

CAUSE AND EFFECT

by Shlomo Katz

**Hamaayan / The Torah Spring
Edited by Shlomo Katz**

**Ki Tetze: Cause and Effect
Volume XVI, No. 43
9 Elul 5762
August 17, 2002**

Sponsored by

**The Marwick family in honor of the birth of grandson Moshe Mordechai
Marwick**

The Sabrin family in memory of mother Bayla bat Ze'ev a"h (Bella Sabrin)

Today's Learning:

Zevachim 6:1-2

Daf Yomi (Bavli): Bava Batra 150

Daf Yomi (Yerushalmi): Shabbat 25

Rabbeinu Yonah z"l (12th century Spain) writes that there are three types of mitzvot: those which must be done (e.g. prayer), those which must be done if the opportunity presents itself (e.g. circumcision), and those which are optional, but may only be done according to a certain procedure (e.g. marrying a prisoner-of-war or taking an egg from a bird's nest). These last two examples are both found in this week's parashah, and each introduces a separate line of cause and effect which follows from a person's deeds. These two lines can be traced through the various topics discussed

in this parashah:

Chazal say that if one marries a prisoner-of-war, even permissibly, he will likely end-up hating her and her offspring. The son he has from her may end-up stealing from his parents, and thus incur the penalty of a ben sorer u'moreh / a rebellious son. Such a boy is executed, not for what he has done, Chazal say, but so that he may die relatively righteous. Should he live, his future is bleak indeed.

In contrast, Chazal say that if one performs the mitzvah of sending away a mother bird, he will be rewarded with prosperity and will build a house. This mitzvah is therefore followed by the commandment to build a railing around a roof. Also, he will merit to have new clothes, so he is commanded not to wear sha'atnez / the forbidden combination of wool and linen and to make tzitzit. The mitzvah of tzitzit is among the cheapest and easiest of the mitzvot to perform, but its reward is great, for it reminds a person to keep all of the other mitzvot, and thus brings merit to the entire body. (Derashot U'perushei R' Yonah Al Ha'Torah)

"Do not observe the donkey of your brother or his ox falling and ignore it; you shall surely help it up."
(22:4)

In Parashat Mishpatim, this same mitzvah is given, but there the Torah refers to the animal of "your enemy." Why this difference?

With regard to the verse in Mishpatim, the Gemara asks: How does one have an enemy? Is it then permitted to hate another Jew? The Gemara explains that "your enemy" refers to one whom you have witnessed sinning. If he refuses to repent, you are obligated to hate him.

However, writes R'Meir Simcha Hakohen z"l (rabbi of Dvinsk, Latvia; died 1926), that was only before the sin of the Golden Calf (which is found in the Torah after Parashat Mishpatim). Before that sin, all Jews were on such an exalted level that they were able to hate someone merely because he had sinned. But today, who can make such a claim?! Rather, we are all brothers.

(Meshech Chochmah)

"When there will be a fight between people, and they approach the court . . ." (25:1)

Rashi comments: "[If people fight,] they will inevitably end up in court. Learn from here that peace never comes from animosity. What caused Lot to separate himself from the tzaddik [Avraham]? It was a fight."

R' Moshe Sternbuch shlita asks: Does Rashi really need to tell us that "peace never comes from animosity"? This seems obvious! Furthermore, what is Rashi proving by mentioning Lot?

R' Sternbuch explains: Often, when people fight, the animosity spreads to the friends and relatives of

the respective sides. Even when the fight is over, and peace has been made, a certain bitter taste remains with all of the people who intervened on either side. Rashi is telling us: Nothing good can come of fighting. Rashi is not referring to the underlying dispute, but rather to the dispute between those who have taken sides. The proof is the story of Lot. Avraham and Lot had no fight between them; the fight was between their respective shepherds. Yet, what was the outcome? That Lot himself could no longer live with Avraham.

(Ta'am Va'da'at)

"You shall not see the ox of your brother or his sheep cast off [i.e., lost] and turn yourself away from them; you shall surely return them to your brother." (22:4)

R' Yaakov Yosef Hakohen z"l (One of the primary students of the Ba'al Shem Tov) interprets this homiletically: "You shall not see the ox of your brother cast off"--it is better not to see your brother in a state of spiritual decline (becoming like an ox). Rather: "[T]urn yourself away."

But if you do see, "[Y]ou shall surely return [him]."

(Toldot Yaakov Yosef)

"Remember what Hashem Elokim did to Miriam.." (24:9)

"Remember what Amalek did to you . . ." (25:17)

R' Yitzchak Luria z"l (the Arizal; 1534-1572) taught that when reciting the berachah before Kri'at Shma, upon reaching the phrase, "You, our King, drew us close," one should think of the giving of the Torah (Hashem drew us close to Him at Har Sinai). Upon reading the words, "To Your great name," one should think of destroying Amalek (the existence of Amalek impinges on the "wholeness" of Hashem's name [Rashi, Shmot 17:16]). Finally, when reciting, "To praise you," one should think of Miriam's speaking lashon hara against her brother (Hashem created our mouths so that we may praise Him, not to speak lashon hara).

R' Chaim Yosef David Azulai z"l ("Chida"; 1724-1806) observes that these three remembrances - the giving of the Torah, Amalek, and Miriam's lashon hara - are related. The Zohar Chadash teaches that the final redemption will come in the merit of Moshe Rabbeinu, who always fought for the honor of the Torah. What causes our present exile? Needless hatred. In contrast to our present state, Bnei Yisrael were "as one person with one heart" when the Torah was given (Rashi, Shmot 19:2). Remembering the giving of the Torah will help us overcome our tendency to repeat Miriam's sin, and will thus bring about the redemption. That, in turn, will cause the ultimate sanctification of Hashem's name and the end of Amalek.

(Midbar Kedemot, Ma'arechet Chet, No. 18)

R' Eliezer Azkari z"l

R' Eliezer was born to a family of Spanish exiles in Constantinople (now Istanbul), Turkey, in 1533. He was a disciple of R' Yosef Sagis. Eventually, R' Eliezer emigrated to Tzefat, and joined the circle of kabbalists there. In Tzfat, R' Eliezer lived as a hidden tzaddik, but he earned the respect of the Arizal even before his (R' Eliezer's) admirable qualities were known to others. The following story is told in this vein:

One Lag Ba'omer, the Jewish community of Tzefat traveled to nearby Meron to celebrate at the tomb of the second-century sage, R' Shimon bar Yochai, as was (and still is) the custom. No one paid attention to R' Eliezer and the unknown, but venerable, old man with whom he was dancing, until, suddenly, the Arizal joined them. When the festivities ended, the Arizal's students asked him, "Why do you lower yourself to dance with an ordinary Jew such as R' Eliezer?"

"The Tanna / sage of the Mishnah R' Shimon bar Yochai saw fit to dance with R' Eliezer," responded the Arizal, "and I should not?!"

R' Eliezer is best known for his work Sefer Chareidim, a compilation of the mitzvot which apply today, when the Bet Hamikdash is not standing. This work stresses not only the halachic aspects of the mitzvot, but their ethical lessons as well. He also composed the hymn Yedid Nefesh which is sung by many people before Kabbalat Shabbat and/or at the third Shabbat meal. Other works by R' Eliezer are quoted in various sources, but are otherwise unknown. R' Eliezer died in 1600.

Copyright © 2002 by [Shlomo Katz](#) and Project Genesis, Inc.

The editors hope these brief 'snippets' will engender further study and discussion of Torah topics ('lehagdil Torah u'leha'adirah'), and your letters are appreciated. Web archives at [Project Genesis](#) start with 5758 (1997) and may be retrieved from the [Hamaayan](#) page. Text archives from 1990 through the present may be retrieved from <http://www.acoast.com/~sehc/hamaayan/>. Donations to HaMaayan are tax-deductible.
