



שלח תשלח את " 22:7
האם ואת הבנים תקח לך.
למען ייטב לך והארכת
ימים"

"You shall surely send the mother bird away, and the children you should take for yourself, so that it should be good for you, and you shall have long days." Chazal say that the Torah tells us the reward for two Mitzvos: Kibbud Av Va'eim, which is called a Mitzvah חמור – considered to be a major Mitzvah, and for the Mitzvah of Shiluach Hakain, which is considered to be a Mitzvah קל, a minor Mitzvah. Chazal tell us that the reward for Mitzvos we perform will be received in Olam Habah. If so, why does the Torah tell us of the reward for these two Mitzvos? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic and support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

כי יקרא קן צפור " – 6:2 – דברים רבה

This Posuk is to be understood with the Posuk in Mishlei 5:6 ארח חיים פן – "Lest you weigh the path of life, its trails have wandered, you cannot know." What does the Posuk mean by, "Lest you weigh the path of life?" Rebbe Abba Bar Kahanah said: Hakodosh Boruch Hu said: Do not sit and weigh the commandments of the Torah. This is similar to what it says in Yeshaya 40:12 "ושקל בפלס הרים" – "And weighed mountains with a scale." Do not say: Since the Mitzvah is great I will do it, because its reward is great, and since this one is a minor Mitzvah, I will not do it. What did Hakodosh Boruch Hu do to prevent this from happening? Hakodosh Baruch Hu did not reveal to people the reward given for each and every Mitzvah so that they should do all of the Mitzvos completely. From where do we know this? We know it from the words, "נעו מעגלתי לא תדע" – "Its trails have wandered, you cannot know." To what can this be compared to? To a king who hired for himself workers and brought them into his orchard to tend to it. He did not let them know how much he was going to pay them for various jobs that they were going to do in the orchard, so that they should not ignore those tasks which they may deem as too little pay for them, and instead only perform the tasks which they would get paid handsomely for them. In the

evening, the king called each and every worker. He asked the first worker: under which tree did you work? The worker told the king which tree he worked under. The king said that it is a pepper tree, and the wage for doing that work is one gold coin. He asked another worker, and that worker worked under a white blossom. The king said that the wage for that is only half a gold coin, and gave him half of a gold coin. Another worker worked under an olive tree, and for that the king paid 200 Zuz. Some of the workers complained and said that the king should have told them before the work was done. The king responded that had he done that, then his entire orchard would not have been tended to, rather only the parts that paid well would have been taken care of while the rest would have been neglected. Similarly, Hakodosh Boruch Hu did not disclose the reward for Mitzvos except for two Mitzvos: The most major of the major ones, and the most minor of the minor ones. Honoring one's father and mother is the most major of major ones, and the reward for fulfilling it is long life, as the Posuk says, "כבד את אביך ואת אמך למען יאריך ימך" – "Honor your father and mother, so that your days will be lengthened." The most minor of Mitzvos is Shiluach Hakain, sending the mother bird away from her nest and the reward for fulfilling that Mitzvah is also long life.

Devorim Rabbah – יפה תואר

"מתן שכרה של כל מצוה ומצוה" 6:2 – The Midrash tells us that we are to perform all the Mitzvos of the Torah completely, and not only perform the Mitzvos whose reward is greater. The Midrash is implying that we in fact know that there are Mitzvos which we know we receive more reward for, and Mitzvos which we know we receive less reward for. The Mishna in Avos 5:23 tells us לפום צערה – according to the pain is the reward – thus we have a measurement for more reward or less reward. The Rambam on the Mishna in Avos 2:1 says that the commandments that have a greater punishment for transgressing them also have a greater reward for fulfilling them. The Midrash is not telling us that we do not know the reward for Mitzvos, and thus should do all of them equally, but rather one must perform all the Mitzvos which he can in its

completion, throughout his lifetime, for it is only through all of them combined that one will attain perfection and be rewarded accordingly in Olam Habah. Hashem's Will is that one fulfill all the Mitzvos which come his way at that time, for one never knows which Mitzvah he needs at that time to perfect himself. It may be that what he is lacking is a Mitzvah which does not generate much reward – but for him it will complete him. Had the Torah specified the reward for the Mitzvos, one may have thought that it is best for him to always seek out the "greater Mitzvah" and not perform the "smaller Mitzvos" which come his way. Therefore, the Torah did not specify the reward for each Mitzvah, to teach us that at the time the Mitzvah comes his way, he needs to consider all of them of equal importance. One should never look at a Mitzvah, and think that it is too small to waste his time on it, and instead should look for a bigger one.

Devorim Rabbah 6:2 – רד"ל

"כבוד אב ואם חמורה שבחמורות" – The Mitzvah of honoring one's father and mother is the most major Mitzvah of the major Mitzvos. How so? The Mitzvah of Kibbud Av is compared to the honor one must show for Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Additionally, it is very difficult to perform the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av Va'eim properly.

Devorim Rabbah – אמרי יושר

"אריכת ימים" 6:2 – When the Torah says "lengthy days", it refers to reward in Olam Habah. These two Mitzvos of Kibbud Av Va'eim as well as the Mitzvah of Shiluach Hakain, which appear to be on opposite ends of the spectrum, are rewarded equally in Olam Habah, to teach us that the human mind cannot fathom which commandments are truly more significant in terms of their respective rewards.

כי יקרא קן צפור " 22:6 – ברך משה

לפניך בדרך בכל עץ או על הארץ אפרוחים או ביצים והאם רבצת על האפרוחים או על הביצים לא תקח והאם על הבנים – "If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother while she is roosting on her young." The Midrash says that for the two Mitzvos of Kibbud Av Va'eim and Shiluach Hakein, the Torah tells us that

the reward is אריכות ימים, long days – a long life. The message is that one should perform all Mitzvos the same, for the most major Mitzvah or the most minor Mitzvah can have the same reward – thus do every Mitzvah. Why did the Torah choose these two Mitzvos of Kibbud Av Va'eim and Shiluach Hakein? The Gemara in Yuma 71a says that Rabbah said: When the Chachomim take leave of one another in Pumbedisa they say as follows: May the One Who grants life to the living grant you a long, good, and established life. Why do the Chachomim call Hakodosh Boruch Hu, "מחיה חיים" – Who grants life to the living? Devorim 32:47 "כי לא דבר רק הוא" – מכאן כי הוא חיים, ובדבר הזה תאריכו ימים על האדמה – "For this is not a trivial thing for you: it is your very life. Through it you shall long endure on the land."

The Maharal in Nesivos Olam – that the waters of a באר, well, are called, "מים חיים" – for it comes forth from itself. While the water of a בור, a pit, is not called מים חיים – alive water, for it is filled up from other sources. The Gemara in Nedarim 64b says that עני חשב כמות, a poor person is considered like he is dead, for he does not have his own things, rather that which he has is from others. When the Neshama is above in Shomayim, it is considered a בור, a pit, as it does not fill itself, but everything it has is from elsewhere. However, when the Neshama comes down to this lowly world, and it accomplishes what can be accomplished in this world, then it becomes a באר, a well, מעין המתגבר, a well spring that gets stronger – as it is brings forth its own goodness. This is what the Posuk means in Bereishis 2:7 when it says, "ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים" – "Blowing into his nostrils a breath of life" – as the main purpose of this world is for the Neshama to become a באר – a living soul. This is what the Posuk means when it says, "כי לא דבר רק" – that one should not be a בור, which is empty from its own power, rather is only filled by other sources – כי – for that is what life is all about – that one should have true חיים, life. If one does this, then, "תאריכו ימים על האדמה" – then his days will be lengthened down here on this world, for they will be days of living. If one does not learn Torah and perform Mitzvos, and doesn't give himself, "חיים" – then what is his purpose

on this world? This is what the Gemara means when it says that the Rabbonim in Pumbedisa would bless each other referring to Hashem as the "מחיה חיים" – that Hakodosh Boruch Hu grants life to the living – for that it is the purpose of life in this world. One is to make himself into a true חיים, to make himself into a באר through Torah and Mitzvos. They would give this Brocha to each other as they would take leave of each other – as they were leaving the Bais Midrash, that the entire day they should be connected to the true "life." The Midrash tells us about Shiluach Hakain that it is connected to the Posuk in Mishlei – ארח חיים פן תפלו נעו מעגלתי לא – "תדע" – that the Mitzvah of Shiluach Hakain, and the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av Va'eim, are all about "ארח חיים" – that is the Torah and Mitzvos. Through Torah and Mitzvos, one is Zoche to have a נשמת חיים, a living soul, one that is a spring which gives forth from itself. If one works to become a באר, a well, then he will be granted from Above Arichas Yomim, lengthy days in this world.

Devorim Rabbah - שם משואל

This Posuk is to be understood with the Posuk in Mishlei 5:6 – "מגעלתי לא תדע" – "Lest you weigh the path of life, its trails have wandered, you cannot know." The Torah doesn't want everyone to only perform the Mitzvos which they deem to be "major" while neglecting the Mitzvos they deem to be minor. Thus, the Torah tells us the reward for one major Mitzvah and one minor Mitzvah (Kibbud Av Va'eim, and Shiluach Hakain), and for both of them tells us that we will receive long life for them. Thus, being that we receive long life for both of them, we will perform all the Mitzvos, and not neglect the minor ones. This that we are saying that one receives the same reward for all Mitzvos needs to be understood, for the Mishna in Avos 5:23 tells us that according to one's effort will be the reward, לפום צערא אגרא. Is reward the same for all Mitzvos, or not? The Gemara in Kiddushin 39b tells us that the reward for a Mitzvah is not given in this world. When the Torah says, "למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים" – that if the person performs the Mitzvah, it will be good for him, and he will have long days, it is all a reference to the world

that – and that is Olam Habah. Olam Habah is a place which we have never seen, and it is not a place which we can describe or explain – for we have no idea what it is really like. The Rambam explains that just as it is impossible to describe to a person who is blind from birth what something looks like, or to describe sound and music to one who is deaf from birth – similarly it is impossible to describe what Olam Habah is. Olam Habah is the hidden world, while Olam Hazei is the revealed world to beings of flesh and blood. It is not possible for beings of flesh and blood from this world to understand what Olam Habah really is. That which the Torah revealed to us the reward for these two Mitzvos is just telling us that we will receive reward in Olam Habah for them. It is not the essence or the breadth of the reward, for that will be determined based on each Mitzvah, how it was done, how much love, etc... However, we cannot fathom the reward to come, thus, there is no description of it.

Now we can understand why the Torah tells us the "reward" for these two Mitzvos. The Torah is not telling us the reward for these Mitzvos in this world – rather the Torah is telling us that the reward that we will receive for these Mitzvos will be received in Olam Habah. The Torah wants us to perform all the Mitzvos of the Torah, and we should not make calculations as to which we think are the most important, and will yield the most reward for us. All Mitzvos have varying degrees of reward, dependent upon the Mitzvah, as well as the way it is performed. However, the reward for each and every Mitzvah is truly great. We have no concept of understanding what the reward will be like – we just need to believe it. It is like a person who is born deaf – that no matter how hard he tries to understand what a song sounds like – he cannot possibly do so. He does not have the ability to have any clue what to compare it to, and thus cannot really understand the enjoyment one can receive from a song. Know this, that the reward is great, despite our not being able to understand what it will be. In the Zechus that we perform all of our Mitzvos with great gusto, may we be Zoche to have וחתימה טובה.