

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

כי אמר ה' להם מות ימתו במדבר ולא נותר מהם איש כי אם כלב בן יפנה ויהושע בן נון וגו' (כו-סח)

The following story took place just a few weeks ago and it demonstrates the incredible *Hashgacha Pratis* that *Hashem* favors on His beloved. A man from *Eretz Yisroel* arrived in the United States for the purpose of raising money to support his family and marry off his children. As many collectors and *meshulachim* do, they bring with them lists of names of potential donors who they feel will contribute mightily and allow them to reach their target amount in shorter time.

This particular fellow had a few names on his list, but one name stood out because it was the only one in that specific city where he was headed. The name was a Doctor Fuchs and the man, he was told, was not only a brilliant medical professional, but also a tremendous *Baal Tzedaka* who gave very generously to those who came to his door.

The day after he arrived, the Israeli hired a taxi driver and told the man in Hebrew, that he was going to Dr. Fuchs. The driver spoke Hebrew but he was unsure exactly who the man was referring to and he asked him to write it down on a piece of paper. The Israeli wrote down, "ד"ר. פוקס" and handed the paper to his driver. The driver nodded and they were off.

They drove for a while until they reached the town and the driver pulled up alongside a nice home with the name "Fox" emblazoned on the mailbox. He had read the paper and understood that he wished to go to Dr. Fox, a well-known dermatologist in the area. The Israeli was none the wiser and walked right up to ring the bell of the erstwhile Dr. Fox.

The good doctor opened the door and let the man in. He spoke to him for a few minutes and understood - although Dr. Fox didn't speak Hebrew very well - that he was collecting money. Their conversation was pleasant and friendly and as Jews usually do, they even played "Jewish Geography" and learned that they had a mutual acquaintance in Israel. At one point, the *meshulach* asked what kind of doctor he was and Dr. Fox explained, to the best of his ability, that he was a dermatologist, a skin doctor, who specialized in treating people with all sorts of conditions that affect a person's skin.

The Israeli became excited and said, "I, too, went to see a skin doctor recently in Israel and he told me that I have a few warts (יבלות) that need to be removed." The Israeli even showed Dr. Fox what his "warts" looked like, and Dr. Fox, always polite and professional, told the man he should come to his office. "Why don't you let me remove them for free and you won't have to take care of it in Israel." The Israeli was happy with the arrangement.

The next morning, the man showed up at Dr. Fox's office and although he did not have an appointment, the doctor took him right in and removed a number of growths - even more than the man had previously shown him. Thrilled beyond belief, the Israeli showered the doctor with numerous blessings and said this *chessed* was even greater than the money he would have collected. He continued to thank the doctor, over and over again, until he left the office.

The *meshulach* traveled around a bit and a few days later, he found himself in Toronto. He looked up an acquaintance he knew in Canada and asked where he could stay for a few days. He was directed to the Gestetner home, where the man from Israel was treated to a comfortable guest room and some warm Canadian hospitality.

On the second day after he arrived, the phone rang and a man calling from Arizona was on the line. It was Dr. Fox, and he was urgently looking for the Israeli fellow who had been in his office earlier in the week. Dr. Fox was on vacation out west when his office called to tell him the incredible news that the "warts" he had removed from the Israeli *meshulach*, were actually cancerous growths and potentially very dangerous. Thankfully, Dr. Fox had removed even more than what he originally saw and apparently, the cancer was removed. He needed to inform the patient right away but had no forwarding address or number to call. Until he remembered the mutual friend in Israel and called him to ask about the whereabouts of his Israeli patient. After some inquiries, Dr. Fox learned that he was staying at the Gestetner home in Toronto and tracked him down! All while on vacation! He was more than astounded when the man got on the phone and listened in shock as he was told about the danger to his life that was removed just a few days earlier. Dr. Fox was the right *shaliach* sent to save his life!

אשר בחר בנביאים טובים ...

ויאמר קנא קנאתי לה' (מלכים א' יא)

In the *Haftorah*, *Eliyahu HaNavi* took advantage of the awe-inspiring moment on *Har HaCarmel* to eradicate the "prophets" of *Bal*. Though it was an awesome sanctification of *Hashem's* name, *Eliyahu* was forced to flee to the city of *Be'er Sheva* because of the bounty the wicked Queen *Izevel* placed on his head. *Chazal* explain that *Eliyahu* and *Pinchos* are the same person and the **Seforno** adds that due to *Pinchos'* zealous act, *Hashem* "struck a deal" with the angel of death and he received a "ברית שלום" - "covenant of peace" which lengthened his life dramatically. How can it be that the reward for *Pinchos'* violent act which ended a life, is in effect

a covenant of peace to lengthen his own life?

R' Meir Stern *shlit'a* explains that the nature of a person is that even though he may understand that certain things are bad for him, fleeting momentary pleasures create an inner turmoil which battles his conscience, and causes him to nonetheless indulge himself. "Both" *Pinchos* and *Eliyahu* assuaged the inner turmoil of the Jewish Nation's conscience and gave them a chance at eternal life in the world to come through killing *Zimri* and the false prophets. Though they were violent acts of murder, they effectively closed those terrible chapters in our history. Therefore, longevity was not only a "good deal," it was the fitting reward for someone who lifted the impediment to *Klal Yisroel's* eternal life.

יפקד ה' אלפי הרוחת לכל
בשר איש על העדה וגו' (כו-מז)

Prior to *Moshe Rabbeinu's* *petira*, he beseeched *Hashem* that a qualified leader be appointed in his stead. The *Medrash* says that *Hashem* responded to *Moshe* by saying, "Instead of advising ME not to forsake MY children, you should advise MY CHILDREN not to forget ME when you are gone." The next *Parsha* in the *Torah* discusses the *Korban Tamid*. The question is, why is the *Parshas Hatamid* chosen to serve as this reminder never to forget *Hashem*?

As a child growing up, it was common to write letters from sleepaway camp. Yet, out of a whole stack of stationary maybe two or three letters were ever penned. The obvious point of the letters was to show parents and grandparents that we love them and didn't forget them even while away at camp. To bring a *korban* once in a while wouldn't show that we constantly remember *Hashem*. But the *Korban Tamid*, brought twice a day, speaks volumes of our *ahavas Hashem*. The **Chizkuni** writes on the *posuk* "ועלת תמיד העשיה בהר סיני" that *Har Sinai* is mentioned because after this identical *korban* was brought on *Har Sinai*, *Hashem* said I don't want it to ever cease to exist. The *machshava* here is: *Har Sinai* was our most momentous occasion, our marriage to *Hashem* through the *Torah*. Every time we bring the *Tamid* it reminds us of this occasion and our precious relationship with *Hashem*. This was the exact purpose of the *korban*, as *Hashem* told *Moshe* "advise them not to forget me."

In the *selichos* of י"ז תמוז the *paytan* says, "וצמיד כי בשבעה עשר בתמוז בטל התמיד.....ונטל מחתך וכלה" - The jewelry of a *chosson* to his *kallah* is a constant reminder of his love for her. Losing the *Korban Tamid* is equivalent to a *Kallah* being robbed of her jewelry. In our relationship with *Hashem* we must keep it fresh and new like it was at *Har Sinai*. With that sense of *ahava*, may *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* rebuild the *Rais Hamikdash* speedily, where we will finally be able to say WE ARE HOME!

משל למח הדובר דומה

לכן אמר הנני נתן לו את בריתי שלום (כה-יב)

משל: In Baghdad, during the last half of the 19th century, lived the great *Tzaddik*, **Rabbeinu Yosef Chayim *zt"l***, the famed author of **Ben Ish Chai**. The *Chacham* was not only renowned for his tremendous *Torah* erudition and the scholarly lessons he taught to his brethren on a regular basis, it was also said that *Rabbeinu Chayim* had "*Giluy Eliyahu*" - he saw and studied with *Eliyahu HaNavi* (Elijah the Prophet) on a regular basis. This was never confirmed nor did he ever deny it - it just remained a mystery.

Each and every *Motzei Shabbat*, the *Ben Ish Chai* would go up to his study on the top level of his home and remain there secluded for many hours. It was known that he was not to be bothered at this special time, so naturally, many of the promulgators of the idea that the *Chacham* learned with *Eliyahu HaNavi*, assumed that this was his special time with the prophet. A few people wished to find out for sure for themselves and so they asked a very difficult question in

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE MIDDAH OF ...

השב את חמתי משל בני ישראל בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם ... (כה-א)

What is the message of the word "בתוכם" - among them? Obviously *Pinchos* did his act of zealousness by killing *Zimri* and *Kazbi* "among" the people. In fact, the reason why *Pinchos* carried them on his spear publicly was to show the people what happens to someone who acts immorally. The **Kli Yakar** explains as follows: "It says '*among them*' (בתוכם) and not '*on them*' (בהם) because a sanctification of *Hashem's* Name needs to be specifically among *Bnei Yisroel*. This informs us of *Pinchos'* praise: He was self-sacrificing to sanctify *Hashem's* Name although he was among the congregation, which was a dangerous situation due to *Zimri's* relatives. Nevertheless, he risked his life." The **Alshich** in **Toras Moshe** says similarly that when *Pinchos* acted zealously, there were many people who were ready to kill him. He was not very popular among the masses, but that did not deter him. His only intention was to do what was right, whether people would approve or not.

How often are we affected by "what will people say" or "what will people think of me" if I tell them that what they are saying is *lashon hara*? Or if I keep my mouth shut when someone is insulting me and risk looking like a fool? Or if I put myself out to help someone at the risk of being called a "sucker" (in *Eretz Yisroel* it is called a friar)!

Truly living B'SOCHAM means being able to do what is the correct thing to do in the eyes of *Hashem* and not be swayed by what THEY are going to say about me. People will always say things - that shouldn't deter one from doing good. And by the way, do you know who everyone else thinks is THEY? They think it is YOU! So let us all stop trying to impress each other and truly live together B'SOCHAM with the single-minded goal of doing the *ratzon Hashem*!

מחשבת הלב

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