



לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
LIKKUTEI
SICHOS

Sicha Summary

Chelek 19 | Re'eh | Sichah 3

The Verse:

If your brother, the son of your mother, tempts you in secret or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your embrace, or your friend, who is as your own soul saying, "Let us go and worship other gods, which neither you, nor your forefathers have known." (*Devarim* 13:7)

The Rashi:

Your brother — from the father's side.

The son of your mother — from the mother[']s side].

Who is as your own soul — This refers to your father. Scripture enumerates those who are dear to you; how much more so must you apply this to others and not spare them!

The Question:

Why does the verse not mention a person's mother or sister as a potential tempter of idolatry as well?

The Explanation:

The verse deals with the most common scenario of a person being led astray. Often, this does not occur through intellectual persuasion, but through personal attachments. Close family and friends that we spend a lot of time with exercise influence over us and over our beliefs.

It is common for brothers who share a mother to be closer than those who share a father. Closer still are a person's children, then one's wife, and finally, the largest influence in a person's life, their father.

So the verse lists those who are likely to influence a person negatively, from the least likely to the most likely. But a grown man with a family is less likely to be close with his sister, and is not likely to turn to his mother for guidance on matters of faith. Therefore, they are not listed in this verse.

The Lesson:

The various relations listed in this verse allude to different faculties of the soul – the intellect, emotions, and so on. The verse cautions us that any of our faculties can lead us astray from G-d, because they are “close to us,” we are easily influenced by our own perceptions and emotions and do not always realize when they are misleading us.

Only a firm conviction based on simple faith can provide us with a foundation that will not falter, and eventually fortify our conscious selves as well from negative influence.