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time, made sure to bring the right baby, their son. R' Moshe Yaakov was called back to the *bris* and this time when he walked into the room, his face lit up and he announced, "אה, יעצט זעה איך איהם!" - "Aha, now I see him!"

TORAH GEMS

ובמלאת ימי טהרה לבן או לבת תביא כבש בן שנתי לעולה ובן יונה או תר לחטאת וכו' (יב-ו)

In the first few *posukim* of *Parshas Tazria*, we find an interesting discrepancy. When discussing the birth of a son or daughter, the term "זכר" and "נקבה" are expressed: אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר - "When a woman conceives and gives birth to a male And if a female is born." Later, however, the terminology is altered: "ובמלאת ימי טהרה לבן או לבת" - "And when the days of purity are completed for a son or a daughter." Why does the *Torah* now address the children as "son and daughter," whereas earlier they were referred to as "male and female"?

R' Mordéchai Gifter ZT"l explains: טומאה - *Impurity*, is a result of the human being lowering his pristine standards of holiness and purity, and capitulating to the pressures of his *yetzer hara*, his physical desires, and his animalistic instincts. Even the impurity associated with women draws its origins from the original sin of Chava, as alluded to in the *posuk*, "וַיִּטְהַר מִמָּקוֹר דְּמִיָּה" - "*She is purified from the root of her blood*" - a veiled reference to Chava, the mother and "root" of all mankind.

The concept of "בן או בת" - "*son or daughter*" is one that is found solely among human beings. Animals may produce offspring, but only in the form of males and females. Thus, when discussing the birth and subsequent impurity associated with it, "male and female" is the term that is used, alluding to the animalistic attribute of טומאה. Later, though, when she is completing her "days of purity" and raising her level of holiness by bringing a *korbon*, "son or daughter" is mentioned, as a symbol of the humanistic trait of holiness.

ואיש כי ימרט ראשו קרח הוא טהור הוא וגו' (יג-מ)

The *gemara* (שבת צה) writes an amazing thing: At the very beginning of the *Torah* we find that Chava, the only female in the world, was beautified by *Hashem Yisborach* Himself, before He brought her for the first time to *Adam Harishon*. This was done by doing up her hair in an appealing manner. Although clothes were of no importance at that time, nevertheless, *Hashem* knew that her hairstyle would be so meaningful that He completed the creation of Chava with this additional act of kindness.

The **Ari Hakadosh ZT"l** writes that human hair, in the mystics of the *Torah*, is related to מדת הדין - (*Hashem's*) attribute of strict judgement. The more dominance of the hair, through its display and prominence on one's head, the greater the power of the *midas hadin*. For this reason, men and boys, who would be very affected by hair, are advised to keep their hair short (apart from the *payos*). This is alluded to in the *posuk* וַיִּשָּׂא כִי "ואיש כי" *"And a man whose hair is removed is purified."*

Women, on the other hand, are not affected in this manner by having long hair. However, adds the *Sefardi Gaon*, **R' Yosef Chaim ZT"l** of **Bagdad**, the **Ben Ish Chai**, we find written in the *Sifrei Kabbalah* that every female, both young and old, should have her hair bound. This act of binding symbolizes that the strict measure of the *din* is contained and not allowed to extend excessively as signified by long open hair which has a tendency to "spread out far and wide." It follows that for hair to be bound is an advisable investment, and brings in its wake great salvation.

שיהיו בעלים על הזמן, וכמו שמבואר בירושלמי (פ"ק דכתובות) על מדכתי "לק-ל גומר עלי" - בתולה בת ג' שנים ויום א' ועיברו ב"ד את החודש בשנה ההוא, בתוליה חוזרין. והטעם מבואר כי בני ישראל נעשים בעלים על עצם הטבע והזמן מסור בידם, וכפי קביעת בניי כן הוא הזמן כיון שהם למעלה מסדר הטבע ומושלים על עצם הטבע.

ובכן, ענין זה נכלל בפרשה זו של "החודש הזה לכם"

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו וגו' (יב-ג)

In the year 5673 - 1913, a seemingly minor event took place in an appropriately quiet manner, which later revealed itself to be of great significance. **R' Moshe Yaakov Rabikov ZT"l**, the "*Shuster*" or shoemaker, as he was affectionately known by the *Eretz Yisroel'dika* residents, brought his entire family up from Lithuania and after a number of mishaps at first, eventually settled in a quiet Tel Aviv suburb by the name of Shabazi.

Who was this "*Shuster*," or shoemaker? It was said about him, by no less of a personality than the holy **Chazon Ish, R' Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz ZT"L**, that R' Moshe Yaakov "is the head of the *Lamed Vov Tzaddikim* of the current generation!" People who would pass the little house and adjacent shoemaker shop in Tel Aviv had no idea that in fact the person living inside, or standing next to them in *shul*, or mending their torn shoes, was in fact carrying the weight of the world on his slight and humble shoulders! R' Moshe Yaakov was brought up by his father before him to maintain a craft and support himself from it. By day, he fixed, mended and created shoes with meticulous care and quality. In the wee hours of the morning, however, he learned the revealed and hidden portions of the *Torah*, and grew into a tremendous scholar. But after the Chazon Ish revealed to the world, a glimpse into the real persona of the "*Shuster*," people began streaming to him from all over for *refuos* and *yeshuos* - assistance in all matters. Nobody was turned away and no one left disappointed.

Many stories abound about the greatness of R' Moshe Yaakov and it was said that he enjoyed גילוי אליהו - *Revelations by Eliyohu Hanavi*. One such incident, which occurred in public became widespread. The "*Shuster*" was once invited to attend a *bris* and when he entered the hall in which the *bris* was to take place, he immediately stopped. He looked around for a moment and then with the hint of a groan, he intoned, "איך זעה איהם נישט!" - "*I don't see him! I don't see him!*" With that, he turned and walked hurriedly out. The assembled guests and family members were stunned and became worried. Obviously, the holy "*Shuster*" was referring to *Eliyohu Hanavi*, but how could it be that he was not there? Eliyohu is known to attend every *bris*. The father of the baby ran after R' Moshe Yaakov and declared that he would get to the bottom of this.

It took a number of hours before an amazing thing was revealed: Somehow, and quite inexplicably, the baby that was brought in the morning to be circumcized was actually switched with the real baby boy. Instead of bringing a Jewish child, a non-Jewish baby was brought to the *bris*! The parents had no explanation for this incredibly twisted turn of events, but they immediately rectified the situation and this