

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

וזכרת את ה' אלקיך כי הוא הנתן לך כח לעשות חיל למען הקים את בריתו ... (ח-ה)

When the **Chazon Ish ז"ל** departed Vilna for *Eretz Yisroel* in 1933, a small sum of money was owed to a distributor who supplied his wife's store with merchandise. Despite many sincere efforts on behalf of the *Rebbetzin*, she could not locate the person and repay the debt. Twenty years later, after the *Chazon Ish* passed away in 1953, the creditor, who had relocated to *Tel Aviv*, heard the news on the radio and attended the funeral. Before it began, he happened to mention to **R' Shmaryahu Karelitz ז"ל**, a nephew of the *Chazon Ish*, that his uncle had once owed him money from 40 years ago. R' Shmaryahu immediately repaid the outstanding sum and even before the *Chazon Ish* was buried, the full debt had been discharged.

"This was a special *zechus* the *Chazon Ish* enjoyed because of his life-long scrupulousness in financial matters," **R' Aharon Leib Steinman ז"ל** later concluded. It was known that R' Aharon Leib would only accept "*kessef naki*" - money that was above any suspicion of being obtained dishonestly. If he thought a potential donor to his *yeshivah*, *Orchos Torah*, received his funds via questionable means, he would not take them. A *yeshivah*, he said, must be built *al taharas hakodesh*.

Every year, the Israeli government disburses UN-claimed funds from dormant bank accounts to charity. The owners of most of these assets are deceased, and they have no known heirs. But one day, the administrator mentioned to R' Aharon Leib in passing that *Orchos Torah* was joining many other *yeshivos* in Israel in obtaining funds from the unclaimed accounts.

R' Aharon Leib objected. "Since a person likely has halachic heirs, even if nobody came forward claiming to be his next of kin, that doesn't mean an heir does not exist." The administrator countered, "But most *yeshivos* do accept money from this source. Furthermore, if our *yeshivah* doesn't get the funds, a university or other secular institution may get the money, thereby depriving the deceased from the merit of donating to *Torah!* We would be giving the *niftar* a *zechus* by allowing his unclaimed funds to support our *yeshivah!*" R' Aharon Leib listened to his logic, and smiled. "That is not our calculation to make," he replied. "Since *halacha* dictates that the money should go to the deceased person's relative, we can't be looking to 'give' people 'merits' if our actions are not in line with *halacha*."

R' Aharon Leib was once out of town giving a *drashah*, having left his home in the morning after the *netz minyan*. A person familiar with his schedule, the inner workings of his household, and the large amounts he habitually distributed to *avreichim* and *yeshivos* monthly, walked in and when no one was looking, stole the large amount of cash that was in the *tzedakah* drawer, adjacent to the one in which R' Aharon Leib stored his personal funds.

When he and his grandson returned home late that afternoon, they were greeted by a huge mess. Drawers and closets had been overturned and rummaged through, and piles of clothing and house-hold possessions were strewn about. Obviously, the thief had searched every corner of the home for valuables. His grandson opened the drawer that contained R' Aharon Leib's paltry personal funds. To his shock and relief, not a *shekel* was missing! R' Aharon Leib was very saddened that the *tzedakah* funds were stolen and immediately began calculating how much he could replace.

"*Sabba*," said his grandson, "a real miracle occurred! At least the *ganav* didn't touch your personal funds!"

"It wasn't a miracle," R' Aharon Leib replied. "You know I am scrupulous that all the money I earn should be 'kosher.' *Hashem* watched over the money." R' Aharon Leib then lifted his hands and related the following: "I have always been extra careful to never steal from anyone. However, there were two times in Switzerland during the war that I may have inadvertently taken things that weren't mine. I once picked flowers from an open field and only later realized that the field wasn't public property but belonged to a non-Jew. I also mistakenly reused a stamp. In both instances, I did my best to repay the owner of the field and to make a payment to the postal service in Switzerland." It no wonder that **R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv ז"ל** said that he didn't know anyone with such clean hands in financial matters as R' Aharon Leib.

ותאמר ציון עובני ה' וד' שכחני ... (ישעי' מט-מ)

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

Yeshaya HaNavi describes the feeling of despair within the Jewish people in the aftermath of the *Churban* where they lament the feelings of abandonment that the very earth of *Eretz Yisroel* feels; "*Tziyon says, Hashem has forsaken me ... Hashem has forgotten me.*" But while *Hashem* does answer them that He "*could never forget*" them (*Yeshaya* 49:15), the question of abandonment still remains.

R' Hersch Domaluk שליט"א explains that we often conflate the feelings of abandonment with feelings of being forgotten. However, it is important to separate those two since they are two distinct feelings. *Chazal* explain that being abandoned can hurt a person tremendously, but it is no match for the pain associated with feeling forgotten. This is because when

a person is abandoned, the possibility still exists for the abandoning party to harbor feelings for the person they had forsaken - thereby keeping the prospect of that person being brought back still alive. But a forgotten person is just that - forgotten and discarded - with almost no hope left to be remembered or returned.

So, while *Hashem* allowed *Eretz Yisroel* to be ransacked and the *Bais HaMikdash* to be destroyed - effectively abandoning the land and its people and sending them into exile in a foreign land - He nevertheless offered a glimpse of solace in that He promises that He has never and will never, ever forget His children - the Jewish people - and they will surely be brought back home.

ודיה אם שמע תשמעו אל מצותי ... לאהבה את ה' אלקיכם ולעבדו בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם ... (א-ג)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L

מחשבת הלב

Many commentaries are troubled by the discrepancy between the first *parsha* of *Shema*, where it says ובכל מאדך as a means to serve *Hashem*, and the second *parsha*, where those words are omitted.

The **Ohr Hachayim Hakadosh** explains that the first *parsha* speaks in singular form. A *yachid*, an individual, may indeed treasure his money, ובכל מאדך, over his soul or life, ובכל נפשך. Which is why, says the *Gemara*, the *Torah* said ובכל מאדך last. However, the *parsha* of ויהי is written in plural form. *Klal Yisroel*, as a whole, will never put money before their lives. Therefore the *Torah* did not have to say בכל מאדכם.

I saw another, deep, '*dakusdike*' thought from the **Shem M'Shmuel**. The *Gemara* says that the word מאדך refers to money. Why is that specific term chosen to represent money? He explains that מאדך denotes endless, unlimited, from the word מאד. *Chazal* teach us that one who has 100 (מנה) will want 200 (מאתיים). The pursuit of money is never-ending. So when the *Torah* instructs us to serve *Hashem*, using the singular form, it includes בכל מאדך, since an individual is otherwise limited; a *yachid*, by himself, does not possess every trait needed to serve *Hashem*. Whereas the second *parsha* which addresses a group, a *tzibbur*, need not say בכל מאדכם, because the very essence of a *tzibbur* is all encompassing - they collectively have every trait, every component, needed to serve *Hashem*.

This is a vital lesson, as *Tisha B'av* is still in our rearview mirror and we are focused on retaining our commitment to *achdus*. It behooves us to be part of a cohesive group, a *kehilla*. As explained in the above thought, as a *tzibbur*, we possess all possible מעלות, positive traits, which we can learn from one another and become much improved members of *Klal Yisroel*.

משל למה הדבר דומה

וידעת עם לבבך כי כאשר ייסר איש את בנו ה' אלקיך מוסר (ח-ה) **משל**: Tom Watson Jr., was the son of IBM Corporation founder Thomas J. Watson, and served as it's CEO between 1956-1971. He was a key figure in the information revolution and a legendary leader of the mammoth company.

IBM had survived the Great Depression. Gambling on a post-war boom, the Watson family maintained IBM's employment levels by increasing inventories when there was little demand. Excess machinery and parts crowded basements and filled every nook-and-cranney of their warehouses. Not everyone loved this approach. Some of the board of directors began lobbying to remove Watson as IBM's chief, due to this. He needed to sell the inventory.

At one point, a very large government bid approaching millions of dollars, was on the table, a deal the company needed very much. Unfortunately, the salesman failed. IBM

lost the bid and the millions it stood to net from the deal.

The young executive was summoned to Mr. Watson's office, fully expecting to be reprimanded and likely dismissed. As he entered the office, he expressed the obvious, "I suppose after all of my mistakes you will want to fire me," he managed to blurt out before getting cut off.

"On the contrary," the CEO exclaimed, "Young man, we have just spent a couple of million dollars educating you!"

נמשל: The **Ohr Hachayim Hakadosh** explains that just like a father rebukes his son because he sees potential in him, so too, *Hashem* only "rebukes" those individuals He recognizes real potential in. Therefore, if a situation presents itself whereby a person feels like things are not going his way and he's getting "the raw end of the deal," he should realize that obviously *Hashem* sees potential in him. He is not just experiencing an act of suffering, but rather an educational lesson which he is meant to learn from!

ועתה ישראל מה ה' אלקיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה את ה' אלקיך ... (י-יב)

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

דרגה יתירה

Moshe Rabbeinu asks the immortal question: "*And now, Yisroel, what does Hashem want from you?*" What does He want? Nothing major, nothing too difficult. Just that we "FEAR Him ..." Sounds simple, right? And then ... *Moshe* continues with a long list of ideas: To go in all His ways; to love Him; to serve *Hashem* with all your heart and all your soul, etc. *Moshe* was telling the people that the most important pursuit in life is *Yiras Hashem* - Fear of G-d, and everything else follows. There are many explanations of what exactly this means.

The **Chinuch** equates Fear of Heaven to fear of punishment. *Hashem* punishes man for all of his sins. When a person is tempted to sin, he is obligated to fight his evil inclination by visualizing that he will be punished. But this is really the lowest level of *Yiras Hashem*. A higher level, as explained by the **Mesilas Yesharim**, and one that we should all aspire to, is the feeling of awe in *Hashem's* presence, by thinking about His greatness and how we are so small and inconsequential next to Him. Awe of *Hashem's* great power will also cause one to be afraid of sinning. This higher level of *Yiras Hashem* is referred to as *Yiras Haromemus* - Fear of His Exaltedness. This causes a person to raise himself up above the nonsense of this world and become exalted as well.

All of our material accomplishments are meaningless. In the Next World, the World of Truth, we will not be given credit for how much money we made. *Hashem* made it all happen through us. "What we HAVE is *Hashem's* gift to us. What we ARE is our gift to *Hashem!*"

"הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים" - Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for Fear of Heaven. The only real accomplishment that we may have in life - and truthfully the entire purpose of our lives - is attaining true Fear of Heaven.