from the ground.

A non-perforated pot may be moved in all of the cases above as it is never considered attached to the ground. Therefore, lifting the pot or moving it from one surface to another will not entail any issue of Kotzer or Zoreia.

#### Muktzah

Some Poskim consider living plants Muktzah even if they are potted. Other Poskim are lenient since the potted plants have the status of functional decorative items. Some Poskim treat the plants as a **כלי שמלאכתו לאיסור** which means that they may only be moved if their space is needed or to use them in a permissible manner e.g. to make a Mechitza or as decoration.

Even according to the opinions that pot plants are Muktzah, they may be moved **כלאחר יד** with a Shinui e.g. with one's foot, elbow etc. provided that there is no issue of Zoreia or Kotzer as per the discussion above.

If the pot plant tips and soil is spilled, the soil is Muktzah. Nonetheless if it is in a room which is being used and is very unsightly, it may be swept up under the leniency of **של רעי**. The soil cannot be returned to the pot as this is an issue of Zoreia as the extra soil enhances growth.

According to some Poskim, any pot plant which has fallen should not be picked up and reset as this may be a form of Zoreia.