



## *Parshas Ki Teitzsi 2021, the accepting heart*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Edward Ben Efraim and Shlomo Ben Edward. As well as in honor of the Refuah Shlema of Shaul Ben Berta, Sasson Bezalel Ben Batia, Chana Bas Ester & Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Tova Basha.*

Our Parsha continues Moshe's final address to Jewish people. He begins with the law of how a soldier can marry a female captive of war. A mandate that a firstborn son always has a right to a double portion of his father's property. The unique law of a Ben Sorer Umoreh - a rebellious and wayward son.

A Ben Sorer Umoreh is a boy at the specific age of 12 and a half years old who is extremely disobedient and violates certain unique and strange conditions. Some of these conditions are stealing money to buy special wine, meat and many other unusual requirements. If the boy actually meets all the conditions required to be a Ben Sorer Umoreh, he is put to death by stoning at the city gates.

There are over 70 Mitzvahs in our Parsha; some of the notable ones are returning a lost object to its owner. The obligation to send away the mother bird before taking her young. The Mitzvah of wearing Tzitzis and the law against wearing Shatnez, any garment that has a mixture of wool and linen.

However, a question comes to mind: The conditions and requirements of Ben Sorer Umoreh are exceptionally difficult and practically impossible to fulfill. In fact, the Talmud in Sanhedrin (71A) writes that this Mitzvah has not and will never happen because of its bizarre stipulations. So why does Moshe give the Jewish people a Mitzvah that will never be fulfilled? What is the point of teaching them something that they (thankful) won't be able to do?!

The Talmud in Sanhedrin (71A) quotes an opinion that a Ben Sorer Umoreh did indeed happen. Rav Yonason argues with Rav Shimon regarding the impracticality of the law of Ben Sorer Umoreh. He maintains that it can happen because he saw it with his own eyes and even sat on the boy's grave after being buried.

According to Rav Yonason, despite being next to impossible to carry out, the law of a Ben Sorer Umoreh is indeed practical. (It is important to note that this opinion is subject to many different interpretations by later commentaries, which would be beneficial to study.)

However, The Rabbeinu Bachya (*Rav Bachya Ben Asher, a Spanish commentary*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He agrees with the opinion that a Ben Sorer Umoreh never actually happened. But he explains that Moshe gave this law before he passed away **to show the Jewish people how much G-d truly loves them**. Just as there are many strange conditions for Ben Sorer Umoreh, G-d places many unique stipulations before punishing the Jewish people.

Since our inception, we have constantly rebelled, argued, and disobeyed G-d's direct commandments. From Adam and Chava eating from the tree of knowledge to the sin of the Golden Calf after G-d revealed Himself, we have always struggled to follow G-d's path entirely.

Yet, with great mercy and understanding, **G-d placed many intrinsic requirements before punishing us**. With extreme compassion, **G-d takes into account the context of our situation** as well as the intention and thought process behind our actions. For we are His nation whom He chose to represent Him and give light to the world.

This incredibly profound lesson from the Rabbeinu Bachya should give us perspective and reassurance as we approach our day of judgment, Rosh Hashanah. Although Rosh Hashanah is the day of judgment for all of mankind, it is also the day we crown G-d as our King once again. Since we crown G-d each year despite the challenges we face, **G-d accepts us with open arms and love**.

In our daily life, it is imperative to realize that judging others is a very destructive and harmful habit. Not only because we don't know the actual circumstances of each situation. Instead, judging others is an easy way to forget that we have fallen short of our standards.

As a matter of fact, when we judge others, we are actually judging ourselves. Hence, breaking this detrimental habit leads to personal growth and development. Since we stop shying away from the pain of our failed goals and shift our focus on achieving our true potential.

***“Judging a person does not define who they are; it defines who you are.”***

*-Wayne Dyer, author of Your Erroneous Zone*

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*