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לעילוי נשמת
ר' אברהם
יוסף שמואל
אלטר בן ר'
טובי ז"ל
ורעיזתו ריזא
רחל בת ר'
אברהם
שלמה ע"ה

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לע"נ אבט"ר שמואל בן ר'
אברהם אבא ד"ל יארצייט
שבת קדש י"א חשוון, תתקא
נשמתו צדורה בצרור החיים

Mazel Tov to the
Mermelstein &
Weisberg Families
upon the marriage of
their children,
Simcha & Frumi
יחד ישיבו לבנות בית נאמן
בישראל לשם ולתפארת

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

המול ימול יליד ביתך ומקנת כספך והיתה בריתי בנשרכם לברית עולם ... (יז-י)

A number of years ago, Rabbi Hertzel Borochoy, a *Lubavitcher chasid* from Rechovot, in the Central District of Israel, visited an auto body shop near his home to have his car serviced. The owner of the shop was a man by the name of Tziyon Kedoshim, a Sephardic Jew, who was nominally observant. He put on *Tefillin* every day and *davened*, but not much more than that. When Rabbi Borochoy entered his shop, he casually inquired how the man’s family is doing and suddenly, Mr. and Mrs. Kedoshim became uncomfortable. They looked at one another, eyes filling with tears, and she finally mumbled, “Um, not so good,” under her breath. It took a bit of coaxing but the Rabbi finally got them to talk. Their fifteen-year-old son has issues: since he is five, he has not grown an inch. He was quite simply ... tiny! At first the doctors thought that perhaps he was just a late developer, but the years passed and nothing has changed. The doctors took tests and prescribed various treatments and hormones but the boy remains under four feet tall. Soon he would be sixteen and it was driving them all crazy. He was becoming introverted and depressed. He had no friends, no self confidence and no hope for the future.

Rabbi Borochoy had an idea. He asked them to write a detailed letter about their problem and he would insert the letter into one of the 25 volumes of *Igros Kodesh* from the **Lubavitcher Rebbe זצ”ל** (the *Rebbe* received and answered more mail than almost any man in the world, including the president of the U.S.). This is a common practice among *Chabad Chassidim*, and at the exact place where the letter is randomly inserted, that is the message to help alleviate their problem.

The Kedoshims wrote the letter and that evening when he arrived home the first thing he did was go the bookcase, randomly pick one of the 25 volumes, pray a short prayer, and insert the letter between two of the pages. Then he opened it to that place and read what was written. It was a detailed explanation of different aspects of the *mitzvah* of ... *Bris Milah*!

What does *Bris Milah* have to do with being short? How could circumcision help? The next day Rabbi Borochoy returned to the body shop and gave the Kedoshims the news. They had no idea - as far as they knew, their son had already been circumcised! “By a proper *Mohel*?” the Rabbi asked, grasping for straws. Suddenly, Mrs. Kedoshim began to stammer, “Well ... sort of. I’m not really sure.” Her husband interrupted, “Rabbi, what’s the big deal? When our son was born our friends convinced us that it was primitive to have a rabbi do it. So we had a doctor in the hospital make the circumcision under anesthetic. But what does that have to do with his height? Excuse me Rabbi, thanks for your help but I think maybe we should forget about it.”

But Rabbi Borochoy stood firm. “It probably wouldn’t require any more than a pin-sized cut to make one drop of blood and maybe it might help. It has to be done anyway according to the *Torah*. It won’t cost money. A lot of older people are doing it”

After a half-hour they finally agreed. At first, their son was horrified, but after a few weeks, he came around. If it could help him, he might as well try. The Rabbi even set up an appointment with Rabbi Yaron Amit who runs the “Brit Yosef Yitzchak Center” in Jerusalem, a large, modern, medical facility, and the circumcision came off without a hitch.

Meanwhile, Rabbi Borochoy became so involved in other things that he completely forgot about the entire incident. It was four years later that he happened to be walking in a shopping mall and heard someone call his name. “Rabbi Borochov!”

He turned around and there was Mr. Kedoshim, with a big smile on his face. “Good to see you Rabbi!”

“Hello! Mr. Kedoshim, right?” Rabbi Borochoy answered. “How are you? How is your wife? Hey! Tell me, whatever happened with your son? Did he have the *Bris Milah*?”

“Yes, of course!” Mr. Kedoshim lifted his open hands to heaven and exclaimed. “*Boruch Hashem*! Rabbi, you won’t believe it. He had the *Bris* and a few months later, our son began to grow. But I mean really grow! Now he is huge! Taller than you, Rabbi! He is in the engineering corps in the army, a real fighter! We are all religious now, too!”

Rabbi Borochoy was invited to their son’s graduation party and he could not believe his eyes: the “boy” was fifty pounds heavier and a full head taller than him! The *Bris Milah* actually affected the boy’s physical body and made him grow! (Chutminim.org)

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

ואתה ישראל עבדי יקרב אשר בחרתך ודע אברהם אחי (ישל' מא-ה)

Following the *Mabul*, the world began anew and once again the people slipped back into idolatry. With *Avraham Avinu's* bombshell discovery, it became clear that there is but one monotheistic ruler of the world - *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*.

Yeshaya HaNavi extolled the virtues of Avraham and points out that the world is forever changed due to his perseverance in discovering the truth and his insistence that *Hashem* is the Creator of everything. It is interesting to note that throughout the *Torah* and the writings of *Chazal*, Avraham is always intrinsically tied with the attribute of אהבה - love. Why is this so, and what is the lesson to be extracted?

R’ Yisroel Meir Kagan זצ”ל (Chofetz Chaim) explains

with a parable. Imagine, a man is shipwrecked, floundering in the water desperately looking for something to grab onto. Suddenly, a tree floats by and the man reaches out to grab it, but instead of taking hold of a branch, he reaches a bit further and grabs the main trunk. Avraham could have easily joined the rest of the world who served a “different” god, but he wanted to find the “source” of blessing in the world. Thus, he made an extra effort to search until he discovered *Hashem*.

Because of his extra effort, a great love developed between *Hashem* and Avraham which is transmitted down throughout the generations. Sometimes, just a little extra effort spells the difference between regular and extraordinary.

ויאמר הכנני נא השמימה וספר הכוכבים אם לספר אתם ויאמר לו כה יהיה ויעד וגו' (בר-ה)

The *Parshiyos* of *Sefer Bereishis* are what formed our nation physically: our *Avos Hakedoshim* formed us spiritually by teaching us what a *Yid* and *Torah* life is all about. Consequently, *Klal Yisroel* were capable of accepting the *Torah* and its commandments, and fulfilling them. The *Mishna* in *Avos* tells us that *Avraham Avinu* was tested (נתנסה) with ten *nisyonos*. Explains **R’ Chaim Volozhiner זצ”ל** in **Ruach Chaim**, the strength that *Klal Yisroel* displayed throughout the generations, to be *moser nefesh* and not question *Hashem’s* ways, is an inheritance from *Avraham Avinu*, when he was tested. As it says in *Mishlei* (20-7): “מתהלך בתמו צדיק אשרי בניו אחריו”. The *hakaras hatov* we owe to our *Avos* - and to our parents and grandparents as well - for demonstrating how to lead proper Jewish lives, is therefore endless.

This week was the *yahrzeit* of **R’ Meir Shapiro זצ”ל** and it is appropriate to quote a *vort* from him on the *parsha*. “הבט נא” *Hashem* told Avraham to count the stars for “*so shall your descendants be.*” *Hashem* knew that counting all the stars in the sky is an impossible task. So why have Avraham try at all? Because if there’s a will, there may very well be a way! Even if that dream seems out of reach, a person must still try. *Hashem* said, “כה יהיה זרעך” - Avraham, your children will be the same, they won’t try solely based on their capabilities. They will attempt the impossible! And when there is a true *ratzon*, they will see *hatzlacha* far more than they ever thought they could achieve.

This *machshava* is something we’ve witnessed with our own eyes - the rebuilding of a world that was, the *Torah* and *mitzvos*, the *Yeshivos* of Eastern Europe and beyond, at a time when rebuilding was but a dream. And look at what our ancestors achieved! May their *zechusim* stand us in good stead and may we always have the determination to try!

משל למא הדבר דומא

וישמע אברהם כי נשבה אחיו וידע את הניביו ... (יד-ד)

משל: The *Tzaddik*, **R’ Menachem Nachum Twerski זצ”ל**, would give his life to the *mitzvah* of *Pidyon Shvuyim* (redeeming captives). It happened that R’ Menachem Nachum was once arrested at night in the city of Zhitomir and was placed in prison. His close disciple, **R’ Zev Wolf of Zhitomir זצ”ל** requested to remain with him. One day there appeared before them a woman whose head was concealed with a silk kerchief, and she asked R’ Menachem Nachum in wonder, “Such is *Torah*, and such is the reward?”

He looked at her and answered calmly, “Yes. Such is *Torah*, and such is its reward.” And then, as quickly as she came, the woman suddenly vanished and R’ Zev Wolf gathered up his courage and asked his *Rebbe*, “Who was this woman and what was the meaning of her words?”

R’ Menachem Nachum answered, “This righteous woman was *Sara Imeinu a”h*, and she asked me: Do you not engage constantly in the *mitzvah* of redeeming captives? If so, how

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF ...

השונדלות ... (יב-ב)

After Pharaoh abducted Sarai, the wife of Avram, and was divinely punished with נגעים (plagues), **Targum Onkelos** tells us that Pharaoh released Sarai and escorted her and Avram out of his palace. The *Gemara* (סוטה מו:) writes that because of the four steps that Pharaoh walked while escorting Avram and Sarai, he was permitted to enslave the Jewish people in Egypt for 400 years - one hundreds years for each step - which *Hashem* in His great mercy later shortened to 210 years.

Chazal further tell us that Nevuchadnezzar, King of Bavel, once wrote a letter which said, “To the Jewish people and their G-d.” After realizing that it was inappropriate to write in this order, he walked four *amos* to retrieve the letter. This showed great honor and respect to *Hashem* and the Jewish people remained in exile under his rule for 70 years.

One might wonder: Why did Pharaoh get “rewarded” with 210 years for his steps while the King of Bavel only received 70 years? **R’ Yonasan Eibeschutz זצ”ל** explains that the average step a person takes is 1/3 of his height. A normal person is three *amos* (cubits) tall so every step that he takes is the length of one *amah*. Pharaoh, however, was very short, only one *amah* tall, one-third the size of a normal person. In order for him to walk 4 *amos* it took three times the effort of Nevuchadnezzar. Thus, Nevuchadnezzar exiled the Jews for 70 years while Pharaoh had them for three times as long!

What a great lesson to be learned from this! *Hashem* rewards a person for his effort, not necessarily for his actions! Both kings walked the same distance but Pharaoh received three times as much! How much more does this apply when we work long and hard to accomplish something positive? Remember, it is not the outcome that counts - it is the effort!

מחשבת הלב

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

דרגה יתירה

ויצו עליי פרעה אנשים וישלחו אתו ואת אשתו ... (יב-ב)

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GU'TTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO