

A Blueprint for Couples with Varying Observances

LETTERS FROM THE REBBE

ENCOURAGING A HUSBAND WHO IS MORE ADVANCED IN YIDDISHKEIT THAN HIS WIFE

..The main point of your letter is that there is a general tendency to strengthen religious observance in your home, but that your wife, though she has also made considerable headway, is not yet fully in agreement with all the requirements of the Jewish way of life, and you sometimes reproach yourself for having initiated your move to Stamford Hill.

Surely it is unnecessary to emphasize to you at length that it is quite out of place to reproach yourself in this situation. On the contrary, you should be gratified that you have had the Zechus to illuminate your home and family with the light of the Torah and Mitzvoth and the Jewish way of life. As far as the difficulties involved, surely you know that all good things cannot be attained easily, and, in fact, the more valuable and desirable a thing is, the harder it is to attain it.

HOW TO INFLUENCE YOUR WIFE

Insofar as your wife is concerned, experience has shown that it is usually easier to obtain the desired results through the influence of friends, rather than in a direct way by the husband. For, a wife may misinterpret her husband's intentions, and think that all he wants is to show that he is the boss,

whereas when friends talk about the same things, she will more readily accept it from them. Better still would be to find some women who can speak to your wife from their own religious experience, and how it has helped to give their personal and family life true meaning, harmony, and happiness. Needless to say, every effort in this direction is worthwhile, because it is not only a matter that concerns you and your wife, but also your children.

— English letter, 13th of Tammuz, 5725



WHEN BECOMING MORE OBSERVANT LEADS TO FRICTION BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

I am in receipt of your letter, in which you write about your background, and also about the change in your way of life, since you were raised in an environment which was not one hundred percent orthodox; however, in due course you underwent a change, and became more observant of the Jewish way of life, and this has created certain frictions between yourself and your husband.

WHO SHOULD MAKE THE CONCESSIONS?

I can well understand that your husband, who has not gone along with you on this path, or at any rate, has lagged behind, may sometimes be somewhat dissatisfied that his partner in life has made greater progress, while he has not yet found the strength to follow suit. On the other hand, in such a case it is clear who has to make concessions in order to avoid friction. For the non-religious person it is in fact easier to make a concession, inasmuch as this does not involve any transgression or sin, or even any strong conviction or travail of conscience; at the very most it might involve certain inconveniences. On the other hand, for the religious person, a concession means a breach of strong religious feelings, and of convictions that go to the very core of the soul.

From the above it follows that the partner—if he sees that there is no attempt by the other party to be domineering, but that the other party is motivated only by strong feelings and the conviction of having found the truth, and consequently wants to see a near and dear person share in this newfound truth—will eventually change his attitude, especially if you follow the ways of

the Torah, which are ways of pleasantness and peace.

May G-d grant that all the difficulties and frictions will soon be no more, and that you and your husband may go hand in hand along the path of truth, the way of the Torah and mitzvot, with joy and gladness of heart, and together bring up your children to a life of Torah, chuppah and good deeds, in good health and ample sustenance.

— The Letter and the Spirit Vol. 1, p. 412

WHEN THE WIFE WANTS TO WIN OVER HER HUSBAND

אין כדאי שמצדה תעשה דברים לפירוד מבעלה שי' (באם אין שייכות לשו"ע שבזה, כפשוט, אין לותר, שה"ז רצון השם).

להשפיע על בעלה בענייני יהדות – כדאי למצוא אחרים שיעשו בזה (שאז אין המניעה – שאינו רגיל שהבעל יודה שאשתו הוציאה אותו מטעות שחי בו כל ימיו)).

והשתדלותה בזה יהיי בעדינות וצעד אחר צעד.

— אגרות קודש חכ"ט ע' מ

IS IT RIGHT TO PERSUADE ONE'S WIFE

לכתבו אודות דרך להשפיע לשינוי רצון – יש להשתדל **ובמרץ** אשר נשים ידברו בזה **וכמה** פעמים **וכ'.** שהרי אין המדובר לשנות שיהי' כרצונו הוא, כ"א כרצונו של ממה"מ הקב"ה. ועוד וגם זה עיקר, כמו שמצוה גוררת מצוה כך כו'. וק"ל.

— אגרות קודש חכ"ט ע' פח



Bayis Neman is a dedicated organization focused on educating and supporting couples in building healthy marriages. Bayis Neman provides valuable assistance to those facing challenges, contributing to happier homes and stronger communities.



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