

הגהות חתם סופר או"ח קב (13) נראה לי

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

אלה ראשי בית אבותם וגר' (ו-ו) – פרש"י חזר הכתוב ויחסם כאן לבדם לומר שחשובים הם עכ"ל

Immediately after the Second World War had ended, many of the survivors who had lost their parents, brothers, sisters - entire families that had been wiped out by the Nazi's failed plan of Jewish extermination - felt that it was their obligation and duty as Jews to defy the Germans and repopulate the Jewish people. Many youngsters, teenagers who had witnessed so much horror in their lives as to be equal in this area to elderly individuals, looked to settle down and get married. In fact, within a few short months after liberation, the city of Munich, Germany, already maintained a sizable population of Jewish couples. Many who were brought to the DP camp in Fehrenwald after the liberation were now branching out and moving to Munich since Fehrenwald was, after all, still a camp. Every *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, people came to Fehrenwald to be with fellow survivors or family members there - and also to be near the Klausenberger Rebbe.

R' Yekusiel Yehudah Halberstam ZT"l, the **Klausenberger Rebbe**, breathed life into thousands of survivors after the war. He had personally lost his wife and eleven children to the Nazi murderers, yet despite his tremendous personal suffering he continuously encouraged and uplifted those around him. He injected faith and trust in *Hashem* into the hearts of so many. It was an inspirational experience to speak with him, or even just to see him. So many downtrodden Jews, owe much of their spiritual rejuvenation to the Klausenberger Rebbe.

My grandparents, Reb Alter and Rushka Kurz A"H were among those young couples who had married soon after the war. As soon as he arrived in Germany, Alter had heard that some of his relatives were alive and well and residing in Fehrenwald, and he had been anxious to see them and be reunited with them. Alter and Rushka felt at home in Fehrenwald as soon as they arrived, and Alter's family was extremely kind to them. They spent every holiday and many *Shabbosos* in Fehrenwald after that first reunion. It was Alter's relatives that advised the young couple to go in and speak with the Klausenberger *Rebbe*, whom Alter had met with on many occasions on his visits to Sanz before the war.

The *Rebbe* knew the entire Kurz family quite well. Alter traced his lineage back to the holy **Ropshitzer Rebbe, R' Naftoli Tzvi Hurvitz ZT"l**, and the Kurz family maintained familial connections to many of the leading Chassidic dynasties, including Bobov, Sanz and Ropshitz. When Alter and Rushka entered the Klausenberger Rebbe's room, they were immediately struck by the special kindness which flowed from his holy face. He greeted them with so much love; they felt as if they were his own children. Alter introduced himself (as he had been a young *bachur* when he had last seen the *Rebbe*) and the *Rebbe* grasped his hand tightly. The *Rebbe* spoke with the two for quite a while, inquiring after their well-being and pouring strength and inspiration into their broken souls. All the while, the *Rebbe* was grasping Alter's hand warmly. They had not realized that the *Rebbe* had noticed a gold ring on Alter's finger, a trinket that a friend had recently given him and he had worn ever since, without much thought about it. The *Rebbe*, with his piercing perception and deep sensitivity, was gently working the ring off of Alter's finger, all the while they were speaking.

When he finally let go of Alter's hand, the *Rebbe* held up the ring and said, "*Ich hub kein nisht gevist az a Ropshitzer einikel trugt a ringel!*" ("I never imagined that a descendant of the Ropshitzer wears a ring!") The *Rebbe* smiled and handed the ring back to a surprised and embarrassed Alter, who quickly slipped it into his pocket.

Alter and Rushka left the room feeling very warm, uplifted and inspired by the *Rebbe*. He had shown them through his words and actions that he truly understood and cared about them as individuals. From his personal example, they gained courage to rebuild, and strength to continue to serve *Hashem* with devotion.

When they arrived home in Munich, Alter took the ring out of his pocket and stared at it for a few moments, absorbing the *Rebbe's* message about his stature as a *Chassidishe* yid. Then he put the ring down on their small table, and went to sleep with the vision of the holy Klausenberger Rebbe filling his thoughts. When he awoke, inexplicably, the ring wasn't there. He never found it again.

משל למא הדבר דומה

וידבר משה לפני ה' לאמר הן בני ישראל לא שמעו אלי ואך ישמעני פרעה ואני ערל שפתים וגר' (ו-יב)

משל: There was once an assembly held in Bialystok, Poland, brought together by early Zionist representatives to discuss the future of their movement. **R' Shmuel Mohilever ZT"l** was invited to lend a religious perspective to the proceedings; however, R' Shmuel agreed to come only on two conditions: That the assembled keep their heads covered, in accordance with Jewish tradition, and that all speakers address the gathering in Yiddish.

One of the attendees protested that while everyone was willing to cover their heads, there were many who were

unable to speak Yiddish fluently. He suggested that those who preferred to speak in Russian do so, with an interpreter to translate for those who didn't understand the language.

R' Shmuel responded that his purpose was to expedite the subject matter at hand. He knew that those attending were good public speakers, and that if they spoke in Russian they would wax eloquent about the virtues of the Land of Israel and neglect to concentrate on the matter at hand. If they spoke in Yiddish, a tongue with which they were less comfortable, they would speak briefly and to the point.

ואלה שמות בני לוי לתלדתם גרשון וקהת ומררי ושני חיי לוי שבע ושלשים ומאת שנה וגר' (ו-טז)

The *Torah* interrupts the narrative of *Bnei Yisroel's* redemption from Egypt to list the children of Reuven, Shimon and Levi. The *Torah* additionally lists the next three generations of Levi's descendants as well as Levi's death at the age of 137. The **Seforno** explains why the *Torah* mentions Levi's grandchildren while only listing Reuven and Shimon's first generation of offspring: Since Levi lived longer than any of his brothers, he consequently had a stronger impact on his grandchildren, which enabled them to raise their children - primarily Moshe, Aharon and Miriam - to a higher level of spiritual greatness. The question is: If there wasn't that much of a difference in the life-span of Levi, as compared to his brothers, how could just a mere handful of years make such a significant difference?

The answer, says **R' Alter Henach Lebowitz ZT"l**, lies in the appreciation of the importance of *mesorah* (tradition). The brothers were indeed righteous men who had a tremendous impact on their progeny. Yet, Levi lived longer than they did. His extra years of life strengthened his grandchildren's link to him and consequently to the entire chain of their forefathers' tradition. Moshe, Aharon and Miriam had a "head start" over their cousins on the road to greatness. They were equipped with a most powerful tool, a deep and profound understanding of *mesorah*. This enabled them to be the most capable individuals to lead *Bnei Yisroel*.

The ultimate purpose of a link in a chain is to conduct the powerful force applied to the upper links down to the lower ones, without any break or weakness. Similarly, every generation of Jewry is ultimately responsible to communicate the full strength of *Torah* as they received it from their parents, and transmit it, undiluted and unadulterated, to their children and the next generation.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

גאולה

Golus Mitzrayim was not just a one-time episode that occurred in history. It actually represents the pain and צרות (from the same root as מצרים) of all Jews in all generations. We all have a "Pharaoh" inside of us that we need to be redeemed from. Redemption is what we pray for every day, for we need it not only in our personal lives but also as a nation collectively.

The **Alter Belzer Rebbe ZT"l** pointed out that the word "פדות" (Redemption) is found three times in *Tanach*. Each one refers to the redemption of the Jew in a different form. The first is found in our *parsha*: "ושמתי פְּדַת בין עמי ובין עמך" (Redemption is what we pray for every day, for we need it not only in our personal lives but also as a nation collectively). This is symbolized by the shortened version of the word "פְּדַת" which is written חסר (without a "vav"). The second, is in *Tehillim*: "פדות שלח לעמו צוה לעולם בריתו" (קא-ט). This discusses the friction between the Jewish nation itself. The baseless hatred, jealousy and lack of appreciation of one Jew to another Jew who is not exactly like him, is the root cause of all our suffering, and needs a greater level of "redemption" - symbolized by the word "פְּדוּת" written מלא (with a "vav").

The third expression of "פדות" is found in another *posuk* in *Tehillim*: (קל-ז) "יחל ישראל אל ה' כי עם ה' החסד והרבה עמו פדות" (קל-ז) This refers to a Jew's individual relationship with *Hashem*. His own *Avodas Hashem* and *Avodas Hamidos* need the most redemption - and yet *Hashem* tells every one of His children: "Turn to Me and ask for redemption." In turn: "והרבה עמו" - He will shower us with Divine assistance, so that we can truly be redeemed and free to come ever closer to Him.

TORAH GEMS

ויקרא פרעה למשה ולאהרן ויאמר העתירו אלי ה' ויסר הצפרדעים ממני ומעמי ואשלחוה העם (ו-ד)

Rashi quotes the *Medrash Tanchuma* that the plague of frogs (צפרדע) began when one large frog ascended from the Nile River. The Egyptians came and hit it and miraculously, swarms of frogs streamed forth, quickly engulfing the entire country. The more the Egyptians attacked the frog, the more Egypt became inundated with the croaking reptiles. After a while, Pharaoh realized that pelting the frog with stones and the like was only exacerbating the problem. Therefore, Pharaoh summoned Moshe and Aharon and said, "*Entreat Hashem that He remove the frogs from me and my people.*" Pharaoh saw that there was no natural means to fight this plague. Only *tefillah* could help.

R' Avraham Pam ZT"l comments that this *Medrash* illustrates the great difficulty in dealing with the most deadly epidemic of our generation: the spread of terrorism. For example, in the 1960's, the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) was a relatively small threat to the security of Israel. Yet after an attack was met with a military response, the danger of terrorism multiplied and mushroomed rapidly. The original group spawned dozens of small splinter factions, even more violent and deadly than the parent organization. Also, since the terrorists were spread out far and wide, it became harder and harder to wipe them out. Even if a group of terrorists was caught and killed, it seemed that there were immediately others who took their place.

This plague has spread all around the globe, and the nations of the world are virtually powerless to stamp it out. The fear of terror grows worse and worse, with no apparent way to stop it. We are not involved in matters of defense, but we can do our part by following the lead of *Moshe Rabbeinu* and beseeching *Hashem* for mercy and protection from this modern-day plague.

דרגת יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ושמתי פדת בין עמי ובין עמך למחר יהיה האות הזה וגר' (ח-ט)

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