

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ד PARSHAS AIKEV BRAZIL RAV

## A STITCH IN TIME WILL SAVE NINE

The *passuk* says (Devarim 7,14) לא יהיה עקר ועקרה There will not be an infertile male or female among you. However, the word עקר infertile reflects different interpretations. The Netziv interprets עקר - infertility as an individual whose life does not benefit the world. The Medrash interprets עקר to be referring to one's *telliah* that it should not be barren. The Baal Haturim says that עקר is in reference to Torah that one's Torah should not be infertile. We suggest an alternative *psbat* that one should not be infertile on Shabbos. This is alluded to in the *gematriah* עקר ועקרה is יום שבת (with the *kollel*).

What connects all these explanations together besides the general consensus that during one's lifetime he must be productive both physically and spiritually? The Medrash, when it introduces *Avraham Avinu*, describes him with the *passuk* לנו קטנה אחות we have a young sister. The Medrash explains that the word אחות which means sister also can be interpreted as איחה to sew and bring together a divided or a ripped piece of clothing איחה את הקרע. *Avraham Avinu* was the arch tailor of the world during his lifetime. Until his arrival on earth even those nations who believed in Hashem as creator of the universe, they also believed that Hashem had nothing to do with the world afterwards. He resided in the lofty heavens and left its functioning up to the constellations. There was no G-dly intervention and no interest from Hashem of what went on in His original project. It was as if there was a gigantic rip between heaven and earth. Avraham was the first קטנה, to mend and sew together this קרע by preaching a monotheistic religion which fostered the belief in one G-d and reverse the prevalent trend of belief in idolatry worship. This is what Rashi brings when Eleizer tells Lavan that his master (24,7) Avraham sent him on this mission.

*Am Yisrael* were chosen by Hashem to be His emissaries and ambassadors to live a life of Kiddush Hashem observing Hashem's Torah and thereby bring light into a world of darkness and *sheker*. No matter what culture we reside in we must adhere to the *mitzvos* and Hashem's wishes and be that lighthouse in the stormy seas guiding humanity towards the ultimate goal of ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד. If we fulfill our mission of living a divine life then we too as our forefather Avraham have sewn another stitch in the קרע that divided the upper world and the lower world. However, if we did not exert and dedicate ourselves to removing the letters of קרע the Big Divide, then we become the same letters of קרע which is עקר infertile. There is a popular Proverb "A stitch in time saves nine". If you sort out a problem immediately it will save a lot of extra work later on. In this *mamar* this *mussar* takes on a new understanding. As long as one does not bring Hashem into his life then he lives with the man made *sheker* of life. *Chazal* tell us that the seal of Hashem is *emes*. The end letters of the first three words of the Torah בראשית ברא אלקים are the letters of אמת. The Torah began with the letter ב because the unit of three letters will also add up to the multiple of nine בגד = 9, הוז = 18 = 9, חטי = 27 = 9, כלמ = 90 etc. The reason being that Torah possesses the seal of Hashem which is אמת which adds up to 441 = 9. Any multiple of 9 will add up to 9 if you break it down to its smallest number. Concerning *emes* the *passuk* says ואמת תכון לעד that truth lasts forever. שקר אין לו רגלים falsehood eventually disappears and has no continuity as we see from world history. That is why the Torah did not begin with the letter א for then the letters that are in the threesome unit would always add up to שקר 600 = 6. אבג = 6, דהו = 15 = 6, זחט = 24 = 6 etc. ונתן לנו תורת אמת.

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If a **Yid** fails to make the stitches that connect Hashem to His world, he will remain in the lower world and will absorb the tsunami of all the falsehoods and lies that cultures everywhere invent and crank out daily. By allowing this to happen he will pollute his mind and heart and even his soul with toxins that keep him separate from Hashem. He will become an עקר which has the letters of רע in it. He will slowly turn a "cold shoulder" to the **razton** of Hashem alluded to in the letters of קר and become the letter קוף a monkey, as the saying goes Monkey see monkey do. Just follow the "word" of the "absurd herd" and their decadent lusts for lifetime journey of unsatisfying meaningless bankrupt earthly pleasures and experiences.

The only way to avoid going through this world without becoming an עקר is by embracing the *avodah* of fixing the קרע between heaven and earth with the four achievements that *Chazal* have set before us and which are alluded to in the word עקר as we mentioned above.

If one has Torah and learns the Torah incorporating its message in his daily life then he will not be an infertile individual. אשר נתן לנו תורת אמת. 'Chazal say that Torah protects one from listening to his *yetzer harah* and causes him to sin. A tailor in *Lashon Hakodesh* is חייט. The letters of two **yuds** together in many Siddurim represent Hashem's two names, the one that begins with יהו' and the one that ends with a **yud** אדני. By being a tailor and stitching up the Big Divide one brings the "the two *yuds* in your daily life and Hashem's presence pushes away the possibility of חט sin to the two sides.

By focusing of fixing the קרע one will be a תועלת for the world by shining Hashem's light to disperse the darkness and evil that exist. One has the choice to become like a *mikveh* and with every righteous act bring *taharah* and purity into the world instead of defilement. However if he chooses not to be a tailor then he becomes הוא בלי תועלת לעולם as the *Neziv* wrote which is the *gematriah* of 960 equal to the minimum amount of Lugin needed to make a kosher *mikveh*. In the generation of the Flood Hashem had to bring over the defiled perverted impure earth an entire *mikveh* called a *Mabbul* because its habitants failed to connect to Hashem and lead a virtuous life and not an animal one.

Every *tefillah* must bring a greater closeness to Hashem, and a greater clarity of purpose and consciousness of Hashem. The Aramaic word for *tefillah* is צלותא which is from the word צליל which means clarity and pureness. Every step we make towards a deeper relationship with Hashem the more we make stitches and repair the Great Divide.

Connecting to Shabbos amounts to sewing Big Stitches. It is on this most holy day that we receive the clarity of the *neschama Yesairah*. We are given a longer *davening* to sing and praise Hashem with *deveikus* with *tefillos* such as an extended *Pesukai Dezimrah Nishmas Ail Adon* etc. it is a day of learning Torah even for those individuals who learn very little during the week, for Shabbos is a day where work ceases to exist and we have more free time. Shabbos is a day of **emes** as the last three words of ויכולו השמים attest to ברא לעשות where the last three letters of these words spell אמת. However, unlike the first words of בראשית where we also find the word אמת, this time in their alphabetical order. The word *emes* in order hints that on Shabbos one can cling to the *emes* naturally as *Chazal* tell us that if one asks an *Am Haaretz* on Shabbos if he took off his obligated *maaser* from his produce, he is believed, not so if he is asked on a weekday. Why? The fear of Shabbos is on him. He would not lie on Shabbos because it is a day of *emes*.

אברהם אבינו איחה קרע is the *gematriah* of השבת including the four letters. His spiritual DNA is embedded in all his descendants and therefore on Shabbos we are given a particular gravitation towards repairing the RIP.

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To really live like a Yid one must possess the awareness of being a full time tailor and sew the stitches bringing Hashem into all aspects of your life. The letter **yud** represents humility and *bittul* for it is the smallest letter in the *Aleph Beis*. A Conscientious Yid focuses on his stitches all the time with all his actions to check if they are in sync with the *sheker* world or aligned with the world of *emes*. By stitching the קרע as a full time tailor one adds the letter י to the קרע thereby spelling the word עיקר, for by doing so he makes Hashem's *kovid* the עיקר and primary drive in his life.

Back to our proverb. A Stitch in time saves nine. As we mentioned above the number **nine** corresponds to *emes*. If we make the *bechirah* of good over evil because we are conscious that Hashem desires a dwelling place primarily on earth בתחתונים שכינה עיקר (Bereishis 19,13) then that stitch on **time** will save the **nine** which is to reveal the *emes* of Hashem in the world.

Rav Brazil,

Gut Shabbos