



THE
SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Pinchas

What Do I Owe This Relationship?

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

One of the greatest challenges in any relationship is that we naturally become more aware of what the other person should be doing than what we ourselves could do better. We notice the affection we are not receiving or the effort we hope someone else would make.

Family systems psychology teaches that one of the greatest obstacles to relationship growth is becoming overly focused on changing the other person. As our attention narrows toward another person's shortcomings, we become less aware of our own contribution to the relationship. Lasting change often begins when we shift our attention from what others owe us to what we owe the relationship.

Perhaps this week's parashah teaches a similar lesson. As Moshe's life comes to an end, he asks Boreh Olam to appoint the right leader for Bnei Yisrael. He describes the qualities this leader should possess and advocates for the people's future.

Rashi explains that Boreh Olam responds, in effect, "While you are asking Me to care for My children, why do you not remind My children to care for Me?"

Immediately afterward, the Torah reviews the laws of the Korban Tamid—the daily offering. Rather than focusing on what Boreh Olam would do for Bnei Yisrael, they are reminded of their own daily commitment to the covenant.

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The word tamid means "continually" or 'daily'. The Korban Tamid was the communal offering brought every morning and every afternoon in the Mishkan and later in the Beit HaMikdash. More than just a sacrifice, it was the constant daily service of Bnei Yisrael, expressing their ongoing worship (avodah) and continual covenantal relationship with Boreh Olam.





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In the Gemara, when the Sages debated which verse expresses the greatest principle of the Torah, Ben Zoma chose:

אֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בַבֹּקֶר וְאֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים

"One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer in the afternoon."
(Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:4; Bereishit Rabbah 24:7)

Out of all the verses in the Torah, Ben Zoma chooses one that conveys the importance of daily consistency and faithfulness, highlighting the simple, unwavering rhythm of the daily offering.

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This principle extends far beyond our relationship with Boreh Olam. It shapes our marriages, our parenting, our friendships, and our communities.

Healthy relationships are strengthened when each person asks not only, "What do I need from the other?" but also, "What is my daily commitment to this relationship?" and "What am I supposed to do today?"

Perhaps every enduring relationship needs its own daily acts of service, kindness, loyalty, forgiveness, and presence. Before asking what someone else has failed to bring today, the Torah gently reminds us to first consider what we ourselves are bringing to the relationship.



About The Shalom Bayit Journal

The Shalom Bayit Journal explores the intersection of Torah, psychology, relationships, and the human experience. Through thoughtful essays and practical reflection, the Journal seeks to make timeless wisdom meaningful and accessible for everyday life.

