Kindness Gone Wrong



**#1**

**Question: If you go to an uncivilized country where they seem perfectly happy doing their thing, should you introduce modern technology to enhance their lives?**

**#2**

**Torah Vayikra 20:17**

*And a man who takes his sister, whether his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and he sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a* ***chesed*** *(Rashi here translates ‘chesed’ as disgraceful act), and they shall be cut off before the eyes of the members of their people; he uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his sin.*

**Question: The description of an incestuous relationship is described as *‘chesed*’ - usually translated as *‘kindness’*. What does kindness have to do with illicit relations?**

**Malbim ad loc.**

*It seems that ‘****chesed’*** *is more appropriately understood as a character trait that is characterized by overflowing and lack of boundaries, which can manifest itself in a positive or a negative way.*

**Questions:**

* **How do you understand Malbim’s commentary?**
* **Based on this explanation, would the following traits fall under the category of using chesed in a negative way? Lack of punctuality, unreliability, lying. Explain!**

**#3**

**TODAY’S LEARNING MATERIAL**

Avraham prepared a lavish meal for the three strangers that happened to come near his tent:

**Torah Bereshis, chapter 17**

*6. And Avraham hastened to the tent to Sarah, and he said, "Hasten three* seah *of meal [and] fine flour; knead and make cakes."*

*7. And to the cattle did Avraham run, and he took a calf, tender and good, and he gave it to the youth, and he hastened to prepare it.*

*8. And he took cream and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and he placed [them] before them, and he was standing over them under the tree, and they ate.*

**Midrash Rabbah on Torah Bereshis 17:7**

*The “youth” referred to in the verse is Ishmael who was given the calf by his father Avraham in order to “train” him in the mitzvah of hospitality at a very young age.*

**Torah Bereshis 21:9**

*And Sarah saw (Ishmael) the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Avraham, mocking.*

**Rashi ad loc.**

*Mocking:**It connotes idolatry … alternatively, it connotes sexual immorality; alternatively, it connotes murder.*

**Questions:**

* **How can Ishmael, who absorbed a trait of ‘*chesed’* (kindness) in its purest and positive way from his father Avraham, be involved in these immoral activities?**
* **How can these actions be explained as having their source in the trait of *chesed* (kindness) gone wrong?**

**#4**

**Torah, Bereishis, 16:12**

*And he (Ishmael) will be a wild-ass of a man: his hand in everything …*

**Rashi ad loc.**

*He was involved in thievery.*

***Robin Hood, Wikipedia***

*Traditionally depicted dressed in Lincoln green, he is said to have robbed from the rich and given to the poor.*

**Question: How does inappropriate use of the trait of ‘*chesed’* (kindness) result in stealing?**

**#5**

**Talmud 62a**

*Women are a nation unto themselves.*

**Men are from Mars, women are from Venus, John Gray, pp. 2-3**

*Men mistakenly expect women to think, communicate, and react the way men do; women mistakenly expect men to feel, communicate, and respond the way women do. We have forgotten that men and women are supposed to be different…*

*When you remember that men are from Mars and women are from Venus, everything can be explained.*

**Questions:**

* **What is something that men do for women that women generally do not particularly appreciate?**
* **What is something that women do for men that men generally do not particularly appreciate?**
* **From this new perspective, is there someone close in your life who is lacking something you could provide?**

**#6**

**Question: Some people may be overflowing with kindness to friends, but forget about sufficiently caring for their own family. What could be the reason for this?**

**#7**

**Question: What’s your takeaway from today’s discussion?**