

# The Impact of Pain and Suffering On Our Relationships

פרשת וישב

The Gemara in the 2nd Perek of Masechta Kiddushin quotes Rav Yehuda Amar Rav. He said, "It is forbidden for a man to marry a woman until he sees her. This is because, he may see in her something physically unappealing and she will be unattractive to him. This will result in him being unable to fulfill the Mitzvah of *ואהבת לרעך כמוך*." This Gemara seems to be saying that due to the fact that in a marriage the physical relationship plays a critical role, if he finds something about her physically unappealing, it will interfere with the relationship.

However, the Ralbag in this week's Parsha provides a deeper understanding of this Gemara that helps clarify the dynamics behind this interference. The Ralbag writes, "The second benefit is in Middos, that it is appropriate for a person to see his wife before he marries her, so that he can assess if she is good in his eyes. For if one marries her without seeing her, perhaps she will not be pleasing in his eyes, and he will be in pain and suffering all the days they are together. Therefore, the Torah points out that Yehuda saw Shuah before they got married."

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We can assume that the Ralbag is expressing the same idea as the Gemara. However, the Gemara implies that the cause of the interference is the physical relationship, whereas the Ralbag says it is the pain and suffering that undermines the relationship, and it is not merely due to the physical relationship. It seems that the Ralbag is learning the Gemara that the lack in her physical appearance, causes pain and discomfort, and this pain and discomfort results in an inability to fulfill the Mitzvah of *ואהבת לרעך כמוך*.

At first glance this dynamic requires further clarification. The only thing missing from this relationship is that one did not see her, and now he finds something physically unappealing about her which causes pain and suffering. However, in every other area she is appealing. She is kind, and caring with great Middos. She is loving to her husband and takes care of all his needs. So why should the mere fact that he is in pain and suffering regarding her looks impact him from fulfilling *ואהבת לרעך כמוך*? Why can't he express his love fully to her based on her qualities and how much she does for him?

We see from here that serious pain or suffering that exists because of one aspect in a relationship, has the potential to undermine our ability to properly appreciate all the good and positive benefits that we receive from that relationship in other areas. This will cause a person not to be able to express his love in that relationship.

We can glean from here a powerful insight in regards to our relationship with Hashem. Often we share with our children and students the extent of Hashem's kindness and how much good He is personally doing for them. Through this we are hopeful that they will come to love Hashem. However, we see from here that if there is any area of serious pain in that relationship, it has the potential to undermine their ability to connect to Hashem. We therefore need to make sure to address their pain and suffering so that they will be able to fulfill the Mitzvah of *ואהבת את ה' אלקיך*

BASED ON THE WEEKLY SHMUSS GIVEN BY HARAV SHAYA COHEN, ROSH HAYESHIVA ZICHRON ARYEH

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לעילוי נשמת הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר  
לעילוי נשמת רפאל חיים דוב בן ריסא שושנה  
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