

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב יְמֵי שְׁנֵי מִגֻּרֵי שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָת שָׁנָה מֵקֵץ וְרַעִים הָיוּ יְמֵי שְׁנֵי דָרִי' (מז-ט)

The **Rebbe of Rimanov, R' Tzvi Hirsch Hakohen זי"ל**, was not born into an illustrious lineage, nor was he a child prodigy. He was born into a simple family and was orphaned at a very young age. He was taken in by a local tailor, who tried to teach him a trade, but R' Tzvi Hirsch had a lofty soul, and was handpicked by **R' Menachem Mendel Rimanover זי"ל**, to succeed him as the *Rebbe* of Rimanov. Many people flocked to R' Tzvi Hirsch for his wise and sage advice.

R' Tzvi Hirsch used to say, "I never had much success as a tailor. I did, however, learn two very important things from my teacher. When he used to give me a garment that was old and torn, he would say, 'Be careful to sew up the tear so that it is as good as the original.' On the other hand, when he would give me a new piece of cloth, he would say, 'Be careful not to ruin the good material that I have given you.' These two things I have never forgotten," R' Tzvi Hirsch would say. "I have always tried to repair the tears in my soul so that I may return it to my Maker in as close as possible to its original condition. On the other hand, I watch every good quality that I have acquired so as not to ruin it"

A *chasid* from a neighboring town once came to R' Tzvi Hirsch with quite an unusual dilemma. He implored the *Rebbe* to somehow intercede so that his father-in-law would die. "What? What do you mean?" exclaimed R' Tzvi Hirsch.

"Well, my father-in-law is very old, already more than 100 years," explained the *chasid*. "He can't really do much for himself, and he is miserable most of the time. He doesn't learn and doesn't *daven* any more. He sits from dawn till dusk and does nothing. It would seem that he has had enough of life already, but he just keeps hanging on day after day, week after week, year after year. Please, ease his pain and ask *Hashem* to take his *neshama* back to its rightful place in heaven!"

R' Tzvi Hirsch didn't really know what to say, but he reasoned that a *yid* who lived to such a ripe old age must have some kind of merit. He told the *chasid* to bring the old man to Rimanov so he may talk to him.

So they picked up the old man and brought him to Rimanov. They carried him in on a stretcher and placed him in front of R' Tzvi Hirsch. The *Rebbe* began to ask the old man questions about his life. He soon learned that the old man had been a simple *baal agalah* - wagon driver, all of his life. He *davened* every morning, but his real interest was to get to breakfast. He went to *Shul* on *Shabbos*, but the *cholent* was his ultimate goal. R' Tzvi Hirsch peppered him with more questions to find out if the old Jew could remember any reason that might account for his many years. Maybe there was some special *mitzvah* that he did once, or possibly he had been to a *Tzaddik* on some special occasion and received a *beracha*.

The old Jew thought about this for a moment and then he recalled that he had once been in the town of Lizhensk, and when he came to the *shul* one day, he heard the loudest singing and witnessed the wildest dancing he had ever seen. He peeked inside and saw dozens of empty bottles on the table. Hoping to join in the revelry, he went inside and saw a circle of men dancing feverishly around one man in the middle. The man was tall, with a face red like fire and he was dancing with his eyes closed. The rest of the men were all singing loudly and dancing with great inspiration around him.

At this point, R' Tzvi Hirsch stopped the old man exclaiming that now he understood everything. The tall one in the middle was none other than the holy *Rebbe, R' Elimelech* of **Lizhensk זי"ל**. He explained that it is a well known *kabbala*, that whoever even just glimpsed the face of the great Noam Elimelecvh, would not be able to leave this world until he had done *Teshuva*. Apparently, this old Jew had seen R' Elimelech but never once thought about *Teshuva*.

R' Tzvi Hirsch leaned over towards the old man and started to explain how *Hashem* created the world, and how everything in it was placed there just for our benefit. He began to describe how we welcome the *Shabbos* and how *Hashem* comes, so to speak, to sit at our table, sharing our food and company. Suddenly, a spark glinted in the old man's eyes. He turned his head and let out a deep sigh. R' Tzvi Hirsch ordered all of the *kohanim* to immediately leave the room. The old Jew heaved one more sigh of remorseful repentance and left this world - fully repentant - for the World-to-Come.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

ועֲבָדֵי דָוִד מִלֵּךְ עָלֵיהֶם וְרוּעֵה אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְבָלָם (חזקאל לו-כד)

In this week's *Haftorah, Yechezkel HaNavi* prophesied a time when the divided kingdom's of Yehudah and Yisroel would unite beneath the single banner of the family of *Dovid Hamelech*. Following *Shlomo Hamelech's* death, the nation split and ten tribes went with *Yeravem ben Nevat* while the remaining two tribes stayed under the leadership of the heir to Dovid's throne. However, in the times of *Moshiach*, all twelve tribes will finally reunite and, "*Dovid will be their prince forever.*" Why is it that the reunification will take place under the banner of *Malchus Bais Dovid* and not with the majority of the Jewish people by *Malchus Yisroel*?

R' Yonason Eibeschutz זי"ל explains that in the days to come, *Bnei Yisroel* will be moved to repentance for their past misdeeds and completely cleansed of all evil and wrongdoing. However, many people who had sinned so often and so severely, will be ashamed to repent, resulting in their obstinacy. The only person who will be able to relate to them will be *Dovid Hamelech*, a king who had been through the process of repentance himself. Dovid will be their guide and inspiration, teaching the entire Nation that real *Teshuva* can accomplish anything and everything.

The dynasty of Dovid is essential to the unification of the Jewish Nation and we must all unite under his rule in order to ensure that everyone will return to the will of the Creator.

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מחשבת הלב

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L

וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ גִּשְׁן וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ וַיִּפְרוּ וַיִּרְבוּ מְאֹד וְגו' (מז-כז)

In light of the recent tragic incidents, both in *Eretz Yisroel* and in *chutz l'aretz*, it would behoove us to delve into the *parsha* to gain some insight into how it pertains to our trying *matzav* in *golus*. First, why does the above-quoted *posuk* start off in the singular, and then immediately switch to the plural form? Secondly, why does it say "*Eretz Mitzrayim*" and "*Eretz Goshen*"? Lastly, why did the *Torah* choose the expression of "וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ" - they held on, as opposed to the more common "וַיֵּשֶׁב" - settled?

My *machshava* here is as follows. *Eretz Mitzrayim* was the beginning of *golus*. Every child knows that *Yaakov Avinu* went down to Egypt and this was the beginning of *Golus Mitzrayim*. The *Torah* is conveying an eternal lesson for all generations in our sojourn through our multiple exiles. The message is: Though you may be living in *Mitzrayim*, if you wish to remain spiritually pure - "וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ" - hold on, with your whole being to *Goshen*, to your *mesorah*. Don't mingle with the *goyim*. Stay under the radar. As *Yaakov Avinu* himself said last week, "למה תתראו" - why stick out? Remain inconspicuous - we don't need to attract the attention of the gentiles. If we mingle, we will inevitably assimilate, and show that we are complacent in our host country and acquired a sense of belonging. That could warrant a harsh reminder, G-d forbid, that we are indeed still in *golus*.

Perhaps the *Torah* is giving us an instrumental tool needed to survive and triumph here in *golus*. If we want our *Yiddishkeit* to remain undiluted and pure, we must live like *Yaakov Avinu* - "וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל" - in the singular form, all together in unity, combatting any form of strife or discord. We must rally around each other and maintain our *achdus*. If we are *mechazek* one another by reaching out to help the unfortunate, the downtrodden, sick, and needy members of *בני ישראל*, then perhaps we can turn to *Hashem* and declare "וַיֹּאמֶר לַצְרוּמִיךְ דִּי" - enough is enough! PLEASE bring the ultimate *k'vod shamayim*.

משל למה הדבר דומה

וְלֹא עָמַד אִישׁ אֶתוֹ בְּהַתְּדוּקַּת יוֹסֵף אֶל אֶחָיו ... (מז-א)

משל: Growing up in Manchester, England, in the 1950's, a young boy suffered the loss of his father, who left behind his young mother and sister. The funeral took place on *Erev Yom Kippur* in the midst of a driving rainstorm. How comforting it was for the young boy, to see the **Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, R' Yehudah Zev Segal זי"ל**, standing outside soaking wet, offering solace and support. Strangely, though, when the assembled entered the funeral home to hear the eulogies, the *Rosh Yeshivah* remained standing outside in the rain. The young boy still recalls looking out the window of the chapel and seeing him standing in the rain.

Many years later, in 1971, this now grown man became a major supporter of the *Manchester Yeshivah*, donating generously in his parents' memory. It was his feeling of gratitude towards the *Rosh Yeshivah* for the great kindness which he showed the family on the sad day of their father's

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTSON
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דרגה יתירה

וַיֹּסֶף יֵשִׁית יָדוֹ עַל עֵינָיו' (מז-ד)

Why do we cover our eyes when we say *Krias Shema*? Our Sages (ברכות יג:) tell us how *Rebbi (Rav Yehuda HaNasi)* used to pass his hand over his eyes when he said *Shema* and the **Shulchan Aruch** (סא-ה) rules that we do this as well to help us concentrate. The **Zohar**, however, suggests a deeper meaning: "This is the SECRET of *Krias Shema*." This secret, says the **Kol Aryeh**, is based on the *Gemara* (פסחים נ.) that tells us that this world (עולם הזה) and the next world (עולם הבא) are different in the fact that here one recites the blessing "הטוב והמטיב" on good news and "דיין האמת" on bad news, whereas in the next world only the *beracha* of "הטוב והמטיב" is recited. Why? Because in this topsy turvy, upside down and deceitful world (עולם השקר), we are often deluded into believing that what is comfortable is "good" and what is painful is "bad."

This, says the *Kol Aryeh*, is absolutely FALSE because everything that *Hashem* does is truly GOOD. We see this from the words, "*Shema Yisroel*" - Hear Yisroel, "*Hashem Elokeinu*" - *Rachamim* (mercy) and *Din* (strict judgment), "*Hashem Echod*" - is all ONE: they are both mercy! Who, if not *Yosef HaTzaddik* understood that often in life, what appears to be "bad" is really good. After being hated by his brothers, he was sold down to *Mitzrayim* only to become the viceroy of Egypt, the one responsible for saving millions of people from starvation, including his very own family!

And so when we recite *Krias Shema*, we cover our eyes so as not to be distracted by the illusions of this false world, and to focus on the truth. Our eyes see so many things that make no sense to us. We must cover our eyes and reach into our souls where the truth can be found and the life lesson that everything *Hashem* does is good is not only spoken, but deeply felt and truly experienced. This is the message of the *posuk*, that Yosef can "*place upon his father's eyes.*"