

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת שבתון מקרא קדש כל מלאכה לא תעשו שבת הוא לה' בבל מושבתיכם (כג-כ)
The great *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Porat Yosef*, a leading Sephardic institution in Jerusalem, **Chacham Rav Yehudah Tzadka זי"ל**, was characterized by his love of *Torah* and its Sages, and his desire and alacrity to perform *mitzvos*. He lived simply and encouraged his students to be content without luxuries. His most important mission in life was to teach *Torah* to students and laymen alike, and he conducted many *shiurim* to the impoverished and under-educated in the Sephardic community. Hundreds of people turned to him for advice and he was most beloved by Jews of all stripes.

Beyond the walls of the *yeshiva*, Rav Tzadka was active throughout Israel, encouraging Sephardic families to give their children a *Torah* education rather than send them to secular schools. He spoke at rallies sponsored by the *P'eylim* organization on behalf of *Torah* education for new immigrants, and made the rounds on school registration days, begging parents to register their children in *Torah* schools. *Torah* was his life and he wished to give this life to others.

After the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, he visited absorption camps in which hundreds of thousands of Sephardic Jews who had left or been expelled from Arab countries were living, urging parents not to send their children to secular schools and encouraging established communities to open *Torah* schools for immigrant children. Many many Sephardic families are *Torah* observant today because of the efforts of Rav Yehuda Tzadka.

On one occasion, the *Rosh Yeshiva* needed to travel to an outskirts community for *Shabbat* to promote religious observance and speak to the community. He arranged for a local taxi service to pick him up on Friday afternoon and waited outside as the driver pulled up. Once inside, he opened a *sefer* and began to look inside.

It was a lively ride as the dispatch radio squawked constantly. On Friday afternoon, taxis are at their busiest. Rav Tzadka overheard the taxi driver take a call from his dispatcher offering him a job to drive a customer to the airport in Lod. It was a long drive. The problem was the job entailed him to drive once *Shabbat* had already started.

At first, the driver refused the offer since this meant working after his normal hours were over, but when he heard the exorbitant fare that the customer was willing to pay - six hundred *shekel* - he changed his mind and took the job.

Rav Tzadka was listening in the back seat to the conversation and he was instantly shocked and dismayed, to say the least. He began to talk to the driver and plead with him not to take a job which will cause him to desecrate the holy day of *Shabbat*. The driver was polite - apparently he did not know the illustrious man sitting in the back seat of his cab - but insisted that he needed the money to feed his family. Rav Tzadka continued to plead but nothing seemed to work.

Finally, Rav Tzadka took six hundred *shekel* out of his wallet and offered the money to the driver. “Here, right now I will pay you the full fare you would have received for this journey, so that you won’t lose out by not taking the job.”

The driver was stunned. He looked at the Rabbi and the money in his hand, moved by the lengths to which this great man was willing to go to ensure that he, a stranger, would not desecrate the *Shabbat*.

It took great emotional fortitude on behalf of the simple taxi driver but he finally took hold of the *Chacham’s* hand and kissed it. With tears in his eyes, he promised that from now on he would keep *Shabbat* at any cost.

Just then, the two men heard a crackling on the radio. The dispatcher was calling back with urgent information about the fare. The driver picked up the call and listened with a huge smile on his face as the man informed him that his big fare had just canceled and it will not be necessary for him to travel on the *Shabbat*. Sorry, said the dispatcher, for losing the hefty fare, but the driver responded that he was not sorry at all. In fact, he was happy that *Hashem* was looking out for him!

After that experience, the driver became close with Rav Tzadka, who taught him and his family about *Torah* and *mitzvos*, until he became a complete *Baal Teshuvah*. And not only him, but his entire family also became religious. This “simple” taxi driver merited children and grandchildren who today live lives of *Torah*, keeping *Shabbat* to its fullest.

אשר בחר בנביאים טובים ...

והכהנים הלויים בני צדוק ... (חזקאל מד-טו)

Chazal teach us that *Kohanim* maintain a special status in *Klal Yisroel* and must be meticulous in their service, personal care and appearance, priestly garments, whom they can marry, their calling as teachers and spiritual leaders, and their special purity requirements. In his prophecy about the third *Bais Hamikdash*, *Yechezkal HaNavi* details the particulars of a *Kohen’s* lifestyle and declared, “*And the Kohanim, the Leviim, sons of Tzadok.*” Interestingly, *Yechezkal* seems to make no distinction between a *Kohen* or a *Levi*.

The **Arizal** explains that *Kohanim* bring down a fleeting inspiration from heaven, but once it wears off, the people just

revert back to their old ways, while a *Levi’s* inspiration lasts. His singing and music create a yearning which the people use to get closer to *Hashem*. Indeed, notes **Rabbi Y. Hurwitz שלי”א**, the *avoda* of a *Kohen* is completely devoted to lofty spiritual deeds. The *Korbanos* and sprinklings he performs, do not provide physical pleasure and thus, the inspiration he creates can dissipate rather quickly. *Leviim*, however, draw their inspiration from music and song, and their inspiration (although not as strong) tends to linger longer. Perhaps the *avoda* of the *Kohanim* is more powerful, but without the emotional attachment of the *Levi’s* musical inspiration, one will find it difficult to hold onto that lofty stimulation. Thus, *Kohanim* and *Leviim* must work in tandem to bring about true inspiration.

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לִנְפֹשׁ לֹא יִצְמָח, כִּי אִם לְשֹׂארוֹ הִקְרַב אִלּוּ
לְאִמּוֹ וּלְאִבּוֹ וּלְבִנוֹ וּלְכֶתוֹ וּלְאִחּוֹ (כא-אב)

Hashem told Moshe to talk to the *Kohanim* and tell them they must not become *Tamei* to any dead person, except for the seven close relatives: a wife, mother, father, son, daughter, brother and sister. On this *posuk*, my *Zaida*, the “**Machsheves Halev**” would say a *vort*. It is an especially meaningful and poignant *vort* because it is a true flashback to my *Zaida* זי”ל.

I loved calling my grandfather on *erev Shabbos* for a *vort* from his wellspring of *derashos*. A few years ago, he shared with me a masterpiece. Why does the *Torah* refer to the *kohen’s* wife here as “שארר” and not “אשתו”? He answered, that although she passed away and he lost a loved one, she left him a legacy via his children. So “שארר” here stems from the *lashon* of “שיריים”, something left over. Because that is a wife. She left him over a legacy of children. I responded to him with an additional *vort* that fit in beautifully. **R’ Zalman Sorotzkin זי”ל (Oznaim L’Torah)** asks if the sequence is correct. “כי אם לשארר...לאמור...לאביו”. A person knows his father and mother before his wife, so why didn’t the *Torah* mention them before his wife? The answer is that the *Torah* is teaching us an important principle in life. A person’s parents signify his past, whereas his wife is his future, his generations to come. Although the past is crucial, and even an integral part of his makeup, the focal point of a person is to build his future no matter what his past was. Turn to *Hashem* and *daven* for *Siyata D’shmaya* for yourself and to build future *doros*. It is up to you to build and create a strong future for yourself. Thus, the *Torah* lists the wife before the parents.

When I told it over to him, my *Zaida* liked the *vort*. How do I know? Because just this year he called me and although he was weak, he asked me in a voice barely audible to remind him about this הוספה to his *vort* of “שארר”. So to now be able to bring these two *vertlach* together is very sentimental. May it be a *zechus* for him, for *Babbi* and the whole *mishpacha*.

משל למה הדביר דומה

ישור או שיה אתו דמת בנו לא תשחטו ביום אחד ... (כב-כה)

משל: There was once a beggar who would go collecting door to door for alms. His clothing was torn and bedraggled, his teeth and lips were cracked, and he was filthy, not having bathed in weeks. He once came to the door of a rich magnate who lived in a mansion, with neatly manicured gardens and mosaic paving stones up to the front door. The pauper stood in the elaborate entranceway and knocked on the door. He told the attendant that he was collecting *tzedakah* and asked to speak to the homeowner. As the attendant ran to fetch her employer, the poor man meandered into the ornate center hall, with its mirrored walls and exquisite marble tiles.

Suddenly, the owner came running in and screamed, “Why are you walking around my house? Get out of here now!”

But the poor man stood his ground. “Before I leave, hear me out. In the *tefillah*, ‘*Boruch Sheamar,*’ we say, ברוך מרחם”

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON
THE MIDDAH OF – **טומאת מקדש**

דרגה יתירה

ושמחתם לפני ה' אלקיכם שבועת ימים ... (כג-מ)

The *Torah* commands us to take a *Lulav and Esrog* on *Sukkos* and go out and rejoice before *Hashem*. The *Medrash* explains that after an intense *avoda* and *teshuva* on *Yom Kippur*, *Klal Yisroel* stands proud on *Sukkos* carrying their flag of victory, which are the *Arba Minim*. In the *Bais HaMikdash*, although all of our sins were wiped clean with the *Avoda*, there was one sin that was so severe that even after *Yom Kippur* it required further atonement. The entire *Sukkos*, and every single holiday and *Rosh Chodesh*, the Jewish people were required to offer sacrifices to atone for the sin of the *Tomat Makdash* - bringing impurity into the *Bais HaMikdash*. In fact, the *mitzvah* of *Lulav and Esrog* was carried out every day of *Sukkos* in the *Bais HaMikdash*, unlike in all other places where, during the times of the *Bais HaMikdash*, it was only carried out on the first day of *Sukkos*. The reason, explains the **Chasam Sofer זי”ל**, is that wherever the fight is greater, the victory is greater. Since *Lulav and Esrog* represents the victory over the powers of sin, thus, inside the *Bais HaMikdash* is the place where one needs the greatest strength to overcome the tremendous power of *Tumah*. We can see that since we needed so many sacrifices to atone specifically for the sin of defiling the *Mikdash*, it is something that must constantly be worked on. This serves as a tremendous lesson for us.

The most terrible sin in the world which requires constant atonement is one who defiles the holiest place. Nowadays, we do not have a *Bais HaMikdash* so what is the holiest place for a Jew? “*Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh*” - I will build a sanctuary in my heart. Our hearts and our minds must be utilized to serve *Hashem* and they must constantly be filled up with holiness. Everything we read and see and hear has a strong effect on our personal “*Mikdash*.” When we go to inappropriate places and see inappropriate things, we are committing the worst sin in the world, the sin which needs constant atonement. So be very careful what you put inside your soul. You don’t want to defile the holiest place in the world ... which is inside your heart!

מחשבת הלב

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FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN זי"ל

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