

**HALACHA V'HALICHA...** By Rav Chaim Schabes

When Eliezer came to Besuel's house to speak about a *shidduch* for Yitzchak, he refused any food until he first spoke. Why did he decline the meal, given that he had just arrived from a trip, and it would be normal to rest up, have a bite, and then proceed with his mission? Rav Binyamin Diskind (father of Reb Yehoshua Leib) said that possibly, just like the Shulchan Aruch writes that one is not permitted to eat once the time comes to say the *b'racha* over the *lulav* (OC 652:2), so too, when Eliezer arrived at Besuel's house, he had a *mitzvah* to propose the *shidduch*, and was therefore prohibited from eating until after fulfilling that obligation.

A man is not allowed to be *mekadaish* a woman unless it was previously discussed (*shidduchim*), and was agreed to by both the man and the woman (EH 26:4, Ginas V'radim 2:11). It is permitted for a man to look at the prospective bride to see whether she looks nice; furthermore, it is proper to see her first, and it is not enough that the *chossan's* mother or other relative sees her (EH 21:3). It is also appropriate for the woman to first see the man and not get married unless she likes him; however, there is no prohibition for a woman to get married to someone she has not met previously (EH 47:8, 36:1). There are Poskim who write that it is sufficient for the meeting to take place after the *shidduchim* (engagement), before the wedding (Bais Shmuel 35:2, Drisha 1), but others hold that the meeting should take place before the engagement, to prevent unnecessary embarrassment in case the engagement would need to be broken because of this (Aruch Hashulchan). It is a *mitzvah* for parents to marry off their children to someone that the son/daughter likes (EH 37:8), and if they pressure their children to marry someone that the son/daughter doesn't like, it is an *aveirah* on the parents, and the children are not obligated to listen (Sefer Chasidim 562). Parents who oppose a marriage their son or daughter desires because of personal reasons, the children are not obligated to listen to them (Ra'ma YD 242), provided that the person they want to marry is proper. However, if the opposition is based on a reason that the *shiduch* is improper, then the children are obligated to listen (Bais Hillel end of YD 240); and so too, if the marriage will cause shame or suffering to the parents, the children are obligated to abstain from the marriage (Maishiv Davar YD 50). Nevertheless, children should take into account the opinion of the parents concerning their marriage (Sefer Chasidim 562). Before mentioning, or not mentioning, a factor that could be a reason to break a *shiduch* (sickness, etc.), one should thoroughly review the ninth chapter of *hilchos rechilus* in *sefer* Chofetz Chaim, or contact a competent authority on this subject. Even though there is a *machlokes* in a case where two people are in the middle of a *shidduch*, but are not officially engaged, whether it would be permitted for someone else to pursue a *shidduch* with one of them (עני המהפך בהררה), once a *shidduch* is finished, even if there were no *kinyan* or *t'naim* made, but they became officially engaged according to the norm of the place, according to all opinions others are prohibited from pushing any other *shidduch*, whether for themselves or for others (Igros Moshe CM 91). There is a *mitzvah* for a father to try and provide the necessities in order to marry off his sons and daughters when they are young. Even if one has many daughters and cannot marry them off unless he takes money from *tzedakah*, he must do so, and if he doesn't because of pride, he is considered a חוטא (sinner) (Shach YD 255:1). One should also try to make *shidduchim* between singles as much as one is able (Brachos 61a, Nedarim 66), and certainly singles themselves must do everything in their ability to get married, as the Gemarah says (Pesachim 49a) that one must sell everything he has in order to get married, and a single girl may not make herself unappealing by not wearing any make-up (Taanis 13b).

**THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ...** By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (Melachim I 1:1-31)

In our Haftara the *navi* relates how, towards the end of David Hamelech's life, his son, Adoniya ben Chagis, takes steps to have himself crowned as the new king of Israel. This rebellious act is perpetrated without fear of either his father or the people. The *navi* explains that he did not fear his father because David never admonished him, so he figured that even in this instance he would also remain silent. According to most *mefarshim* David's silence gave Adoniya the impression that he had his father's consent for all that he did. As for the people, Adoniya had three reasons not to fear them: 1) He felt that his physical beauty would help make him a popular candidate for king with the people because they would feel that he 'looked the part'. In fact his brother Avshalom made this same incorrect calculation at the time of his rebellion. 2) Logically, because he was David's eldest surviving son (his 3 older brothers, Amnon, Daniel, and Avshalom, were all dead at this time) it was only natural that he be named king. 3) The people saw that Adoniya already had strong allies such as Yoav and Evyasar the Kohain Gadol who had joined with him. These were David's most trusted allies, the ones that stood with him during Avshalom's rebellion. If they were supporting Adoniya, then it certainly must be with David's blessings! But still, how was it that David didn't stop Adoniya from taking such seditious actions as soon as they happened? The truth is that from the time Avishag HaShunamis was brought to the palace to serve David, issues of modesty demanded that he be cut off from daily contact with other people. Even his most trusted servants and his eighteen wives couldn't visit him! Adoniya knew this and took advantage of the situation to act even more brazenly than usual. It was only when Batsheva entered his room at Noson HaNavi's suggestion that he learned that this highly unusual and treasonous event had occurred, and he immediately dealt with it.

**ON LANGUAGE ...** By R' Moshe Orlian

Avraham enjoins Eliezer (B'reishis 24:6) **השמר לך פן תשיב את בני שמה** - "refrain from returning my son there". Two *pesukim* later, Avraham says again, **רק את בני לא תשב שמה**. Here, the word **תשב** is used, rather than the **תשיב** from the earlier *pasuk*. In fact, the words are identical. They are the future tense of the root **שוב**, "to return", in *binyan hif'il*. However, **תשב** is an **עתיד קצר**, shortened future tense, form of **תשיב**. While the word **תשב** itself appears several times (e.g., **תשב אנוש עד דכא**), this is actually a rare instance of the **קצר**. Typically, the **קצר** is used in conjunction with the **היפוך** (reversing 'ו'), which turns a future tense word into past tense. For example, in *pasuk* 19 we find **ותכל להשקותו**. The word **ותכל** is created by taking the future tense **תכלה** and adding the **היפוך** **ו'**. **תכל** is the **קצר** of **תכלה**, with the **ה** dropping out. There is no apparent rule for **קצר**, other than to make pronunciation easier.

