

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

זה חליפתי זה תמורתי זה כפרתי זה ילך למיתה ואני אלך לחיים טובים ארוכים ולשלום (סדר הנפחות)
Chazal tell us: “*The world continues to exist only in the merit of the breath of the schoolchildren.*” (Shabbos 119b). The Gemara continues: Rav Papa asked Abaye, “Why only the breath of schoolchildren - what about us? What about our Torah and prayers?” Abaye responded: “*One cannot compare breath filled with sin, with that which is free of sin.*” We see that even the *Amoraim* felt that they do not compare to the young schoolchildren - “תינוקת של בית רבן” - who study Torah and daven to Hashem with total purity and innocence. Adults who no longer fit into the category of schoolchildren must nevertheless do their utmost to insure that the Torah they study remains as “clean” as possible. Indeed, we must clean our eyes and our thoughts from that which is improper in order that our Torah and our prayers remain pure!

Rabbi Naphtali Carlebach זי”ל served as the chief rabbi of Baden, Austria, near Vienna (Baden bei Wien), from 1931-1938. Hailing originally from Berlin, Rabbi Carlebach was forced to leave Germany in 1931 with his wife Paula, twin sons, Eliyahu Chaim and Shloime, and their sister Shulamith, but not before he took a heavy beating at the hands of the Nazi SS. By the time he managed to leave Germany, he was bruised and beaten and looked like a man much older than his age. Eventually, he made his way to Austria where he served his community faithfully for seven difficult years. After the Anschluss (annexation) and with the ominous Nazi rise to power in Austria, the Carlebach family traveled to Lithuania, and eventually managed to emigrate to New York city, arriving on March 23, 1939.

Eliyahu Chaim Carlebach relates that when he and his brother Shloime were very young, they would walk to school in the morning. They would have to pass a certain large intersection in one of the main town squares, which did not have a typical street light to direct traffic. Instead, an SS officer would stand on a box in the middle of the street and point in every direction, telling vehicles, wagons, carts and even people when it was their time to cross.

As women and girls would pass him, he would politely say, “This way Ma’am,” or “Good Morning, Fraulein,” and lead them across the street. However, when the two Carlebach boys would wait their turn to cross, the Nazi would heap menacing insults upon their unfortunate heads and call them all sorts of terrible names. This went on day after day and it made their daily trek to school extremely unpleasant.

There was not much anyone could do - or so they thought. One day, right after the *Rosh Hashana* holiday, the two boys were standing at the street corner listening to the harassing message from the Nazi crossing guard. Suddenly, the older brother motioned for his brother to follow his lead. Striding purposefully into the middle of the intersection, Eliyahu Chaim began to walk around the makeshift platform upon which the Nazi stood and in a loud voice, started reciting the following words: “זה חליפתי זה תמורתי זה כפרתי זה ילך למיתה ואני אלך לחיים טובים ארוכים ולשלום” - “*This is instead of me, this is replacing me, this is my atonement, this will go to his death while I will go on to a long and blissful life.*”

The familiar words of the *Kapparos* rang out from the mouths of the two young children and it caused quite a scene. People stopped and stared and the German guard became apoplectic at the sight of two Jewish boys poking fun at him. He began yelling at them and pointing in all different directions, screaming that they are not permitted to cross the street until he allows them to. His continued to point at the boys and at the streets on both sides and while he was doing this, he did not realize that the vehicles he was supposed to be directing believed he was still directing them!

Well, the inevitable happened and two automobiles attempted to drive across the avenue at the very same time. This caused a terrible collision and one vehicle spun out of control, smashing directly into the soap-box upon which the Nazi guard stood. The impact sent him flying in the air, landing with a sickening thud on the pavement nearby. The Nazi was killed instantly and the two Jewish boys ran away as fast as their little legs could carry them!

Indeed, the *tefillos* of the *Tinokos shel bais Raban* have a tremendous impact - sometimes that impact is instantaneous!

משל למה הדבר דומה

כי אני עֶמָךְ ואתה אלקינו **אנו** בְּנִיךְ ואתה אבינו (סדר התפילות ליוה”כ פ)

משל: One overcast and cloudy day, a little girl and her father went for a walk. At one point, they came to a raging river which appeared ominous and dangerous. The only way across was to go over a flimsy makeshift bridge.

At first, the father wanted to turn around but his little girl insisted that they continue across the bridge. Of course, the father was concerned for his daughter’s welfare and told his little girl, “Sweetheart, we can only cross if you hold my hand so that you don’t fall into the river.”

The little girl shook her head and said quite firmly to her

father, “No, Daddy. You must hold my hand!”

The father stopped walking and looked at her. “What’s the difference?” asked the puzzled father.

“There is a big difference,” said the little girl, wise beyond her years. “Daddy, if I hold your hand and something happens to me, chances are that I may let your hand go. But, if you hold my hand, I know for sure that no matter what happens, you will never let my hand go!”

נמשל: On *Yom Kippur* we must remember that Hashem loves us with an infinite love and is waiting to hear our

ברוך אתה ה’ אלקינו מלך העולם שחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה ... (ברכת המזן)
On the eve of *Yom Kippur*, the entire *Tzibbur* comes to *shul* to hear the awe-inspiring words of *Kol Nidrei*. At the end, the *Chazan* recites the *beracha* of “*Shehechayanu*” and everyone answers *Amen*. Why is this *beracha* situated right here?

I once heard a story which can be used to answer this question. A Jew committed a crime and was placed in jail for a length of time. During this period, he developed a friendship with the local Jewish chaplain and spoke to him about various matters of Judaism. When the man was released from prison, he met the chaplain while walking in New York. The chaplain was happy to see his old friend and commented on the fact that he retained his Jewishness and observance of *mitzvos* even while incarcerated. The chaplain told him that he was going to Israel and would be happy to take a *kvittel* with him to be placed in the *Kosel HaMaaravi*. The man took out a pen and a napkin and wrote a few words. The chaplain was surprised that his *kvittel* was so short and asked if he can read it. When he looked at the napkin, it stated simply, “Thank you.” The man explained that before he can ask Hashem for blessings and good things in life, he needed to first thank Him properly! He wouldn’t ask for something new until he properly thanked Hashem. Now is not the time to ask, he said, rather the time to thank.

R’ Avigdor Miller זי”ל said that instead of looking at *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* as the beginning of a new year, we should look at it as the *siyum* of the past year and thank the *Ribono shel Olam* for all the *berachos* we received of health and *nachas*, because without *hakaras hatov* we cannot expect another year of the same. Every year, every day, every minute is a gift from Hashem. For this reason, the *shehecheyanu* we say on *Yom Kippur* at night is not only a *beracha* to usher in the *Yom Tov*; it is a thank you to the *Ribono shel Olam* for everything He has done for us this past year. “שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה” - *May Hashem grant us a gmar chasima tova* together with all of *Klal Yisroel*. After this, we can now ask Hashem to forgive us!

DRUSH V’CHIDDUSH

אבינו מלכנו מלא דינו מברכותך ... (סדר אבינו מלכנו)

We beseech the Almighty: “*Our Father, Our King, fill our hands with Your blessings.*” The **Maggid of Ratzki, R’ Chaim Deiches זי”ל**, explained this with the following parable: Once a villager came to town to purchase wine, bringing with him a large empty barrel which he intended to fill up with wine and take home with him. He purchased the wine, filled his barrel and loaded it onto his wagon. When he arrived home and lifted the barrel he found, to his shocked amazement, that it was not heavy at all; in fact, it was empty!

Furious, he returned to the wine seller, shouting that he had been cheated. The wine-seller said to him, “Let me take a look at your barrel. Perhaps it leaked out on your way home.” Sure enough, upon examination, there was a sizable crack in the wooden container, and the wine had seeped out until there was nothing left. The wine-seller admonished his

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDOS OF כפרה/טהרה

What is the difference between “כפרה” and “טהרה” and why does the *posuk* tell us we need both? “*Kappara*” means atonement, from the word “כפר” which means to cover. When we sin, we cover our *neshamos* with layers and barriers that separate us from Hashem. The more covered our souls become from sin, the more desensitized we become to spirituality. On *Yom Kippur*, we do *teshuva*, which removes the coverings and allows us to return to a real connection to Hashem.

That leads us to “*Tahara*”! *Tahara* means purity, which is a state of being that is fully focused on *Ruchniyus*. “*Kappara*” is the way to get there, but “*Tahara*” means truly living with Hashem. Living for *olam haba* and not for *olam haze*! *Tahara* means living a physical life with a spiritual *kook* (focus)! When we say, “**וטהר** לבנו לעבדך באמת”, - we ask Hashem to purify our hearts so that we can REALLY serve Him. Only with *Tahara* can we live life the way we are supposed to.

Sometimes we feel like all this talk about *teshuva*, and changing ourselves is a bit heavy. “I keep *Shabbos*, eat *kosher*, send my kids to the best *yeshivos* and give *zedaka* to the needy. Why should I change? What’s wrong with my nice *frum*, *Torahdik*, *yeshivish* life?” The answer is that although we live *frum* lives, our focus is mainly on the material. Imagine if tomorrow all food would have no taste! Everything we eat would be totally bland. What would you think? “Great! Now we won’t spend so much time eating and going to restaurants! We will be able to focus more on spiritual matters!” Or will you say, “No more BBQs, fancy dinners and delicious desserts? No way!” Some feel that life is just not worth living without physical pleasures! THIS is the focus we need to change! Our enjoyment in life should come from *Tahara* - living with Hashem. This is what we hope to accomplish this *Yom Kippur* so that we will be *zoche* to real life in this world. Physical existence with a spiritual *kook*!

מחשבת הלב

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

customer, “Next time you want to purchase wine, make sure that you bring a container capable of holding what you buy. Otherwise you will have no one to blame but yourself when you arrive home with an empty barrel.”

And so we pray to Hashem, said the *Maggid*, that He shower us with His blessings. Sometimes when we do receive His blessings, though, we let them “slip through our fingers” by not making the most of them. Thus, we pray that we should be strong, whole vessels worthy of containing the Divine blessings. This is similar to the case of a bride and groom under the *chupa*. The groom places the ring on his bride’s finger and declares: “*You are consecrated to me with this ring ...*” In other words, we have been blessed by being brought together by Hashem, but we must make sure, as I place this ring on your finger, that we do not let this blessing slip through our fingers. We must vow to appreciate and use all we are given to build a holy life and fine family together.

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לומר אתכם מכל חטאתיכם ... (ויקרא מז-ל)

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