

# Dvar Torah for Shavuot – The One-Eyed Bride

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***“You have won my heart, my sister, my bride; you have won my heart with one of your eyes.” (Song of Songs 4:9) Oola said, “How brazen is the bride that cuckolds her husband right after the ceremony.” (Shabbat 88b)***

Rashi comments that Oola is referring to the making of the Golden Calf, which the Jews did while still encamped at Sinai. The Maharsha teaches that there are two eyes, the mind’s eye and the physical eye. With our intellect we were gung-ho for accepting the Torah. What we saw with the eye of desire, however, led us astray.

Each of us struggles with the eye of desire. Too often it leads us to poor choices that we regret, sooner or later. Those sorry choices create "soiled garments," hindrances to achieving closeness to God.

There is another source to these soiled garments, one that seems hardwired into our being, but is in fact correctable. This source is the degree of holiness our parents had when we were conceived. Kabbalah teaches that the garment of the soul that one receives from his parents enables him to fulfill the Torah. The greater their holiness, the greater is the holiness of the child's garment.

Don't despair! Even King David said, in regard to his lapse with BatSheva, "I was certainly brought forth in iniquity and my mother conceived me in transgression" (Psalms 51:7). One whose origins stem from the fulfillment of sensual desire is hard pressed to withstand temptation.

Till we get rid of the dirty garment and get a respectable one, we have to toil hard. One avenue for this involves fulfilling the Fifth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12). God honors anyone who honors Him (Avot 4:1). Therefore, proper honor given to another gives one a more respectable garment and improved ability to fulfill the Torah. Honoring one's parents produces the same effect to a much greater degree, for two reasons.

One is the equation of God's honor with that of one's parents (Kiddushin 30b). Since we honor God so greatly by honoring our parents, the honor He gives us in return is that much greater. The second reason is that the garment we received from our parents is not static. The more honored and honorable our parents are, the more honorable our garment is.

So, God's honor depends on how well we honor our parents, because the better the job we do honoring them, the more beautiful the bride's gown and the better her ability to

remain faithful.

(Based on Likutey Halakhot, Kibud Av v'Eim 3:1)

agutn yom tov und agutn Shabbos!

Chag Sameach v'Shabbat Shalom!