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מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

קראתי שמך ה' מבור תחתיות. קולי שמעת אל תעלם אונך לרוחתי לשועתי (איכה ג-נהגו)

A short time ago, a well-respected individual from London flew to *Eretz Yisroel* and called **R' Eliyahu Mann *shlit'a***, one of the prime disciples and attendants of **R' Chaim Kanievsky *shlit'a***. He had a very important *shaila* to ask - actually it was a request from his mother back in England - and he did not feel up to the task of personally approaching the *Tzaddik*.

He asked if R' Mann can bring the *shaila* to R' Chaim. He explained that his mother was a survivor of Auschwitz and she suffered through many months of torture and pain, losing her entire family in the process. In fact, she endured two long stays in Auschwitz - even after she was transported from there to a different camp, she was brought back later. The man explained that just the other day, his mother sat him down and said to him the following words: "My dear son, during the war, I passed through seven levels of *Gehinnom*. There are no words to describe what I experienced. But through it all, I never uttered one word of complaint. When I lost everything in the war, my family, my friends and my childhood, how was I able to stay alive through it all? I will tell you, my son. During those terrible days, I felt that I had a Father in Heaven, Who was watching over me, and I would speak to Him constantly. What did I say? I would pray a short prayer, a prayer which was always on my lips. It is something that we *daven* every Monday and Thursday. להרוג, נחשבנו כצאן לטבח יזבל, להרוג. 'רבט משמים וראו, כי היינו לעג וקלס בגוים, נחשבנו כצאן לטבח יזבל, להרוג. I said to my Father in Heaven, 'Father, even though I see all this death and destruction in front of me, and even though I am living through *Gehinnom*, 'בכל זאת שמך לא שכחנו' - nevertheless, I will never forget Your name. I will always turn to You. So, please, 'נא אל תשכחנו' - do not forget me, do not forget my name!

“These are the words that were always on my lips and it gave me encouragement and *chizuk* to remain strong throughout those horrible years. Until the Americans came and liberated us. Thank G-d I was saved, I remained alive, and I managed to build a wonderful family here in England. But, my son, I will not live forever. The day will come and I will leave this world. I will stand before the Heavenly Tribunal in my final judgment. Please, I have one request. That after 120 years when I go to my final resting place, take a piece of paper and write on it these words and place it in my hand. This is the prayer that I said to my Father in Heaven when times were tough and He saw me through. With this prayer I wish to come before Him once again, before His Heavenly throne, and I hope and pray that it will save me from the fires of *Gehinnom*.”

R' Mann went to his *Rebbi* and told him what the woman said. "The question is if one is permitted to write holy words on a paper and bury them in this fashion?" R' Chaim listened intently and his eyes moistened with tears as the righteous woman's words were relayed to him. He took a few moments to compose himself and then he said, "One needs to check if these words are words of *Torah* or *Tefillah*." A complete *Tanach* was brought to R' Chaim and he quickly leafed through the entire volume. Finally, he proclaimed, "It is not a *posuk*, so it is permitted. If it had been an actual *posuk*, it might have been deemed a *bizayon* (shaming) the words of *Torah*, to place them in a grave. But since it is a *Tefillah*, it is okay. Still, place the paper with the words on it in a vessel inside a vessel (כלי בתוך כלי) and place it in her hand."

R' Mann stood up and was about to take leave of his *Rebbi*. But R' Chaim suddenly looked up at him and said, “But the *Ribono shel Olam* does not need any papers!” His intent was clear: a woman of such great *Emunah* and *Bitachon*, will not need a piece of paper to merit a good judgment - she will succeed based on her own *zechusim*.

R' Mann asked R' Chaim if he should relay these last words to her son and he replied, "No, it is not necessary to tell her this. Since she feels so strongly about this, and it will give her comfort to know that she can write these words on a piece of paper and have them with her in her grave, let her do as she pleases."

R' Chaim explained that of course *Hashem* does not need any papers or any other form of “convincing” when it comes to a person’s judgment. But he told her it was okay so that others might see and fortify themselves in the halachic areas of not shaming holy words, *lashon hara*, and *Torah* study - and it will all be a further merit to her everlasting *neshama*.

אשר בחר בנביאים טובים ...

ציין במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה ... (ישעי' א-כו)

Yeshaya HaNavi declared: “*Tziyon shall be redeemed through justice.*” What does this mean? As we know, the *Churban* occurred due to the collective sins of all members of *Klal Yisroel*, yet, there are many explanations given by *Chazal* which allude to specific individuals and instances who ruined those glorious times. Did the *Churban* happen based on the collective sins of the Jews, or individuals?

R' Henech Plotnick *shlit'a* relates the *Gemara* (Gittin 58a) of the apprentice who tricked his employer into becoming indebted to him by giving him money to divorce his wife. The apprentice then married the ex-wife and the

employer was forced to wait on them to repay his loan. Based on the concept of, “*that which is hateful to you, do not do to another,*” (*Shabbos 31a*) Chazal place the final seal of the *Churban* on this story. He quotes **R’ Yaakov Emden ז”ל** who explains that this story sealed the nation’s fate, because although there may have been a “*Halachic* loophole” for the apprentice to marry his the ex-wife, common sense dictates it is a terrible thing to do! *Yashrus* - uprightness and integrity, is a fundamental part of a person’s day-to-day living, and without it a person’s common sense becomes warped. Thus, although their collective sins aroused *Hashem*’s wrath, the complete disregard for *Yashrus* and common sense by the individuals, was the final straw that ushered in the terrible *Churban*.

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מחשבת הלב

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

Moshe Rabbeinu begins *Sefer Devarim* by rebuking the Jewish people. Among other things, he told them, “How can I, alone, carry the awesome burden and responsibility of *Klal Yisroel*?” The *minhag* in many *kehillos* is to read this *posuk* with the tune of *Eicha*. Aside for the play on words, “איכה אשא לבד” and “איכה ישבה בדד”, what is the deeper meaning here?

The **Gerrer Rebbe zt"l (Sefas Emes)** writes that although at this interval in their desert sojourn, *Bnei Yisroel* were elevated to a high *madreiga*, there was an element of imperfection and failing which ultimately, many years later, brought about the *Churban*. He explains that the idea that *Moshe Rabbeinu* had to call for reinforcements to help him judge the Nation, stemmed from the fact that *Klal Yisroel* wasn't totally subservient to their leader, Moshe. The ripple effect of that insubordination caused the catastrophe of the *Churban*, where there was a massive lack of unity and *Klal Yisroel* didn't heed the *mussar* of the *Neviim*. Thus, even now, this *posuk* is aptly read with the sorrowful *Eicha* tune.

Another *machshava* to explain this *minhag* is the actual explanation of this *posuk*. **Rashi** expounds here that Moshe was saying, "טורחם ומשאכם וריבכם" - how impossible and difficult you were in a *Din Torah*. How contentious and full of strife you acted. In other words, you were flawed in your *middos bein adam l'chaveiro* and required much rectification.

As we know, the *Bais HaMikdash* was destroyed because of *sinas chinam*. Thus, it's actually very appropriate to read this *posuk* to the *Eicha niggun*. It's no coincidence that *Aharon Hakohen's* *yahrtzeit* is *Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av*. Aharon, the ultimate *ohev shalom v'rodef shalom*, was perhaps hinting that specifically in these days, we must seek to improve our *bein adam l'chaveiro* - to help each other out a little more, and to be *mevater*. With our increased efforts to create *ahavas Yisroel*, may HKB"Y bring the *tikkun hashaleim*, with the rebuilding of the *Bais HaMikdash* ב"ר.

משל למה הדבר דומה

וזהו דבר אשר יקשה מכם תקרבון אלי ושמעתי ... (א-יז)

משה: In 1975, the well-respected (at the time) newspaper, the New York Times, called the *yeshivah* of **R' Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל**, and inquired about doing an interview with him, to discuss his life, his ideals and how he came to be the dean of his institution. The Feinstein family told them that R' Moshe was busy and could not sit for an interview, but they continued to call and it seemed they were genuinely interested in the story. Finally, R' Moshe himself agreed, reasoning that, "we must give in to them a little so they won't think that we are trying to hide something from them."

R' Moshe's close *talmid*, **R' Elimelech Bluth *shlit'a*** accompanied his *Rebbi* to the interview with the "Gray Lady" - a nickname commonly used to describe the New York Times, and was present the entire time. He later recalled that when R' Moshe was asked, "Who appointed you to be the 'Arbiter of the Generation' (*Posek Hador*), R'

**EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE MIDDAH OF ... דיבור**

דרכה יתירה

**FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHILOMO**

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל ... (א-א)

The word “*Devarim*” means words. The *Mishna* in *Avos* tells us that *Hashem* created the world with “עשרה מאמרות” - Ten utterances. *Hashem* said, “*Let there be light*,” and there was light. *Hashem* said, “*Let there be a sky*,” and the sky was created. The question is, why did *Hashem* have to SAY everything? Why couldn’t He simply create everything without words?

The answer is that *Hashem* is teaching us the greatest lesson about the power of words! Words actually create something! The word “*Davar*” means a word but it also means a “thing”! When you say something, you are creating something real. A real “thing”. Although we don’t actually see the words we say, we must know that they have the power to either create something beautiful or destroy something or someone in the most terrible way.

On the night of *Tisha B'Av*, 2448, it was the words of the *Meraglim* that caused all of *Klal Yisroel* to sit on the floor and cry. The evil speech that the spies reported about the Land of Israel, caused a terrible destruction. This day was slated for all future generations, to be a day of tragedy, calamities, mourning and sadness.

Yes, your words make a difference! We can choose positive words of building and creating or we can choose to be negative, sarcastic, hurtful and destructive with our words. Surely if we wish to rebuild the *Bais HaMikdash*, we must choose words that will do just that. Build people up, create positive feelings in others and we will see that yes, it is in our power, simply by choosing the right words, to rebuild what we destroyed. "*Aileh HaDevarim*" ... these are the words May "These Words" - the words we choose, put the final touches on the *Bayis Shlishi*, speedily in our days.