



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

ויאמר אל נא תעזב אתנו כי על כן ידעת הנתנו במדבר והיית לנו לעינים ... (י-ל)

The *Torah* records a fascinating exchange when Moshe invites his father-in-law, Yisro, to journey with the Jewish nation to the Land of Israel. Moshe pleads with him, saying, “*Please do not leave us ... for you will be as eyes for us.*” The commentators puzzle over why the generation that witnessed the open miracles of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and was guided by columns of fire and cloud would ever need a human guide to serve as their “eyes.” The answer lies in the unique role of a true spiritual guide; they possess a far-reaching vision that transcends the immediate horizon, anchoring a community through unseen future trials. This prophetic clarity ensures that even when the road ahead appears completely shrouded in darkness, the visionary guidance established years prior remains a steady beacon. The foresight of our Sages acts as a permanent spiritual map, designed to manifest its navigational strength at the precise moment we lose our own way.

A powerful testament to this eternal light is found in the life of **R’ Avraham Cohen ז”ל**, the legendary director of the Girls’ Seminary in Gateshead, England. Rabbi Cohen frequently traveled to the Holy Land to draw spiritual strength from its great *Rabbanim* and *Madrichim*, and on one of his historic visits, he sought an audience with the venerable **R’ Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld ז”ל**, the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. As their deeply moving conversation drew to a close, Rabbi Cohen respectfully bowed his head, seeking a personal blessing from the elderly sage. R’ Yosef Chaim, renowned for his profound humility and aversion to honor, initially waved away the request, asking why a young, healthy man with caring parents would have need for his blessing. However, the moment Rabbi Cohen clarified that he was not asking for his own personal benefit, but rather for the success of his sacred mission - educating young Jewish women in *Torah* and instilling within them a genuine fear of Heaven - the atmosphere in the room completely transformed. Recognizing the cosmic weight of Jewish education, R’ Yosef Chaim stood tall, declared with absolute conviction, “I am ready to bless this endeavor!” and spread his hands over Rabbi Cohen’s head to deliver a heartfelt, soaring blessing for the institution’s future success.

Many years later, that very blessing was put to the ultimate test when the Gateshead Seminary faced a devastating, unprecedented financial crisis. The institution had opened its doors to welcome dozens of young, vulnerable refugee girls arriving from Morocco, and the sudden influx of students caused the seminary’s daily operational expenses to spiral entirely out of control. The situation rapidly deteriorated into a state of sheer desperation; the local kosher butcher refused to supply meat on credit, the bakeries ceased their daily deliveries of bread, and the greengrocer completely withheld essential fruits and vegetables. Rabbi Cohen exhausted every humanly possible avenue, desperately reaching out to philanthropists, communal leaders, and rabbinic authorities across Europe, but every door remained firmly shut. With a shattered spirit and a heavy heart, realizing he could no longer feed the children entrusted to his care, he made the agonizing decision to close the gates of the seminary and tearfully advised the girls to seek shelter elsewhere, though the vast majority literally had nowhere else to go.

That night, Rabbi Cohen slept fitfully, his soul filled with anguish and despair as he contemplated the ruin of his life’s work. Yet, at his absolute breaking point, the eternal light of the past broke through his misery when R’ Yosef Chaim appeared vividly to him in a dream. The *Tzaddik* looked at the broken director with immense warmth and firmly reassured him, declaring, “I have blessed you to succeed. Do not worry. *Hashem* will help you and will definitely not abandon you.”

The very next morning, the reality on the ground shifted in an instant when Rabbi Cohen received an urgent, unexpected phone call from the Chief Rabbi of London, who informed him that a massive, significant financial grant had been miraculously allocated overnight to rescue the seminary. The Chief Rabbi was pleased to inform Rabbi Cohen of the tidings. The critical funds were transferred immediately, effectively securing the institution’s survival and ensuring that the sacred work of illuminating the souls of Jewish girls could continue unhindered, proving that a true blessing never loses its power.

ויהושע היה לבש בגדים צואים ועמד לפני המלאך ... (זכריה ג-ג)

DEEP, PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

While the *Haftorah* opens with a vivid depiction of the joy that will prevail when the *Shechina* finally returns to *Yerushalayim*, the tone soon turns as *Zechariah HaNavi* begins to describe the frightful scene that will take place in the Heavenly Court of the incriminating angels who sought to implicate *Yehoshua Kohen Gadol*. *Yehoshua*’s sons had married non-Jewish wives and since he had failed to reprove them properly it was as though he had committed a sin and his clothes became “soiled.”

**R’ Chaim Volozhiner ז”ל** points out that although originally the *Kohen Gadol* was wearing “dirty clothing” because of his childrens’ sins, when they later divorced their wives and repented, *Hashem* rebuked the angels and

ordered that the dirty clothing be removed thereby exonerating the *Kohen Gadol* of his sins.

Says R’ Chaim, *Chazal* tell us, “*There is no righteous man who has never sinned in his life.*” Each and every person walks around with some measure of soiled clothing and though he may feel remorse for his misdeeds he may feel it is too hard to repent.

The lesson from *Yehoshua Kohen Gadol* is that we need to remember that a person’s soul is inherently clean deep down - it’s just clad in a dirty exterior. Though it’s not an easy feat, all one needs to do is just shake off the dirt and clean up his act a bit and *Hashem* will wash away the rest revealing his pure Jewish soul.

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר וכו' בהעלתך את הנרת אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות ... (ה-אג)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPFMAN ZTL

# מחשבת הלב

The **Ibn Ezra** says that there was a *dibbur* - “ידבר” - preceding the *parsha* of the *Menorah* to teach us that *Hashem* also spoke to Moshe at night, when “light” was necessary. The **Ramban** asks: Elsewhere, the *Medrash* states that *Hashem* spoke to Moshe only during the day? (**Rashi** throughout *Chumash* also says this.)

In *עמק דבר*, the **Netziv** answers: The *Menorah*, he posits, refers to the תורה שבעל פה, whereas the *Aron HaKodesh* represents תורה שבכתב. *Moshe Rabbeinu* would learn the *d’var Hashem* during the day and review it at night. He, as do we all, needed *שיעור דשמיא*. Hence this *dibbur* wasn’t a regular one, rather it symbolized the “שיעור” - that heavenly assistance, he needed to learn at night. That is *pshat* in the *Ibn Ezra*. But why learn at night though? Was he simply too busy during the day?

I heard **R’ Yitzchok Sorotzkin shlitá** quote another *Netziv* that can shed light on this. The *Netziv* offers a *meshal* of two men who were invited to the king’s palace. One had been there before and knew his way around the palace. The other lost his bearings several times, and kept entering the wrong rooms, finally reaching the king’s inner chamber. So while it may have taken him longer to arrive, he inadvertently “toured” the palace and saw it in all its vast glory. So it is when learning *Torah*. At times the going is not so easy; we may get stuck here or lost there, till we successfully, בט”ד, illuminate the elusive *maskana*.

But, we are fortunate that along the way we get to see many other sites; another *Gemara*, a **Rashi**, a **Tosfos**, a **Rashba** or a **Rambam** - *Hashem*’s “Written Palace” in all its vast glory! Thus, Moshe learned תורה שבעל פה at night conveying this idea.

*Chazal* say, “אין אדם לומד רוב תורתו אלא בלילה”. Much of one’s success in learning is at night. Perhaps this is metaphoric that his success in learning is when he gets lost in the dark and struggles to find his true path, basking in *Torah*’s ethereal radiance. הקב”ה that all our toilings in תורה ועבודת ה' ultimately enable us to see the light of *Yiddishkeit*, and bring us closer to יה”ר

## משל למה הדבר דומה

ומי יתן כל עם ה' נביאים כי יתן ה' את רוחו עליהם ... (א-כט)

**משל**: In May 1972, a heavy cloud of anxiety descended upon Israel. Sabena Flight 571 had been hijacked by terrorists and forced to land at Israel’s Lod Airport. The hijackers issued a terrifying ultimatum: release over 300 prisoners, or the aircraft and everyone aboard would be blown to pieces.

Miles away, in the quiet town of Netivot, the news was brought to the great sage, **Chacham Yisroel Abuchatzzeira, ז”ל**, the **Baba Sali**. Upon hearing of the hostages’ peril, his face grew pale. Without a word, he entered his private study and remained secluded for hours in intense, solitary prayer.

Outside his door, his family and students waited in a tense hush. Suddenly, the stillness was pierced by heartrending sobs emanating from the *Baba Sali*’s room. A short while

later, radio broadcasts shifted from dread to jubilation. In a lightning-fast raid known as Operation Isotope, Israeli commandos had stormed the plane, neutralized the hijackers, and miraculously freed the hostages.

When the dust settled, the household realized that the very minute the commandos breached the aircraft was the exact same moment the *Baba Sali* had suddenly burst into tears.

**משל**: In the *Parsha*, seventy elders are chosen to help Moshe carry the burden of the Jewish people. Two of them, Eldad and Meidad, remained far away in the camp, yet *ruach hakodesh* (divine spirit) rested upon them anyway, allowing them to prophesy. *Yehoshua* is alarmed and urges Moshe to stop them. But Moshe answers with profound humility: “Are you jealous for my sake? If only all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them!”

GOLDEN NUGGETS ON THE PARSHA WITH A FOCUS ON LESSONS HOW TO SERVE HASHEM AND BE A BETTER JEW BY R' YEHOShUA GOLD

## הנחמדים מזהב

After spending time with *Klal Yisroel*, Yisro attempted to return to his homeland. *Moshe Rabbeinu* protested, promising that his father-in-law would share in the blessings *Hashem* would bestow upon the nation. He further described him as “והיית לנו ... לעינים” and the *Ananei Hakavod* leading the way, what advice would Yisro provide? Additionally, the continuation of the *pasuk* כי תלך ה' והיה כי תלך ה' - implies a connection between the two things. What is it?

The **Noam Elimelech** quotes a **Zohar**, that for *Tzadikim* to bring *yeshuos* in this world, they must first create “movement” in the upper world. How is this accomplished? When a person looks heavenward and recognizes the abundant goodness *Hashem* constantly bestows upon him, it generates profound *Hakaras Hatov*. This immense closeness with *Hashem* becomes a conduit for even greater blessing. Rather than focusing solely on pleading for a *yeshuah*, one should reflect and internalize how much gratitude is owed to *Hashem*; that itself becomes a tremendous source of salvation. *Yonah* offered a lengthy *tefillah* from the belly of the fish, but only when he declared, “ואני בקול תורה אזבחה לך” was he immediately released. The source of *Shefa* during the *Shalosh Regalim* is recognizing the gifts, *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the *Torah*, and the *Ananei Hakavod Hashem* gave during those times. **R’ Meilich Biderman shlitá** related a story about a man who came seeking a *beracha* after being childless for many years. *Rav Meilich* advised him to join the *Ne’ilas Hachag*, and truly rejoice. Although it was difficult at first, the man immersed himself fully in the *simchah*. A year later, he returned to share the joyous news that he had been blessed with a child!

Yisro embodied this quality. He recognized all the good *Hashem* had done and joined *Klal Yisroel* because of it. Moshe told him: “והיית לנו לעינים”, your ability to focus on *Hashem*’s הטבה and be filled with gratitude will itself become a source of blessing for *Klal Yisroel*, and in turn, for you as well.