



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

ידיה העם במתאננים רק באוני ה' וישמע ה' וידר אפר ותבער כם אש ה' ותאכל בקצה המחנה ... (א-א)

The *parsha* discusses the “*Misonenim*” - the complainers, who were not satisfied with all that *Hashem* gave them. Even after He rescued them from Egypt, the *Yam Suf*, *Amalek*, the *Mann*, and all the miracles they lived with on a daily basis, the people wanted more. They complained that life was not good - that they had it better when they were slaves. Their complaints made no sense. *Hashem* allowed them to vent, before He vented His wrath on them. No good ever comes out of complainers.

Anyone who has ever traveled on an Israeli bus knows that time schedules and overcrowding do not always make for a pleasant trip. The same goes for long distance bus rides from city to city. Families who go away for a *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov*, especially with small children, babies and lots of “*pekalach*” often find themselves waiting tensely for buses amid the hullabaloo of shrieking, impatient, hungry and crying children; the experience is a trying one, to say the least.

**R’ Elimelech Biderman *shlit’a*** recounts the following story, and the lesson learned therein. On *Motzei Rosh Hashana* 5777 (October 4, 2016), a large group of people found themselves waiting at the Egged bus stop on *Rechov Kahaneman* for the #402 bus to Jerusalem. They had all spent *Yom Tov* in *Bnei Brak*, and late as it was, they all needed to get back home to Jerusalem, as soon as possible. The night hour was late, and the bus was not coming. People’s patience was being tried, and one after the other, upset riders called the bus company to complain about the #402 and why it STILL hadn’t come. A few demanded that they send out another bus to pick up the huge crowd of Jerusalemites who needed to get home.

After an additional frustrating wait - it was after 1:30 in the morning - when they saw an approaching Egged bus. But, sadly this bus was not the #402 to Jerusalem, but the #318 to Rechovot. The driver kindly slowed down and a few people jumped on and asked if perhaps he can change his route and take them all to Jerusalem, instead of Rechovot.

The man calmly explained to the group, that he can get fired for changing his route and sadly he could not do as they asked. They pleaded with him. “No one is going to Rechovot. You have an empty bus. Please take us - do this *mitzvah*!”

The driver was literally bombarded with requests, persisting and cajoling him to take them to their intended destination. Finally, he smiled hesitantly and reluctantly agreed to switch his route. He changed the digital display in front from #318 to #402 and after what seemed like a mass embarkation onto his bus, he drove off in the direction of Jerusalem. The entire group was extremely grateful, continuously singing his praises all throughout the entire bus ride to Jerusalem.

As they approached the outskirts of the holy city, one curious passenger had the temerity to ask, “Why did you agree to risk your career with Egged and change your route for us? You know they can track your bus with a GPS!”

Instead of a frown, the driver broke out in a wide smile. “To be frank with you,” he said, “my route tonight was not to Rechovot after all - it was truly meant to be Jerusalem all along!” The passenger’s jaw dropped in astonishment.

“So many people had called that the bus company dispatched a bus to come get them. The problem was that no driver was willing to take the route. We all knew how irate and upset the large group on Kahaneman was going to be at 1:30 am, and how they would likely take their angst and indignation out on the driver. Finally, I agreed to take the route but I made an usual request of my superiors. I proposed - and received approval - to allow me to change the display to Rechovot and pretend that I was not meant to pick them up. But when I will agree to take them all, instead of complaints, they will be thrilled and show their appreciation by showering me with blessings! Instead of viewing my late arrival with contempt and exasperation, they will view it as a huge favor, undertaken at great personal risk. And, I am happy to say, it worked!”

We see from here, a new lens from which to view the way we appreciate all that is done for us. *Hashem* provides us with all that we need and He maintains us on this world He created, with no benefit to Him. And yet, what do we do? We complain about this and that - and lose sight of the big picture. “*Kol Mah D’avid Rachmana L’tav Avid*” - all that *Hashem* does is for our good, and even if it takes an Israeli bus driver tricking us into seeing that, it’s all worth it in the end.

## אשר בחר בנביאים טובים ...

הסירו הבגדים הצאים מעליו .... (זכריה ג-ד)

In the *Bais Hamikdash*, the golden *menorah* represented the purity of the Jewish people. Each of its seven flames signified *Bnei Yisroel’s* continuity and pure culture which is passed down through the generations. In the *Haftorah*, the *Satan* sought to incriminate *Yehoshua Kohen Gadol* because of his sons’ marriages to gentile women. He was clothed in “dirty clothes” symbolizing his impure status and was exonerated by *Hashem* because of his commitment to rectify the issue. Was *Yehoshua’s* children’s faults his problem?

**R’ Gamliel Rabinowitz *shlit’a*** explains that children stay true to *Hashem* by following their parents’ example. Once

alerted, *Yehoshua Kohen Gadol* directed his children back to the proper path and was then commended for his actions.

**R’ Shimshon Pinkus *zt”l*** details Nevuchadnezzar’s dream where his idols were clad in gold. The holy *menorah* in the *Bais Hamikdash* was also made from gold, but while it was fashioned from solid gold, Nevuchadnezzar’s idols were gold plated and finished with an iron/earthenware combination.

Jewish children who lead *Torah* lives in the footsteps of their parents ascribe to the symbolism of the *menorah* and attain “solid gold” status in the eyes of *Hashem*. However, a person who chooses to go astray, ultimately forgoes his “gold status” and ends up like Nevuchadnezzar’s idols - a twisted mixture of iron and earthenware devoid of any real value.

וזאת אשר ללוי מן חמש ועשרים שנה ומעלה יבוא לצבא צבא בעקבותי אחרי מעד וגו' (ח-כד)

The *Torah* commands that all able-bodied *Levi'im* from the age of 25 must be “drafted” into service in the *Bais HaMikdash*. When they reach 50, they are retired from physical labor, but still do other services. **Rashi** says they may still sing and close the gates. We learn a number of fundamental lessons from this. First, in our society, everyone looks forward to reaching retirement age and finally relaxing. The *Torah’s* outlook is different; if you’re not fit for heavy labor, you have another option. In *ruchniyus* there’s no such thing as retirement. Second lesson is based on *Rashi* in *Avos* (כ-ה) who writes that the senior *Levi'im* would now have the job and task of teaching the junior *Levi'im*. A senior *Levi*, or any *zakein* for that matter, has accumulated vast knowledge in all life matters. He has experience that surpasses all other modes of education. And from our *zekainim*, our grandparents, we can learn a lot about life, a lot about living a true *Torah* life with real *mesiras nefesh*.

Last, but certainly not least, *Chazal* teach us that a *Levi* who sang when it was really his job to lock up is *חייב מיתה* because he encroached on his friend’s job. My *machshava* here is that each person has his own niche and role that’s tailor-made for him. If he tries to mimic “*yenem*,” he is defeating his own *tafkid* in life. It’s like someone who is 5’8 that wants to be 5’11, so he walks on tiptoes! That’s a one way ticket to a podiatrist! *Hashem* gave each *yachid* wonderful *kochos hanefesh* to fulfill his/her role. Stepping into someone else’s shoes is tantamount to suicide! Doing your absolute best at your “job” will make *Hashem* proud. In addition, we see there’s room for everyone. Every person can have a job, a mission to accomplish, no matter what his age. In the *Torah* perspective, there’s no such thing as being over the hill or burnt out. Every person, at every stage has what to achieve. Whether its a young teenager, a newlywed, a middle-aged couple juggling myriad interests, or even an older couple enjoying their empty nest - find something positive to do because that’s what *Hashem* put you here for!

## משל למח הדבר דומה

כי על כן ידעת הנתנו במדבר והיית לנו לעינים ... (ו-לא)

**משל:** Many years ago, the famed *Yerushalmi Talmid Chacham* and *Rav*, **R’ Zundel Kroizer *zt”l***, traveled from *Eretz Yisroel* to Lugano, Switzerland, to open a school there. He was asked why he would leave *Yerushalayim*, a city that was filled with so much *kedusha* and so many *Torah* scholars, where he was able to devote all his time to *Torah* and *avodah*, and move to a foreign place where most of the community was not even learned. Perhaps he needed money and they had offered him a generous salary.

His answer came as a surprise. He said that it had nothing to do with money. He explained that before he traveled there, the community in Lugano had invited him to a meeting whose purpose was to arouse the participants to take responsibility for the spiritual state of their fellow community members.

“Don’t worry just about yourselves,” the organizer of the

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON  
THE MIDDAH OF ... רוחניות

דרכה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF  
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

**Rashi** begins the *parsha* by explaining the connection between the previous *parsha* describing the *Nesi'im* and their *korbanos*, and our *parsha* which starts with *Aharon HaKohen* lighting the *Menorah*. *Rashi* says that *Aharon* “חלשה דעתו” - he had so much pain and *tzaar* that he and his *shevet* did not have the opportunity to bring a *korban*. He was “beside himself” at the thought that this tremendous *zechus* would not be available to him. So *Hashem* tells him, “CHAYECHA, I promise you that your *zechus* will be greater than theirs. You will light the *menorah* in the *Bais HaMikdash*!”

**R’ Moshe Wolfson *shlit’a* (Emunas Itecha)** says that *Hashem* used the word “*Chayecha*” which is an expression of promising, but here it was the reason that he merited the promise! CHAYECHA - “*Es gayt zuch in leben*!” *Aharon*, this is your life! Your whole life is one long desire for *ruchniyus*. You care so much and are bothered by the fact that you feel you have lost a *ruchniyus* opportunity, so *chayecha*, in the *zechus* that you have made this your entire *sheifa* in life, your *zechus* will be even greater! Just as you have lit up your *neshama* with a fire of desire to do *ratzon Hashem*, you will light the fire in the *Bais HaMikdash* every single day! What an amazing lesson for us! What is our CHAYECHA? What do we live for?

Do we look at others and wish for a bigger house? For a nicer car? Or do we wish that our children will have *cheshek* in learning. Certainly the true desire of every single one of us is for *ruchniyus*. We want to bring *nachas* to *Hashem*. We look for any opportunity to do *chessed* for others. We are a great nation with a big heart, we just have to remember what we are living for. It is easy to lose focus and get sucked into the materialism of this world. We need to remember, CHAYECHA - it is your life! What are you living for? What do you really care about? Make sure it is worthwhile!

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