

THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

BY: RAV YAAKOV WEINBERG ZT"l



About Rav Weinberg zt"l

HaRav Yaakov Weinberg, zt"l, was the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, Maryland from 1987 until his petira in 1999. For many decades he was a force for Torah in the Jewish world. He was the ultimate Rebbi, transforming the hearts and minds of thousands of talmidim with his unfaltering adherence to the truth of Torah and the words of Chazal. With his incisive analysis and penetrating insight, he developed generations of outstanding leaders. They follow his example in their understanding of Torah and in their responsibility for its transmission. His talmidim have been instrumental in creating communal organizations including shuls, schools and kiruv centers. Rav Weinberg was a sought-after advisor, involved in hundreds of private and public issues within the Jewish community. He often conducted the question and answer sessions at Torah Umesorah conventions where many benefited from his counsel. Rav Weinberg was married to Rebbetzin Shaina Chana Ruderman, the daughter of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman, zt"l, the founder of Ner Yisroel. He was the older brother and mentor of Rav Noach Weinberg, zt"l, the founder of Aish HaTorah.



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on the 40th day of the Omer.

The following is an adaption of a shiur that was delivered in Aish HaTorah in Jerusalem.

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The Rosh HaYeshiva had a distinctive and expressive style of speaking. The text has been edited extensively for readability. However, where necessary, the usual grammatical rules have been relaxed to retain the force and flavor of the Rosh HaYeshiva's delivery.

The Purpose of Marriage

The first thing the Torah tells us is that marriage is not for love. Those places in the world that approach the concept of marriage as marrying for love are making a very heavy bet that it's not going to work out. It could work out in spite of that because even if entered for the wrong motive, they might be doing the right things afterward. But, it certainly is a great handicap.

Now, let's explain a little bit of why this is so.

The essence of marriage has got to be non-selfish. Marrying for love is a selfish act. You're not going to build a successful marriage, which by its essence has to be built on a non-selfishness, through a completely selfish motive.

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Marriage has to be *not* a way for them to get pleasure in each other, but for them to assume together, the husband and the wife, an obligation and a duty specifically to a community, to humanity if you wish, but certainly to something outside of themselves.

Marriage by its very nature is to establish families, not just to satisfy each other. If it is to satisfy

**"דבש מצאת אכל דרך, פן תשבנו והקאתו."
[משלי, כה, טז]**

each other then it's doomed to failure sooner or later. Because satisfactions don't continue. You don't eat steak every day. If you eat steak every day you get kind of disgusted with steak. If you eat ice cream every day then ice cream will nauseate you. There's got to be in a marriage some purpose other than satisfying each other.

That purpose has to be that we've gotten together and are living together to do something together that we don't do individually. And to do it for the sake of outside of ourselves.

If marriage is to satisfy each other then it's doomed to failure sooner or later. Because satisfactions don't continue. If you eat steak every day you get kind of disgusted with steak. There's got to be in a marriage some purpose other than satisfying each other. That purpose has to be that we've gotten together and are living together to do something together that we don't do individually. And to do it for the sake of outside of ourselves.

Normally, that is to raise a family. Raising a family is not a selfish act. Raising a family means you've got to be ready to give.

The truth is that marriage requires being ready to give. If you go into marriage for what you're going to get out of it, it's not going to work. You've got to go into marriage for what you're putting into it. She has to put into it; he has to put into it. The investment of both husband and wife emotionally, in commitment, in

undertaking and in purpose is what builds a marriage, which is not there when it's for romantic love.

When there is a common purpose, when they have gotten together and are getting married so that together they can accomplish and do something, the basis of developing a sound love that will last a lifetime is there. And the probabilities of its developing is very, very large.

And that's why, in general, arranged marriages work out better than romantic marriages. They are not the ideal in our time. In our age, I don't think arranged marriages are healthy and I'll explain to you why if you're interested in a moment. But the concept of an arranged marriage is a much sounder and more meaningful marriage than a marriage built on a concept of romantic love. Because an arranged marriage means that they recognize and realize that they're entering the marriage for a purpose for which they are going to work together. And that's a much more likely base with which to produce a happy functioning marriage than romantic love is.

So that the first thing is...you enter marriage by looking for somebody, not whom you have a feeling of desire for, but somebody with whom you feel that together you can assume a common purpose, have a vision that you share, an undertaking which both of you feel that you can do together.

If that's there, your chances of building a good sound marriage are very, very strong and good.

The first thing that that involves is, if you're not going into marriage for what you can get out of it, then you don't want to say, "Well, what did you do for me?" The question is what did you

If you're in the marriage for what you want out of it, then, the minute there is a frown or a rough word, then "What happened? Why? Which?" If you're in it for what you can contribute and build, these things don't bother you. You don't react that way. It is the reaction that causes most of the problems. It's not what happened. It's the reaction. So, a first thought will be, look for compatibility of purpose.

do for her? You don't want to say, "Well, you were nasty, you used a bad word or you frowned at me this morning." I want you to know the overwhelming majority of arguments in a marriage come from "Why did you frown? What did I do?" Who said you did anything? A little nonsense like that can develop into a very strong argument. If you ignore these little things and you don't

look at the twist of the ear or the word that was said that you felt was a little rough, nothing comes out of it. It's forgotten in a minute or two.

But if you're in there for what you want out of it, then, the minute there is a frown or a rough word, then "What happened? Why? Which?"

If you're in it for what you can contribute and build, these things don't bother you. You don't react that way. It is the *reaction* that causes most of the problems. It's not what *happened*. It's the reaction.

So, a first thought will be, look for compatibility of purpose.

Today, of course, you have to look for compatibility of personalities, that you're comfortable with each other.

I say that for today, it wasn't always like that. A hundred years ago that was of minor importance. Because a hundred years ago a husband and wife didn't have that much time in togetherness. He was busy all day and she was busy all day. When you had to take care of the laundry and rub it up and down...you got up early in the morning, you went to sleep late at

night and you didn't have time to discuss things. You were exhausted. Tuesday you had to hang up the wash. Wednesday you had to bake for the week. Thursday you had to clean for the week. Friday you had to cook for the week. You didn't have much time to talk to each other. So, the time spent was precious and you kept it to things that are important and meaningful. There was very little need for compatible personalities. Shared purpose and outlooks were sufficient.

Today that's not true. Today a husband and wife talk to each other a good deal. They go out together a good deal, share a lot of time, a lot of experiences. They've got to be comfortable with each other. They [i.e., husbands] have got to feel that her presence is enjoyable, that it's

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If that's there and you share a common purpose, you know what you want to do with your life together. That's what you want.

The Torah does have a more specific advice as well.

There is the *Ran*, one of the very greatest of our medieval commentaries. In a sense, I guess if you're going to divide it into eras, he was the last of the mediaeval commentators. He's the last of the *Rishonim*. After him begins a new epoch in authority of commentators.

The *Ran* asks as follows: "How do we understand the fact that Abraham wants a wife for his son Isaac who is the daughter and sister of idol worshipers, and rejects the daughter of a G-d believing and G-d worshiping person, Eliezer, his servant?"

"למה צוה אברהם שלא יקח אשה מבנות הכנעני האם מפני שהיו עובדי עבודה כוכבים גם בעבר הנהר היו כן ומה הואיל בתקנתו... ומדוע מרחיקם ולא הרחיק את בנות בתואל... שהיו רעים וחטאים מצד אמונותיהם כאנשי כנען... [הרן בדרשותיו כתב... כי המצות והעברות אשר בתורה הם על ב פנים מהם שיעשו רושם בגוף ובנפש במידות וכמעשים ומהם אשר יעשו רושם בנפש בלבד כאמונות... אמנם הדברים שעושים רושם בנפש בלבד והם האמונות עם היותן כוזבות ורעות לא יתפשטו בבנים. לכן ובתואל עם היותם עובדי עבודה כוכבים לא היה מחוייב שיעבור רשומם לבניהם ולכן בחר בהם אברהם והרחיק בנות הכנעני... " [אברבנאל, בראשית כד א]

Eliezer, his servant, has a daughter whom he considers suitable for Isaac. Abraham rejects him as a suitable wife for his son and instead sends Eliezer to Aram N'harayim to pick up Rivkah whose father is an idol worshiper and whose brother, Lavan, is an idol worshiper.

So, the *Ran* says, why?

He answers, the Torah is teaching us here that character traits of compassion, kindness, empathy, sensitivity and awareness are more important than beliefs. Avraham knew that in the home of Lavan he would find a girl of *middos*, of those character traits which alone can really build a true Jewish home. Even though Eliezer's daughter was trained in beliefs and in doing the right things, her character traits were not sufficient. Therefore, the *Ran* says when getting married, look for character traits, for innate sensitivity, kindness and compassion.

[Question from the audience:] "Isn't that kind of dangerous, because wouldn't you be obliged to say that if there were a non-Jewish woman who had good character traits, you would be obliged to go to her rather than someone Jewish?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] No, he makes it very clear that this takes place after, (a) of course, she's Jewish, and (b) she's going to be keeping the *mitzvos*. We are talking about which 'background' you prefer to take. Even though her [Rivkah's] father was an idol worshiper, she was not. We're talking about the background that they came from. It is better to accept this background than that background. But, the person you marry has to be

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obviously at least in agreement with you about what life is about, which means to not worship idols and not be non-Jewish. He [the *Ran*] is talking about the background that the two girls came from. I would rather, he said, choose a background of idol worship with a girl who's compassionate over a girl who is not. But both girls have got to be far from idol worship themselves. Both girls have to be observant and Jewish. But the question is which background is more important.

Out of the specific case which he's describing, meanwhile, we understand that character traits are of the essence in marriage. You want a girl whose character reflects these feelings of *gemilas chasadim*, of empathy and compassion - kindness. This is the point that he's making.

[Question from the audience:] "How about intellectual compatibility and creativity?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] Well, to the extent that they reflect personalities that you're comfortable with they matter a great deal. But they are subsumed in that aspect of what we were talking about. In the extent that they do not influence the degree in which you're comfortable and at ease in her presence they don't matter.

If you need somebody that you can talk to on an intellectual level then you're not going to be comfortable with a girl that you can't do that with.

If you respond only with a sense of creativity, then with a girl who is dry you're going to feel uncomfortable and ill-at-ease. Therefore, that first criteria that we mentioned, the one that you've got to be at ease and comfortable with her and to feel that you enjoy each other's

[Question from the audience:] "How about intellectual compatibility and creativity?"
[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:]... They are important only in terms of the degree to which they make for non-friction and enjoyment with each other's company. Now, when we speak of character traits, you may be comfortable without it, but you ought to want it anyway. Intellect and creativity you only need if that's what you're comfortable with.

presence, includes that she has the intellectual and creative faculties that you as an *individual* need.

Now, when we speak of character traits, you may be comfortable without it, but you ought to want it anyway. Intellect and creativity you only need if that's what you're comfortable with. If you're comfortable without it then what do you care? Character traits are something which you *ought*

to be concerned with. Intellect is something that you either are concerned with or are not concerned with. And if you're not concerned with it, then why worry about it? Whereas character traits, if you're not concerned with them, learn to be concerned with them. But in terms of intellect or intellectual power or creativity, that's strictly a question of what you feel comfortable with. There are people to whom it matters a great deal and there are people to

whom it matters not at all. Both is fine. They are important only in terms of the degree to which they make for non-friction and enjoyment with each other's company.

[Question from the audience:] "How does a person search for these character traits? Are they a matter of judgment?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] Well, in the main they're going to be a matter of judgment. In traditional Orthodox homes they do it another way as well, which I don't think is that effective anymore. They ask. You know, before they go out with a girl they try to get information from

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Now, it used to be very effective but it's only effective when you're dealing with people who are willing to give you their honest opinion. But as soon as you start with people who say, well, we can't say anything not nice...oh, she's wonderful, she's fine, she's this, then it doesn't mean anything.

The same is when you get a [performance] recommendation. If the recommendation is from an honest person it tells you something. But if today, everybody, because of access to records, the Freedom of Information Act, etc., gives you a recommendation, the only thing it means is that the fellow isn't about to take a chance at getting sued. That's all that it means. So you never know anymore when he tells you, yes, he was a wonderful worker, he did his work fine, excellent. You don't know any more. It doesn't help today. Today if you didn't give a good recommendation he'll sue you. If you gave a bad recommendation he'll sue you. Literally.

A love with which one enters an engagement is almost invariably a love built on a physical attraction that isn't going to last very long unless it's transmuted into a relationship love because physical attraction is a very tenuous thing to build a relationship on. Before you're engaged, it's got to be in the main, physical attraction. What else would cause love?

[Question from the audience:] "So where does love come in?"

[The Rosh HaYeshivah responds:] Love never did come in *getting married*. Love always resulted from *being married*. A love with which one enters marriage...I shouldn't say that...a love with which one enters an engagement is almost

invariably a love built on a physical attraction that isn't going to last very long unless it's transmuted into a relationship love because physical attraction is a very tenuous thing to build a relationship on. Before you're engaged, it's got to be in the main, physical attraction. What else would cause love?

What happens with an engagement is that the commitment to each other starts generating love. That is because there is now a relationship. The relationship and the commitment itself binds us. And once there is a feeling of being bound to each other and a feeling that we're going to merge with each other, there starts a feeling of identification with each other that very quickly

What happens with an engagement is that the commitment to each other starts generating love. That is because there is now a relationship. The relationship and the commitment itself binds us. And once there is a feeling of being bound to each other and a feeling that we're going to merge with each other, there starts a feeling of identification with each other that very quickly brings about a feeling of great affection growing into actual love.

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The act of commitment is itself the basis of love. The act of commitment when it expands into actual marriage where they have become one then becomes a very powerful drive for the development of a feeling of love.

This is an expression of another thing which is basic to the Jewish concept of marriage. It is something that other nations share. The Catholic Church shares this concept of marriage with us. I don't know if it's exactly the same thing, I don't know if it isn't, because I'm not quite sure if I understand what they mean by a 'sacrament.' Remember, I know it only from the outside. But to them, marriage is a sacrament. And I'm not quite certain what sacrament means. But I do know that with us, what marriage means is there's *not* an agreement between two people to live together and to share their lives. There is an actual *merger* that takes place through the process of *kedushin* and *nesuin*. The marriage ritual that in Jewish law the bride and groom go through ties them together on the spiritual level in the same sense that an operation would make them share blood vessels, heart and brain.

Which means that if you're going to try to separate it afterwards, you have to perform a very dangerous, delicate and traumatic operation. Therefore, to break a marriage requires a very

Let me read to you the relevant portion of how the Bible itself views marriage. "G-d said, it is not good for Man to be alone, I will make a compatible helper for him." Which is not at all what the Chumash said. He [the translator] went and twisted what the Chumash said to make it compatible with what people might think it should be saying. This is the terrible terrible tragedy of translations. It's a nice translation but he wrote his own verse. He didn't give over what G-d Wrote.

definite act that actually separates, that operates on the two, and separates that which had merged and become one. It is a terrible procedure with dire consequences, a very real breaking of something that existed. It's not a mutual parting of the ways.

So, a marriage is a reality of having gotten together. This reality produces a feeling for each other that is the soundest possible basis

for love, a total identification with each other, a feeling of a merged spirit.

The Torah itself is fascinating in that sense. Let me read to you the relevant portion of how the Bible itself views marriage. But you've got to give it a little attention and some thought. "G-d said, it is not good for Man to be alone, I will make a compatible helper for him." This is not at all what the *Chumash* said. He [the translator] went and twisted what the *Chumash* said to make it compatible with what people might think it should be saying.

Let me read to you what the *Chumash* does say. This is the terrible terrible tragedy of translations. It's a nice translation but he wrote his own verse. He didn't give over what G-d wrote.

Let me read to you the Hebrew. **ויאמר יהוה אלהים - לא טוב היות האדם לבדו** - *And G-d the Lord said, it is not good for Man to be alone*, **אעשה-לו עזר** - *I will make for him, a helpmate*, **כנגדו** - *against him*. Or

"ויאמר יהוה אלהים לא-טוב היות האדם לבדו
אעשה-לו עזר כנגדו." [בראשית, ב, יח]
"שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד..." [תהלים, טז, ח]

more accurately, *opposed, opposite him*. Now, let me prove to you what the word **כנגדו** means. **שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד** - *I will set up G-d opposite me all the time*. What does **כנגדי** mean? It means I'll put it to where I look. So that I'm always seeing

it. **כנגדי** - *opposite me*. To the other direction so that when I look I see it. **שויתי ה'** - *I have placed G-d, כנגדי* - *before me*. But opposite me is before me, right? I'm looking at you, you're looking at me. We're opposites. You're **כנגדי** - you're on the other side of me. So that you look at me, I look at you. If we're both facing the same way, you're not opposite me. I see the back of you but I don't see the front of you. And you don't see me at all.

"לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו." Now let me prove to you what the word **כנגדו** means. **שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד** - *I will set up G-d opposite me all the time*. What does **כנגדי** mean? It means I'll put it to where I look. So that I'm always seeing it. **כנגדי** - *opposite me*. So that **שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד** means I place G-d opposite me - meaning I make it that we face each other.

If we want to relate to each other, if we want to deal with each other, we've got to be **כנגד** each other. Facing each other. So that **שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד** means I place G-d opposite me - meaning I make it that we face each other.

So **עזר כנגדו** would mean a helpmate who faces him. We can *face each other* as opposed to a

helpmate who is *absorbed* by him. Do you follow? That there will be, in other words, two personalities who will deal with each other. Face each other. Talk to each other. Relate to each other. If there is only one, one leads, one guides there's no **כנגד**, there's no faceoff. There's no facing each other. There's no **כנגדי**. A helpmate, in other words, has to be **כנגדו** - facing him. Facing him means two personalities that relate.

So **עזר כנגדו** would mean a helpmate who faces him. We can face each other as opposed to a helpmate who is absorbed by him. That there will be two personalities who will deal with each other. Face each other. Talk to each other. Relate to each other. If there is only one, one leads, one guides there's no **כנגד**, there's no faceoff. A helpmate has to be **כנגדו** - facing him. Facing him means two personalities that relate. You need two personalities for a marriage. If one subordinates himself or herself completely to the other, you've lost a sense of marriage.

Do you follow that this is what the verse is actually saying? I will make him a helpmate **כנגדו**. Not from inside. Not in front. Not in back. But facing each other. So that we can relate to each other.

Again, I am proving what it means, though the verse itself tells you. That's the only word meaning **כנגדו** could mean. But I am proving it from the other usage of the word **כנגדו** of **שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד** - *I will constantly place G-d opposite me*. Meaning, I will face G-d

face to face, constantly.

[Question from the audience:] "No opposition?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] No opposition. Right. But more, no opposition only comes from being opposite each other, facing each other. It is when we are facing the same way and

I'm in the back of you or you are in the back of me that there is opposition. "Don't turn your back," back creates opposition. You look your way and I look and see a different thing. What we see is not each other. What we're talking to is not each other. You're talking about what you see, I'm talking about the back of your head, which isn't expressing and isn't responding. Opposition comes from *not* facing each other.

You need two personalities for a marriage. If one subordinates himself or herself completely to the other you've lost a sense of marriage. It's not a helpmate, it's a helpmate **כנגדו**. A helpmate to face each other, to deal with each other. She's got to have a personality of her own, he needs a personality of his own. Otherwise, you don't have a **כנגדו**. You cannot develop a relationship with a nonentity.

[Question from the audience:] "Where this **כנגדו** is in the *parshah*, could it be seen as foreshadowing Eve's tempting Adam of the apple [in other words, actually opposing Adam]?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] I don't think that that can be acceptable as to what the *pasuk* means. Let me show you why.

Let's go on with an almost incredible paragraph. Start again: *And G-d the Lord said, it is not good for Man to be alone, I will make him a helpmate against him, facing him, face to face.*

It tells us what's not good about Man being alone! He needs another personality to deal with. It's not because he's lonely. The answer isn't a companion to take away his loneliness. In order for him not to be alone, what he needs is a **כנגדו**.

So what would you expect the next verse to be?

Remember, G-d has just said, "it is not good for Man to be alone, I will make him a helpmate to face him." The next verse, of course, is [i.e. should be] "*and G-d made him a helpmate to face him.*" Right?

"ויאמר יהוה אלהים לא-טוב היות האדם לבדו
אעשה-לו עזר כנגדו: ויצר יהוה אלהים מן-האדמה
כל-חית השדה ואת כל-עוף השמים ויבא אל-האדם
לראות מה יקרא-לו וכל אשר יקרא-לו האדם נפש
חיה הוא שמו: ויקרא האדם שמות לכל-הבהמה
ולעוף השמים ולכל חית השדה ולאדם לא-מצא
עזר כנגדו: [בראשית, ב, יח יט כ]

But that's not what it says!

You know what the next verse says?

It says, "*And G-d formed every wild beast of the field and the fowl of the sky and he brought it to Man to see what Man will call him, and whatever Man called him that is its name. And Man called names to all the animals and the fowls and the beasts of the field, ולאדם - and for himself, עזר כנגדו - לא מצא עזר כנגדו - he did not find a helpmate to face him.*"

Now, over here in this verse, there's no way that you can understand **כנגדו** to mean to oppose him. He didn't find any helpmate to oppose him? Is that what he was looking for? Do you hear?

This verse says that Adam looked through all the animals, he saw that they all had mates, they all had relations and for himself, he did not find a helpmate **כנגדו**. You can no longer say that **כנגדו** means to do him in, or to hurt him, or to harm him, or to oppose him. Because that isn't what he wanted to find. "*He couldn't find...*" It's got to be he couldn't find somebody to relate to. It's the only possible way that you can explain this verse. Isn't that right? There is no other way. He was looking for somebody to relate to. He wasn't looking for somebody to oppose him and stand against him.

Therefore, this meaning of עזר כנגדו, which we gave, has got to be THE proper meaning, THE translation.

What happened?

What happened clearly is that G-d said Man cannot be given this helpmate *until he discovers that*

"ויפל יהוה אלהים תרדמה על-האדם ויישן ויקח אחת מצלעותיו ויסגר בשר תחתנה." [בראשית, ב, כא]

he needs her. Because G-d said, it isn't good for Man, I'm going to make him a helpmate, and then He doesn't do it?! Instead, He brings all the animals...said

okay, look them over. Man looks them over, discovers he doesn't have a helpmate, the next verse is "ויפל יהוה אלהים תרדמה..." - And He made his rib and closed flesh from its place and He built it into a woman.

It isn't until Man sees I'm looking for a relating [being] and I don't find it, then, G-d makes him Eve! Do you follow?

It is clear that until Adam realizes his need, he can't get it. He's got to recognize the need to relate. He's got to recognize that he can't do and understand and express himself without another personality to deal with. He can't have a helpmate until then.

What happens when one recognizes it?

It is clear that until Adam realizes that he can't do and understand and express himself without another personality to deal with, he can't have a helpmate. What happens when one recognizes it? What happens is you recognize that you need somebody else, and therefore, it's no longer going to be selfish! It's going to be a mutual give and take. Therefore, he now will know that he's got to bring something to the marriage. It's not there for him to take.

What happens is you recognize that you need somebody else, and therefore, it's no longer going to be selfish! It's going to be a mutual give and take.

If G-d gives him a helpmate, well, sure you're there to take care of me, you're there to serve me, you're there to...no, that won't work. You first have to recognize what you're lacking, what is it he's lacking. Therefore, what you're

getting now is a relationship, not a servant. You're getting now a relationship, not somebody to boss around. Do you follow?

Therefore, he now will know that he's got to bring something to the marriage. It's not there for him to take. But had he been given this before he realized his need, he would have understood it to be as something to take care of me, to meet my needs, to serve me. He would have thought that a wife is to use, to take from. He now knows a wife is to relate to because that's what he was lacking. That's what he needed.

Now, the implication of that can only be that had he had a wife without recognizing the need, he would not have related to her properly.

Therefore, you have an inescapable conclusion that the Bible is pointing out clearly that the proper way of a husband and wife is to relate to each other. In addition, to which the very statement of a wife as a עזר כנגדו - they face each other, meaning deal with each other - itself delineates what the Chumash understands a wife to be in terms of a husband.

Therefore, it is clear that we're not talking over here of a subordinate. We're talking of a relationship.

But look let's see how it goes further.

יעזוב איש את אביו ואת - *therefore, "על כן..." - flesh of my flesh* - זאת הפעם, ויאמר האדם
אמו - *A Man will leave his father and his mother* ודבק באשתו - *and cleave to his wife, and they become one flesh.*

"ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר
מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה-זאת:
על-כן יעזב איש את-אביו ואת-אמו ודבק
באשתו והיו לבשר אחד: [בראשית, ב, כג כד]

The Torah says that a Man leaves a mother and father. That means that he tears himself away from his setting. Isn't that what it is? He leaves mother and father and goes out

to become independent.

I have always (and this is 'my' extension of this verse) understood this verse to be the source of the prohibition of incest. Incest is the opposite of what we're talking about. Incest is total selfishness. I stay with myself. I don't have to meet and relate to a new personality, a new way

"על- I have always understood the verse of
כן יעזב איש את-אביו ואת-אמו ודבק באשתו והיו לבשר
" to be the source of the prohibition of
incest. Incest is total selfishness. It's from
within the family. We think the same
already. We've had the same upbringing.
We're just staying where we were.

of thinking. It's from the house itself. It's from within the family. We think the same already. We've had the same upbringing. We're just staying where we were.

Therefore, there is a building within one's self instead of a going outward. There is a reinforcement of selfishness instead of a recognition of a need to

relate to others and to meet the needs of others, where other people's feelings and requirements become important to me. That's [possible only] when I go out of my setting.

"על כן" - A Man has to leave his father and mother. He's got to go and meet a new personality. He's got to create a whole new way of life. That isn't so if she's a servant and a subordinate. You can stick to your old way, stay where you were and just bring her in, which I understand from

G-d didn't make a mistake and then caught it, aah, I better correct it. He knew that לא טוב היות האדם לבדו.
Therefore, two things are clear. One, that in essence, Man is one with his wife. G-d makes them originally one so that he recognizes that marriage is a merger of the two and that the two are one. But that the one has to develop out of two personalities that relate to each other. And that the full achievement of self is only through relating to somebody else.

reading was the Chinese concept of marriage. She left her father's house and came into his father's house. He stayed with his family and she becomes a part of his family and she's just a servant to take care of him.

But when you leave your father and mother, והלך, and you go away to create a whole new home ודבק באשתו, then he can

cleave to her and they become actually one. You follow?

But more than that.

G-d didn't make a mistake and then caught it, aah, I better correct it. He knew that לא טוב היות לבדו. Therefore, two things are clear.

One, that in essence, Man is one with his wife. G-d makes them originally one so that he recognizes that marriage is a merger of the two and that the two are one. But, that the one has to develop out of two personalities that relate to each other. And that the full achievement of self is only through relating to somebody else. That is why He makes him one and separates him into two, so that when they get married they become one again.

"א"ר אלעזר כל אדם שאין לו אשה אינו אדם שנאמר זכר ונקבה בראם ויקרא את שמם אדם." [יבמות, דף סג.]

The marriage unites the two and make out of the two, one. As the Rabbis put it, **אינו נקרא אדם** until he's married. It is only in marriage, the husband and wife together, that you have the *tzelem Elokim* – the image of G-d, and he is truly called Man. They get that from this fact. That Man in his original creation is the two together, separated to get together voluntarily with awareness and consciousness.

So, the essence of Man is the married couple but with awareness and understanding of their need for each other, and their relating to each other. You see that. That's the whole thrust of the whole story of the creation of Man and woman.

[Question from the audience:] "So then, if Man was one in the beginning...and then only becomes one later with his wife, is there a concept that there's one certain person that you have to connect with? Or you can do that with any female?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] Any human female, yes.

"מן הענינים העמוקים שבהנהגתו ית' הוא ענין ישראל ואומות העולם שמצד טבע האנושי נראה היותם שוים באמת ומצד עניני התורה הם שונים שינוי גדול ונבדלים כמינים נתחלפים לגמרי...ואברהם לבדו נבחר במעשיו ונתעלה ונקבע להיות אילן מעולה ויקר כפי מציאות האנושית במדריגתו העליונה וניתן לו להוציא ענפיו כפי חוקו. ואז נתחלק העולם לע' אומות כל א' מהם במדריגה ידוע אבל כלם בבחי' האנושיות בשפלותו וישראל בחי' האנושיות בעליון. והנה אחר הענין הזה נסתם שער השרשי והתחיל הגלגול וההנהגה בענפים כל א' לפי ענינו ונמצא שאעפ"י שלכאורה נראה ענינו עתה וענין הקודמים שוה באמת אננו כך אלא עד הפלגה היה הזמן שרשי האנושיות ונתגלגלו הדברים בבחי' זו וכשהגיע קץ זמן זה נקבע הדבר כפי המשפט והתחיל זמן אחר שהוא זמן הענפים שעודנו בו עתה." [דרך ה', חלק ב, פרק ד']

[Question from the audience:] "How does this concept tie into intermarriage?"

[The Rosh HaYeshiva responds:] Well, it ties in with intermarriage only in the sense that this is talking Man before, when all men shared the same soul. This changed at the time of *Avraham*. Remember, we've mentioned this. At that time, there

took place a very drastic change in the status of human beings. All human beings gave up the ultimate soul and it is only *Avraham* who retains it, and therefore, through his children, that G-d can be known to Mankind.

Once that takes place, then, there cannot be a marriage between the Jewish *neshama* and a non-Jewish *neshama*. They are not compatible. They cannot merge. There cannot be a oneness between them.

In Jewish law there never is! It can only be a contract. A contract is not a marriage. Therefore, civilly it may be recognized as a marriage but in Jewish law marriage never took place. To dissolve it

"ונכרית מנלן אמר קרא לא תחתן במ. פ' רש"י ד"ה לא תחתן במ" לא תהא לך במ תורת חיתון." **אשכחנא דלא תפסי בה קדושי...** [קדושין, דף סח:]

doesn't require a divorce. It's dissolved because it never jelled. There is no way that these two souls can merge.

"ויאמר יהוה אלהים לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו." [בראשית, ב, יח]

"למה צוה אברהם שלא יקח אשה מבנות הכנעני האם מפני שהיו עובדי עבודת כוכבים גם בעבר הנהר היו כן ומה הואיל בתקנתו...ומדוע מרחיקם ולא הרחיק את בנות בתואל...שהיו רעים וחטאים מצד אמונותיהם כאנשי כנען...והרן בדרשותיו כתב...כי המצות והעברות אשר בתורה הם על ב פנים. מהם שיעשו רושם בגוף ובנפש כמידות וכמעשים, ומהם אשר יעשו רושם בנפש בלבד כאמונות. והנה אותם שיעשו רושם בגוף ובנפש הם אשר יעשו רושם אל הבנים המשתלשלים מהם, כשנאה והנקמה והאכזריות והזימה והכילות ודומיהן שהן יעשו רושם בנפש מהצד שהן עבירות, ובגוף לפי שהמידות יפעלו בליחות כמו שהליחות יעשו תכונה במידות. כי כמו שכאשר יהיה דם הלב רותח יהיה האדם כעסן כן מי שיכעס יעשה דם לבו רותח. הנה אם כן אותן המדות יחייבו המזגים הגופיים ולזה ימשך ענינם לבנים וזה רוע אנשי כנען. אמנם הדברים שעושים רושם בנפש בלבד והם האמונות עם היותן כוזבות ורעות לא יתפשטו בבנים. לכן ובתואל עם היותם עובדי עבודת כוכבים לא היה מחוייב שיעבור רושםם לבניהם ולכן בחר בהם אברהם והרחיק בנות הכנעני..." [אברבנאל, בראשית כד א]

"...קול ששון וקול שמחה, קול חתן וקול כלה..."



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Email: moshew789@gmail.com Phone: (908) 910-3090

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