

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

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KI TEITZEI

In this week's parsha there is a description of a seemingly obscure mitzva - the command of sending away the mother bird prior to taking her chicks or eggs (D'varim 22:6-7). The Torah refers to this mitzva as Shilu'ach HaKen.

Some of the commentaries explain that the reason for this mitzva is to teach us the attribute of compassion.

Ramban elaborates on this issue and carefully explains that this mitzva is not an animal rights issue. The Torah is going out its way to educate compassion to humanity. If we can learn to show compassion to the animal kingdom than we have the ability to understand the need to have compassion for humankind. This is the monumental reason for this mitzva. When looking at the p'sukim describing this mitzva, one may notice something out of place. The words used are KI YIKAREI KAN TZIPOR - "When you happen upon a bird's nest..." To describe the words "to happen upon" would make sense for the Hebrew word ending with a HEI from the root... KUF-REISH-HEI meaning by happenstance, it just happened, if a bird's nest chance to

be. Yet the word in the pasuk ends quite differently. The word has been spelled with an ALEF at the end, from the root KUF-REISH-ALEF - meaning to call out.

The pasuk, no doubt intends to describe a chance meet in the field of an inhabited nest. Why would the pasuk use a word that seemingly means, "If the bird nest CALLED OUT to you? Why use such a different spelling?

I saw quoted by Rav Shalom Schwadron zt"l in his Sefer "Kol Dodi" a fascinating explanation to this spelling that its message can have a remarkable influence on our day-to-day life. An individual is walking along and suddenly a bird's nest appears before him in a field or in a tree. There is no such thing as "by chance" or "just happened". Rather, the mitzva of SHILU'ACH HAKEN is CALLING OUT to him. Perhaps, this seemingly coincidence moment is no coincidence at all, but G-d's way of calling out to the person that he needs and requires personal correction in his attribute of compassion. If it HAPPENS (YIKAREI, with a HEI), that this person of all people, runs into this scenario, then what really transpired here was YIKAREI with an ALEF - that the mitzva of chasing away the mother bird is CALLING OUT to him to put him on notice - that perhaps his practice of his compassion needs improvement.

How many times do we find ourselves in situations that befall us suddenly and we throw it up to chance and coincidence, yet, if we think a little deeper, we may be able to associate the happenstance with an opportunity of G-d calling out to us. G-d has unique ways in telling us "This is what you need, this is what is necessary for you to experience." 🚫