

I give the price of the field, (take) accept it from me . (23:13)

The *Talmud Kiddushin* 2a questions the source for money, *kesef*, serving as a means for achieving *kiddushin*, betrothal, of a woman. The *Talmud* explains that a woman is actually *niknis*, acquired; thus, the act of *kiddushin* is essentially a *kinyan*, act of acquisition. The *Talmud* asks, "From where do we know that 'money' is a valid method of *kiddushin*?" "We derive *kichah/kichah misdei Efron*." (Through the use of a *gezeirah shavah*, one of the thirteen hermeneutic principles for expounding the Torah, through which a similar word or phrase occurs in two otherwise unrelated passages in the Torah, they are linked to one another, and the laws of one passage are applied to the subject of the other.) The word *kichah*, take, is found regarding betrothal, *Ki yikach ish ishah*, "When a man shall take a wife" (*Devarim* 24:1), and concerning Efron's sale of the *Meoras HaMachpelah*, *Nasati kesef ha'sadeh kach mimeni*, "I give the price of the field – take (accept) it from me" (*Bereishis* 23:13). From here, we derive by process of the *gezeirah shavah*, that a woman is acquired /betrothed by money.

Horav Aryeh Leib Heyman, zl, observes that the actual creation of woman was performed through the act of taking, *Vayikach achas mitzalosav*, "And He took one of his ribs" (*Bereishis* 2:21). Thus, Hashem "took" one of Adam *HaRishon*'s ribs; and now man repairs/fills what is "missing" (has been removed) with *ki yikach ish ishah*, when a man takes a wife.

While a *gezeirah shavah* works with two otherwise unrelated subjects, the two subjects must have something in common – as in our case, in which they both refer to acts of acquisition. Furthermore, *kiddushin*, marriage, and *keverah*, burial, are loosely connected by the notion that in marriage, what was "originally" (creation of woman) taken from him (his rib) is returned as a wife; and in burial, man, who was taken (created) from the earth, is returned to his source – the earth.

Rav Heyman wonders why the Torah specifically chose to establish the source of *kinyan ishush*, the acquisition of a wife (through the word *kicha*), to the sale of *Meoras HaMachpelah*. He explains that, although *Meoras HaMachpelah* had originally been promised to Avraham *Avinu*, he still chose to pay money for it; likewise, in a marriage, *Chazal* say, "Forty days before the conception of a child, it is announced in Heaven who will be his spouse." The *chosson*, groom, must actuate this acquisition with the transference of money to the *kallah*, bride.

The *Rav* adds another novel point, one that goes to the very core of the marriage bond. The name *Machpelah*, doubled, is, according to one exposition of *Rashi*, used because it was doubled with couples: Adam/Chavah; Avraham/Sarah; Yitzchak/Rivkah; Yaakov/Leah. This is the very first instance that the Torah mentions the concept of internment of one's mortal remains. The idea of burial is not mentioned concerning Adam, Chavah, Hevel and Noach. Included in the concept of burial is the idea that the deceased must be cared for, eulogized, mourned, with seven mourning days observed following the burial. The mere fact that so much is involved surrounding the deceased is an indication that the deceased is not gone forever, but will rise once again during *Techiyas HaMeisim*, Resurrection of the Dead. Otherwise, why bother with all of this? Gone is

gone! Apparently, gone is not gone forever, or the deceased is not really gone; he has only been transferred to another world.

This teaches us a profound principle: When a man marries, when he acquires a wife, it is not a temporary, time-bound deal which culminates in death. No! Marriage has a connotation which supersedes even death. This “place” from which we derive the law of *kinyan ishush*, marriage acquisition, is called *Meoras HaMachpelah*, due to the four couples buried therein. Yes, they are together in death as they were in life. The *kesher*, bond, of *ishush*, marriage, commences in this world and carries on to the *Olam Habba*, the World To Come. This is a *kinyan olam*, eternal acquisition! As the man and woman’s *neshamos*, souls, are eternal, so, too, is their relationship. We now realize the importance of husband and wife being buried near one another.

Immediately following the passing of Sarah *Imeinu* and the purchase of *Meoras HaMachpelah*, the Torah relates that Avraham *Avinu* dispatched Eliezer to seek a wife for Yitzchak *Avinu*. Marriage is connected to life/death, because one who is married has made a *kinyan olam*, forever.

When Yaakov *Avinu* met Rachel *Imeinu* for the first time, he cried. *Rashi* explains that he saw through *Ruach HaKodesh*, Divine Inspiration, that she would not be buried together with him. Let us analyze this statement. When Yaakov stood before Pharaoh he said, *Me’at v’raim hayu yemei shnei chayai*, “Short and bitter were the days of my life” (*Bereishis* 47:9). *Rashi* explains that this is a reference to the various troubles that he had experienced. He went on to enumerate them: *tzaras Lavan*; *tzaras Eisav*; *tzaras Rachel*; *tzaras Dinah*; *tzaras Yosef*; *tzaras Shimon*; *tzaras Binyamin*. He had undergone seven sources of distress. Yet, not a single one brought him to tears – except the fact that he would not be buried with Rachel! This leads us to believe that not being buried with Rachel was his greatest, most compelling source of torment. It brought the Patriarch to the height of emotional breakdown which he expressed with tears. What made this anguish greater than the rest? The others were physical troubles which affected him only in this world. Being separated from Rachel in death affected him also in the World To Come! Distress that transcends both the here and now and the eternal future is an unbearable anguish. When the bond is eternal – the anguish over the separation is likewise.