

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויגדל משה ויצא אל אחיו וירא ככבלתם וירא איש מצרי מכה איש עברי מאחיו ... (ב-יא)

R’ Simcha Zissel ז”ל of Kelm notes that *Parshas Shemos* introduces us to *Moshe Rabbeinu*. From now until the end of the *Torah*, we will be learning and studying about the life and greatness of *Moshe Rabbeinu*. He was the prophet who spoke to Hashem “face to face” and was the man who taught all of the *Torah* to the Jewish people. Moshe exhibited the quality which every Jew should have, but most importantly it is a quality that is absolutely essential for the leader of the Jewish people - the quality of participating in the burden of his fellow man, feeling his pain, and empathizing with his suffering.

On the evening of December 24, 1944, in the the camp of Hauhenstein, near Kaminetz, something unusual occurred. Many in this camp were in the infirmary, sick and weakened from the slave labor and lack of proper nutrition. If only they had more food, more of them could be saved. On this eve of the gentile holiday, to everyone’s surprise, the camp’s inmates were given double portions of bread, sugar and margarine.

As they stood on line to receive their extra rations, a young man, a hero, by the name of Shimon Zricken, had an inspiration. If everyone would donate a small portion of their rations, some of the sick people in the infirmary could be saved. He got up on a box at the head of the line and spoke. “We have a great opportunity to save some of our people. There are sick people in the infirmary who are starving. Let us join together in this great *mitzvah* of saving lives. Everyone should give something from their rations in order to save our starving brothers.” Immediately the soul of the Jews was awakened, and they gave away part of their rations to save these weakened people.

The next day after work, Shimon was called into the office of the Nazi commander. On his way he met another man, the camp secretary, who told him that he’d just been sentenced to death because he had organized a “Communist gathering” and called for a rebellion. When he entered the office, the Nazi demanded to know by what right Shimon had organized the gathering and what kind of ideas was he was bringing into the camp, speaking publicly as though he were in the Kremlin.

Shimon was petrified but still managed to ask the Nazi for permission to say his last words before his execution. The words that came out of his mouth were like thunderbolts from Heaven.

“We Jews are forgotten from the world! No one cares about us. The only ones who can take care of us is ourselves, and only we can understand the pain of one another here. I know that there is nothing wrong with our sick friends except a lack of food. And if we won’t have pity on them, who will? We share a common destiny. You have made us collectively responsible. Not only are we brothers in faith, but also in our pain and affliction. I did what I did for the sole purpose of saving lives, Jewish lives, and in that way they would be able to work again for you - for the Reich!” He spoke this way for a long time and miraculously, the Nazi devil began to soften. Suddenly, the officer looked up and said one word: “Out.”

Shimon ran as fast as his legs could carry him. Word got around that not only had he been acquitted from death, but that he was going to become “an elder spokesman of the Jews.” This sadistic Nazi removed the previous elder who had reported him for his “crime” and installed Shimon in his place.

However, the victory was short-lived. The next day, he was called back to the office. The Nazi commander handed him a whip and said, “From now on, you will be in charge. With this whip you will hit the Jews hard and make them work!”

Shimon felt miserable. Hit another *Yid*? How could he? Once again, he begged the Nazi for permission to speak. “Sir, I cannot hit the prisoners. They are my brothers, brothers of one destiny, brothers of pain. I cannot hit people from my own nation, but I guarantee that the quota of work will be done.” For the second time in two days, a miracle occurred and the Nazi appeared almost normal. Then he looked at Shimon in wonder and barked, “Get out, you dirty Jew!” Shimon was saved from two horrors, one worse than the other - his own death paling in comparison with torturing his poor brethren.

את מי יודע דעה ואת מי יבין שמועה נמוכי מחלב... (שעי' כח-ט)

Yeshaya HaNavi discusses the many privations endured by *Yaakov Avinu* and his family during their journey to Egypt, and he relates the devastating fall of *Malchus Yisroel* to the depths of impurity. In his prophecy, *Yeshaya* questions if there is anyone left in the doomed kingdom to relay *Hashem’s* word and speculates on whether it would be better to start fresh with newborn babies who have just been weaned from their mothers. But what does one have to do with the other?

R’ Yitzchok Sorotzkin *shlita* (Rinas Yitzchok) explains that *Chazal* (*Sota 12b*) say, upon discovering baby Moshe in the water, Basya took him around to all the Egyptian wet-nurses, but he refused to nurse from any of them because as **Rashi** explains, “*A mouth that in the future will speak*

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

with the Divine Presence should nurse something impure?” This understanding is derived from the words of *Yeshaya*, “*Whom shall one teach knowledge? And whom shall one make understand the message?*” The answer is: “*Those who are weaned from [their mother’s] milk ...*” (*Yeshaya* 28:9). The *Torah* should be taught to the one who did not want to nurse from the milk of a gentile woman - *Moshe Rabbeinu*.

Says **R’ Yitzchok**, even the greatest *Talmid Chacham* needs to have the basics of *Siyata D’Shmaya* to ensure that nothing impure enters his body, through his mind or mouth. This is because he is charged with the most important task of all, teaching *Hashem’s* holy *Torah* to our children. How careful must we all be with what we allow to enter our own bodies.

ה' אלקי אברהם אלקי יצחק ואלקי יעקב שלחנו אליכם זה שמי לעולם וזה זכרי לדר דר ... (ג-טז)

During the dialogue between *Hashem Yisborach* and *Moshe Rabbeinu* at the burning bush, which ultimately leads to Moshe’s shlichus to go before Pharaoh and tell him to let the Jewish people go free from *Mitzrayim*, *Hashem* tells Moshe to relate to the *Yidden* that he was sent to them by the G-d of the *Avos*. And then the *posuk* continues with the above captioned verse. What are these two elements of “זה שמי” and “זה זכרי”? And why the change from “לעולם” to “לדר דר”?

The **Meshech Chochma** says the following *psbat*: The words and connotation of “זה שמי” refer to the *zechus* of the *Avos* who proclaimed the manifestation of *Hashem’s* name in this world. Their merit lasts forever. Thus, “זה שמי” - those *zechus Avos* are “לעולם” - everlasting. The words “זה זכרי” refer to the *nissim* and miraculous events of *yetzias Mitzrayim*. Many of our *mitzvos*, even generations later, connect us to that time as we are constantly proclaiming מצרים ליציאת מצרים.

However, as we are taught, the miracles that occurred then will pale in comparison to those of *נמות המשוח*. Hence, it is only “זה זכרי” - those memories of *Mitzrayim* are “לדר דר” - for many generations, but not forever.

It is worthy to note that **R’ Meir Simcha ז”ל** quotes **Rabbeinu Tam** in *Maseches Shabbos 55a* who expounds on the *Gemara* there which says that *זכות אבות* did indeed expire. **Tosafos** says, though, that although *זכות אבות* may have expired, the *זכות אבות* won’t ever be terminated. The obvious question on this is from the first *beracha* of *עשרה* in which we say that *Hashem* is “זוכר חסדי אבות”. Perhaps we can say that although their *zechusim* may have unfortunately been depleted, the pipeline they created for us through which our supplications can ascend to the heavens, still exists. We are therefore able to say וזוכר because in this case *זכות אבות* refers not to their actual merits, but to the avenues they so lovingly paved for us all. May all our *tefillos* be answered לטובה *b’zechusam*. ע"ה

משל למה הדבר דומה

ויקח איש מבית לוי ויקח את בת לוי ... (ב-א)

משל: A man made an appointment to see his rabbi. At the appointment he put forth a request that the rabbi make him a Levi. The rabbi was taken aback but tactfully replied that as much as he would like to accommodate the request, this is one thing he cannot possibly do. The man offered the rabbi a thousand dollars. Again, the rabbi politely explained that there is no such ceremony or ritual, and no way he can help.

This went on for several days and so did the offer. Finally, the persistent individual offered a contribution of a million dollars to the rabbi’s *shul*. Seeing no real way out, the rabbi figured he’ll just play along and make the guy a Levi ...

“Meet me tomorrow at the *mikvah*,” the rabbi told him. “I will see what I can do for you.” Sure enough, the next day, the rabbi said that upon further research he found an obscure

תוראן ובמקרה את האלקים ולא עשו כאשר דבר אליהם מלך מצרים ותחין את הילדים ... (א-ט)

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

The *posuk* praises the *Yiras Shamayim* of the Jewish midwives rather than their desire to do *chesed*. Yocheved and Miriam, otherwise known as Shifra and Puah, risked their lives to keep the Jewish babies alive in *Mitzrayim*. They did *chessed* all day long, rescuing as many tiny humans as they could, and yet the *Torah* doesn’t say a word about their *chessed* or about their *mesiras nefesh*. The *Torah* writes, “*Vatirena Hameyaldos es HaElokim*” - the midwives feared *Hashem*. The **Chofetz Chaim ז”ל** remarks that *chesed* alone could never have brought them this far. Kindness might have caused them to resign from their jobs, but their intention was to keep their posts so that no one else would do the heinous job of killing Jewish babies. It was specifically their fear - *יראת שמים* - that spurred them on to perform the will of *Hashem*.

When a person finds himself in the midst of a *nisayon* (a test of character), it is the Fear of Heaven translated into the desire to do the *רצון ה'*, that will allow him to pass the test. The next time you find yourself in a precarious situation, just ask yourself: “What does *Hashem* want me to do now?” If one follows his heart and his mind, he will undoubtedly pass the test. As we say in *Tehillim*: “*יראת ה' טהורה עומדת לעד*” - A pure *Yiras Hashem* - “עומדת לעד” - will stand by him forever! How different is the Fear of G-d of a gentile, who is so afraid to get caught that he’ll try to “outsmart” G-d!

The **Nesivos Sholom ז”ל** explains that *יראת ה'* is the true *avodah* of a Jew, like the *posuk* says: כי אם: “*What does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only that you fear Hashem.*” The word for “*יראה*” - “*Fear*,” is the same word that means “*to see*.” Because true *Yiras Hashem* is seeing the Almighty in every situation! Bringing *Hashem* into every aspect of our lives! The more one notices *Hashem*, appreciates *Hashem* and connects to Him, the more he will emulate His ways, thereby performing the *רצון ה'*. This is true *Yiras Hashem* in practice!

מחשבת הלב

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

דרגה יתירה

את מי יודע דעה ואת מי יבין שמועה נמוכי מחלב... (שעי' כח-ט)

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