

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ושמרתם את הקתי ואת משפטי אשר יעשה אתם האדם ווד בהם אני ה' ... (טו-יז)

The *Gemara (Yoma 85a)* discusses cases where a person has only a short time to live. The halachic principle is: One may risk temporary life in order to attempt to save long-term life. We violate *Shabbos* even to preserve *chayei sha'ah* because any amount of life has value but when a medical intervention might shorten life yet might save it, *halacha* allows taking that risk.

Late one night, a worried father arrived at the home of the **Chazon Ish, R' Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz ז"ל**. His infant son was in a nearby hospital with a severe brain tumor. The doctors had told him that without surgery the child would die within a few days. The only possible treatment was a dangerous operation that very few patients survived. The father was torn between the certainty of death without intervention and the real possibility that the operation itself would end the child's life.

The *Chazon Ish* listened carefully as the father explained the medical situation and the doctors' warnings. When the man finished speaking, the *Chazon Ish* lay back, closed his eyes, and remained silent. The father waited anxiously as the minutes passed. Five minutes became ten, then fifteen. The room was quiet, and the father could only watch and hope that the *tzaddik* would offer some clarity. After about a quarter of an hour, the *Chazon Ish* suddenly opened his eyes and asked the father which doctor had been assigned to perform the surgery. When the father gave the name, the *Chazon Ish* nodded and said that he knew that doctor and he was a worthy *shaliach*. The *Rav* then told the father that the operation should go forward. He instructed the man to tell the doctor that, he, the *Chazon Ish*, felt it was worthwhile to operate.

The father returned to the hospital and repeated the message to the surgeon. The doctor reacted with surprise. He acknowledged that the *Chazon Ish* was known for sound judgment and under most circumstances, he would agree fully with the medical opinion of the rabbi. However, in this case he believed the *Chazon Ish* was mistaken. From a medical standpoint, he saw no real chance of success. It took a bit of convincing until finally, whether out of respect for the *Chazon Ish* or compassion for the father, the surgeon agreed to perform the operation.

The surgery lasted more than six hours. When it was over, the doctor came out exhausted and gave a blunt assessment. If the child woke up within twenty-four hours, he said, there was hope for recovery. If the child did not wake within that time, there was nothing more to expect. The father stayed by his son's bedside, watching the hours pass. Twenty-four hours came and went, and the child remained unconscious. The doctor told him that the situation was hopeless.

Refusing to accept this, the father went back to the *Chazon Ish* and told him what the doctor had said. The *Chazon Ish* listened and responded calmly: "The time involved is seventy-two hours." He did not elaborate but said it with certainty.

The father returned to the hospital and waited. At the seventy-two-hour mark, the child suddenly awoke. He looked around and asked for something to drink. The doctors were astonished. Over the next few weeks, the child made a full recovery. When the father brought the boy to the *Chazon Ish* for a *beracha*, the *talmidim* who witnessed the scene were deeply moved. Later, they asked the *Chazon Ish* why he had spent fifteen minutes in thought before giving his initial ruling. They also asked how he had known to expect improvement at seventy-two hours rather than twenty-four.

The *Chazon Ish* explained that he had been reviewing the halachic principles related to *chayei sha'ah* - temporary life. The *Gemara* discusses situations in which a person has only a short time to live and whether one may take risks that could shorten that time in order to attempt to save the person's long-term life. The conclusion is that when acting in accordance with *Torah* principles, one is permitted to risk temporary life if there is a possibility of saving long-term life. He had needed those minutes to consider the halachic framework carefully and determine whether the operation fit within those guidelines.

As for the seventy-two hours, he said that this time frame appears in the *Mishna* in discussions of medical and halachic status. It represents a threshold after which a person's condition can be reassessed. He applied that principle to the child's situation and with Divine assistance, the child pulled through and regained his health fully and completely.

הלוא כבני כשנים אתם לו בני ישראל! (צפס-ז)

DEEP, PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

While the *Parsha* warns *Klal Yisroel* not to engage in abhorrent behavior, the *Haftorah* discusses the punishments for one who does indeed commit these sins. Through *Amos HaNavi*, *Hashem* declares, "To Me, you (*Klal Yisroel*) are just like the Ethiopians." The *Navi* explains that *Hashem* brought many nations out of peril, including the *Pelishtim* from Kaftor and the *Arameans* from Kir; therefore, if *Klal Yisroel* were to act no different than those nations, for what reason should *Hashem* not move on and find another nation to be his chosen people? Such statements are shocking and completely unflattering for the nation of *Hashem*. As such, how is it that despite the many sins *Klal Yisroel* have indeed committed over the years, *rachmana litzlan*, *Hashem* still

holds us near and dear to him?
R' Baruch HaLevi Epstein ז"ל (Torah Temima) explains in his commentary on *Shir HaShirim* (1:5) that the difference between a Jew and a gentile is not what appears on the outside, but what really lies deep within his heart. *Shlomo Hamelech* writes "שחורה אני ונאורה" - "*I (Klal Yisroel) am dark, but comely,*" which illustrates this point beautifully. Since although *Klal Yisroel* may (at times) be tainted with the darkness of sin, their inherent beauty is still there. Therefore, *Amos* is careful to use the word "כבני כשנים" to show that *Klal Yisroel* were only acting like the gentiles, but that their very essence is good, and they are in fact nothing similar to any other nation in the world.

קדשים תהיו כי קדוש אני ה' אלקיכם ... (י"ב-ג) - ופרש"י דהו פרושים מן העריות ומן העברה ע"כ

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPMAN ז"ל

מחשבת הלב

What is the *Torah* commanding us with this directive of "קדושים תהיו"? (See *Rashi and Ramban*)

The **Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh ז"ל** says as follows: The end of *Parshas Acharei-Mos* was discussing the topic of *eruv*, steering clear of forbidden relationships, one of the three cardinal sins. In *Parshas Kedoshim*, the *Torah* gives us a positive commandment. One who not only refrains from these forbidden relationships, but takes steps proactively to keep the *eruv* at a distance, is *עשה* as well. Additionally, such a person earns the lofty title of "*Kadosh*"; he is deemed "holy" for he fastidiously following in the ways of *Hashem*, as it says, "כי קדוש אני".

The *Ohr HaChaim* adds that this *mitzvah* isn't only for the thirty-six hidden *tzaddikim* of the generation, but rather, as the *posuk* says, "דבר אל כל עדת בני ישראל", - in fact, it applies to the general populace.

Klal Yisroel in *Mitzrayim* was precariously teetering at the 49th level of impurity. They counted forty-nine days, and on the fiftieth day, they were able to receive the *Torah*, as they now reached the 49th level of *kedusha*. The calculation, though, is seemingly imprecise, as they should only be on the first level of *kedusha* after 50 days, rather than the 49th level. It should've taken forty-nine days to exit the forty-nine levels of *tumah* and then on day 50, the *kedusha* climb commences!

Perhaps the answer could be that the effort expended to leave one level of impurity, simultaneously raises one's *Tahara* one level, so that by the time one exits the realm of impurities, he is inevitably at level 49 of *kedusha*!

It is not by chance that these two *parshiyos* are connected. The *סדר מרע* of *Acharei Mos* brings us, as just explained, to the *עשה טוב* of *Kedoshim*. יה"ו that each *gid*, young or old, be able to utilize these special days of *Sefirah* to strengthen their personal levels of *Kedusha* thus elevating the world to prepare for the day of תהורה!

משל למה הדבר דומה

לא תלך רביל בעמך לא תעמד על דם רעך אני ה' ... (י"ז-י"ז)

משל: Once, in the *Satmar Bais Medrash*, the *baal korei* halted the *laining* after spotting a flawed letter in the *Torah*. **R' Yoel Teitelbaum ז"ל** approached the *bimah* to inspect it.

Rather than rendering a swift verdict, he hesitated and requested several *seforim*. For a few minutes, he stood before the silent congregation, deliberating. Finally, he ruled: "I think it is better to return this *sefer* and take out another."

Later, a perplexed student asked, "*Rebbe*, the *halacha* was clear-cut. The scroll was obviously *pasul* (invalid). What was it that you were deliberating over?"

The *Rebbe* replied, "Didn't you see? The *sofer* who wrote that *Torah* scroll was standing right next to me in the room. If I had immediately declared his work *pasul*, imagine his

crushing humiliation. I had to make it look like a difficult, uncertain case in order to protect his honor."

נמשל: *Chazal (Bava Metzia 58b)* equate public embarrassment to murder, stating that when a person is shamed, the blood drains from their face. Therefore, humiliating someone is akin to shedding their blood. This sensitivity is reinforced in the *posuk*: "*You shall surely rebuke your fellow, but you shall not bear a sin on his account.*" *Chazal* interpret this as a strict warning: even when you are obligated to correct someone, it must be done privately and gently, ensuring you do not "bear a sin" by causing their face to turn white with shame.

Indeed the gravity of this is enormous. *Chazal (Sotah 10b)* derive from the story of Yehuda and Tamar the dictum: "*It is better for a person to cast himself into a fiery furnace than to publicly embarrass his fellow!*"

כתנת בד קדש ילבש ומכנסי בד יהיו על בשרו ובמכנסי בד יחגר ... כגוד קדש הם (טו-ד)

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

זינפש

Rashi explains that on *Yom Kippur*, the *Kohen Gadol* does not wear his usual eight *bigdei zahav*, due to the principle of "איך" "*an accuser cannot become a defender,*" as the gold in those garments will evoke the memory of the sin of the Golden Calf at a time when the *Kohen Gadol* seeks *Hashem's* favor. The *Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 26a)* distinguishes in this regard between the service performed inside the *Kodesh HaKodashim* and the service performed outside, where the *bigdei zahav* may be worn. This distinction is difficult to understand. What difference does it make where the service is performed?

The *Lutzker Rav, R' Zalman Sorotzkin ז"ל (Oznayim LaTorah)*, gives the following approach, deriving a powerful lesson from this distinction. Many people shy away from giving or hearing reproof, claiming that one must judge another favorably and focus on his positive qualities rather than rebuke him for his sins. However, says the *Lutzker Rav*, such an outlook is incorrect. Certainly, when standing before *Hashem* in prayer, one must not speak negatively about his fellow Jew, but advocate for him so that he might find favor in *Hashem's* eyes. But as it applies to the sinner himself, one is just as certainly obligated to rebuke the sinner for his misdeeds, according to the laws and guidelines of the *mitzvah* of *tochachah*. This is the difference between the *avodah* done inside the *Kodesh HaKodashim* and the *avodah* done outside it. When standing in the *Kodesh HaKodashim* before *Hashem*, the *Kohen Gadol* may not evoke the memory of the sins of the Jewish people before Him, but must rather advocate for them and seek to cast them in a favorable light. But when serving outside the *Kodesh HaKodashim*, when he is no longer before *Hashem*, as it were, but among the people themselves - then, on the contrary, the *Kohen Gadol* purposely dons golden clothes to remind them of their sin so that they should repent from their ways.

As with *chessed*, *tochachah* starts at home, with an honest reckoning of where we stand vis-à-vis our *avodas Hashem*. Let us utilize *sefiras haomer* as a time of growth and introspection, so that we can truly make ourselves ready for *Matan Torah!*