



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

כל איש אשר בו מום מודע אהרן הכהן לא יגש להקריב את איש ה' ... (כא-כב)

A *Kohen's* disqualification of a *mum* (blemish) to perform the *avodah* in the *Mishkan* and the *Bais HaMikdash*, is not due to a lack of *kedusha*. The *Kohen* remains holy forever and even if he develops a blemish, he still retains his full sanctity and privileges. However, the *Torah* is sensitive to human nature and avoids placing a person in a position where he may become the object of embarrassment. People stare, people whisper, people say things that they shouldn't. *Chazal* emphasize that the *Torah* is teaching us *derech eretz* and compassion, ensuring that no Jew is publicly exposed to shame.

A number of years ago, there was a young man in New York who was an outstanding *talmid chacham*, someone who at a young age was already *paskening shailos*, leading followers, and showing signs of inner greatness. At a certain point, this young *talmid chacham* came to be tested by **R' Yochanan Halevi Vosner *shlita***, the **the Skverer Dayan** and *Rosh Beis Din* in Montreal. He passed his *bechina* with flying colors. The young man was beyond exceptional.

R' Vosner, who is a very perceptive person, felt that there was something special here beneath the surface.

"Could I please meet with your father?" he asked the young man, who said he would give his father the message.

A few days later, R' Yochanan Vosner met this young *posek's* father. He shook the man's hand warmly.

"Can I ask you a question?" asked R' Vosner in the middle of the conversation, after they had been talking for a while.

"Was your son always like this, such a diligent *masmid*? Did he always have such a clear understanding of the *sugyos*?"

The father was pensive for a moment. "It is so interesting you ask," he finally responded. "The truth is that no, my son was not always so focused, and he didn't always understand. He worked hard to become the *masmid* he is today."

"So what happened? What made him suddenly take off?" the R' Vosner asked.

"Well, here is the story as it was told to me. About seven years ago my son was still in *yeshivah*. A big *yeshivah*, one of the largest in New York. He was a good *talmid* but not very exceptional in learning, definitely not in the top of his *shiur*. One Thursday morning he was called up for *hagbah* after *Krias HaTorah*. My son went up and when he lifted the Sefer Torah, he did what is called a 'reverse-*hagbah*' - the type of *hagbah* that certain individuals only do on *Simchas Torah*. People thought it was a prank. Everyone was shocked at first, and then the smiles and the snickering began. Very soon, the reverse-*hagbah* became the talk of the *yeshivah*. Hilarious. Another one of his antics.

"The *Rosh Yeshivah*, who was also present at the *minyán* that morning, asked one of the other *talmidim* to call my son over after breakfast. My son received the message and went into the *Rosh Yeshivah's* office.

"Why did you do it?" the *Rosh Yeshivah* asked him. He was not angry. He was simply bewildered.

"My son looked down at his shoes. At first, he didn't want to tell. He tried to remain silent, but the *Rosh Yeshivah* insisted that if he has something to share, he must do it now. My son continued to look down at his shoes, but after a few moments, he suddenly picked up his head and simply said, 'I don't know if the *Rosh Yeshivah* remembers who was called up for *shlishi*. It was Yankele, the boy with a terrible stutter. Although it was nice that they gave him an *aliyah*, he took almost a full minute to say the *beracha* before *shlishi* and about the same amount of time for the *beracha* after *shlishi*. I could see so many of our fellow *bachurim* trying to hold back their frustration and demeaning smiles. It bothered me that they were doing that and I thought that I had to act quickly. I had to find something that would divert everyone's attention so that no one would remember Yankele's *shlishi*.'" The father smiled as he retold the story.

"So I did a reverse *hagbah*. And it worked. No one remembers his *shlishi* any longer!"

"The *Rosh Yeshivah* started to cry. My son had shown that he had the sensitivity to be someone who people needed. And from that day on all the wellsprings of wisdom opened up to him." R' Vosner sat there stunned. It all made sense now.

ואחזה לא תתנו להם בישראל  
אני אחותם ... (ויקראל כד-כה)

DEEP, PENETRATING ANALYSIS  
OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

Just as the *Parsha* describes the holy role of the *Kohanim* in the *Bais Hamikdash*, *Yechezkel HaNavi* prophesied about the eventual service of the *Kohanim* in the third *Bais Hamikdash*. *Yechezkal* conveys a perplexing directive from *Hashem*: "You shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession." What does this mean? Surely the *Kohanim* who work so hard to maintain the spiritual level of the Jewish people deserve a portion in their ancestral land.

**R' Yom Tov Lipmann HaLevi Heller *zt"l* (Tosfos Yom Tov)** explains that the *Kohen's* "Boss" is *Hashem* Himself who takes care of "his employees" diligently by supplying them with *Maaser* - tithes. Furthermore, just as a *Rosh HaKehila* - head of the community, can very easily become

haughty and self-absorbed as a result of his elevated status in the community, *Kohanim* can be swayed to corruption in much the same way. A *Kohen's* role is to serve as the intermediary between the people and *Hashem*, and as such their only allegiance should be to facilitate service to *Hashem*. Thus, the *Kohanim* were withheld from receiving a portion of the land (while still being supported through other means) so that they won't be swayed by materialism and lose their focus on their purpose in life.

In our ostentatiously materialistic world, the lesson of the *Kohanim* rings clear: It's not how much money a person has that makes him great, it's what great things he does with the money that he has that sets him apart.

וכהן כי יקנה נפש קנן ככפו הוא יאכל  
בו ויליד ביתו הם יאכלו בלחמו ... (כג-יד)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE  
FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPFMAN ZT"l

# מחשבת הלב

In the first *posuk* of this week's *parsha*, on the two words "ואמור", and then the seemingly redundant "ואמרת", **Rashi** quotes a well-known *Chazal*: "להזהיר גדולים על הקטנים". Advise the grown *Kohanim* that they must ensure that the youthful *Kohanim* adhere to the laws, and not become *tema*.

This is the continuous responsibility of parents and educators who deal with our young. Besides for the ever-vigilant attention needed, is there another idea or method we can implement to aid in this all important task?

The word "להזהיר" can also mean to cast a light. In other words, the adults' actions, their conduct and their very way of life, should mold and influence the younger generation. We should inspire them through our own *avodas Hashem*.

Additionally, light has a warmth to it. If we show them the beauty of *Torah* through warmth and '*hartz*', we have a chance to leave a positive, indelible impression. Our interactions with children can vary as will the results.

The **Chasam Sofer *zt"l*** has a *vort* on the aforementioned *posuk*. *Kohen*, he says, refers to anyone who learns or teaches *Torah*. *Chazal* say that anyone who teaches a friend's child *Torah*, is as if he gave birth to that child. Similarly, anyone who is *machzik Torah*, attains that distinction as well. Thus, "וכהן כי יקנה נפש" - he who acquires a student through teaching him, or "קנן" - through support of *Torah*, "הוא יאכל בו" - HE will reap the rewards. But, "ויליד ביתו", a true biological child, "הם יאכלו בלחמו" - they will eat from you. Meaning they are dependent on you for the innumerable things that may arise. There's a much bigger need for "להזהיר"; to cast on them your light, warmth, love and attention.

In *Yiddishkeit* there's a tremendous emphasis on *mesorah*. With heartfelt *tefillah* and considerable דשמיא, we should be zoche to yiddishe nachas from all the beautiful young neshomos, as we observe them perpetuating that מסורה.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

שבת הוא לה' בכל מושבתים ... (כג-ג)

**משל**: A Chassidic rebbe was known for the joy he felt sharing *Shabbos* meals with his disciples. All week they toiled at their work, but with *Shabbos* they were transformed, their inner holiness emerging. The atmosphere shifted most deeply during the third meal late *Shabbos* afternoon. As the sun dipped low, the melodies grew somber and the weight of the coming week returned. In those moments, the *Rebbe* would lift his eyes heavenward and plead, "How long, dear Father? Can't You redeem us now?"

During one particular third meal, the rebbe's eyes animated with a strange glow. He banged on the table: "I have it, my beloved disciples! We shall force *Hashem's* hand and wage a rebellion against Heaven. The plan is incredibly simple: we

will not recite *Havdala*! If we do not officially conclude the *Shabbos*, we will never have to return to the weekday world."

The *Chassidim* danced and sang joyous tunes long past the appearance of three stars. But soon, their wives began looking for them and one by one, the disciples embarrassedly slipped away to their families. Ultimately, even the *Rebbetzin* entered the *Beis Medrash*, reminding the *Rebbe* that there was necessary work to do and the week had to begin.

**נטל**: With tears coursing down his cheeks, the defeated lone revolutionary poured the wine and made *Havdala*. A voice then echoed from Heaven: "Redemption shall come, and the world will experience a never-ending *Shabbos*. But this cannot occur until *Bnei Yisroel* works to be redeemed; until every Jew internalizes the message of the *Shabbos* and carries its peace into the mundane week, elevating each ordinary day!"

ויאמר ה' אל משה אמר אל הכהנים בני אהרן  
ואמרת אלהם לנפש לא יטמא בעמיו ... (כא-א)

INSIGHTFUL TORAH THOUGHTS ON THE WEEKLY  
SEDRA TO LEARN AND TO ENJOY BY R' MOSHE GELB

# הנפש

The question is obvious: If it says "אמור אל הכהנים", to speak to the *Kohanim*, why must it further specify "בני אהרן"? Who else are the *Kohanim* if not the sons of Aharon? *Chazal darshen* that it is to teach us "בני אהרן - ולא בנות אהרן" - these special *halachos* pertaining to *Kohanim* apply only to the male descendants of Aharon but not the female. However, perhaps, על דרך, we may add the following. For in truth, there are *Kohanim* who are not of אהרן; בני אהרן; we are told that the entire nation is a *kedush*, במלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש, a kingdom of *Kohanim*.

What is a *Kohen*? The *Kohanim* are the משרתי ה', the honored, privileged few who merit to serve *Hashem* in the *Bais HaMikdash*. It emerges that on some level, every *yid* is a *Kohen*, a servant of *Hashem*.

According to the **Sefer Chareidim**, there is a special *mitzvah* of *Avodas Hashem*, to serve *Hashem*. This is expressed, he says, in doing everything we do for *Hashem's* sake. When we do *mitzvos*, when we eat, when we sleep, when we work, and so forth, everything we do should be done לשם שמים. In this way, as elaborated upon by the **Rambam** in *Hilchos Deos* (3:3), our lives will be one unbroken chain of *avodas Hashem*. To illustrate, I once heard someone who was מעורר, that according to this *Rambam*, the time during which one sleeps can be a veritable goldmine of *zechusim*! All one has to do is to think before he goes to sleep that he is doing so to have the כח to serve *Hashem* further. In this way, instead of his sleep being "dead time" between one day and the next, it becomes a huge stretch of *avodas Hashem*, in service of the *Torah* and *mitzvos* that are to follow.

But this does not apply only to our intentions. Our actions, dress and comportment as well - just as a *Kohen* must wear special, beautiful כהונה בגדי, as befitting the honor of his position as a servant of *Hashem*, so too must every *yid* present himself in a way that brings glory and *kavod* to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. May we all merit to contemplate our own *chashivus* as 'משרתי ה', and with that raise the level of our *avodah* בפרט and *kvod Shamayim* בכלל.