



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

ולמען תספר באזני בנך ובן בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים ואת אתני אשר שמתי בם וידעתם כי אני ה' ... (י-ב)

Ariel “Arik” Sharon was a famous Israeli statesman, former Prime Minister and retired Major-General who served in the IDF for more than 25 years. In mid-December 2005, Prime Minister Sharon spent two days in a hospital after suffering a minor stroke, which doctors said caused no irreparable brain damage. However, on January 4, 2006, Sharon was rushed to the hospital following another, more serious stroke. Sharon suffered a massive brain hemorrhage, which caused extensive cerebral bleeding. After two surgeries lasting 7 and 14 hours, doctors stopped the bleeding in Sharon’s brain, but were unable to prevent him from entering into a coma. Subsequent media reports indicated that Sharon had been diagnosed with cerebral amyloid angiopathy (CAA) during his December hospitalization. Sharon remained hospitalized in a vegetative state from January 2006 until his death on January 11, 2014.

**R’ Gamliel Rabinowitz *shlit’a*** recounts an amazing story that occurred during the time that Arik Sharon was in a coma. He relates that his own *mechutan*, **Reb Amram Blau *shlit’a***, an active member of one of the premium *Vaad Hakashrus* agencies in Jerusalem, fell ill and he too, suffered a brain hemorrhage which put him into a vegetative coma. Doctors used life-saving measures to stabilize him but he hovered between life and death for many months. His family was constantly at his bedside, saying *Tehillim* and learning as a *zechus* for him, but doctors were not optimistic and had no idea if he would ever regain consciousness, or brain function.

But the Almighty tends to His righteous adherents and one fine day, Reb Amram suddenly opened his eyes and woke from his vegetative stupor. His family laughed and cried and doctors came running to witness the miracle patient who suddenly woke from a coma, seemingly without rhyme or reason. Extensive tests were performed on the patient and after a few short weeks, Reb Amram was released from the hospital with a clean bill of health. He had suffered no long term effects and his cognitive skills were as sharp as before he took ill. It truly was a miracle.

One day, Reb Amram received a phone call from Omri and Gilad Sharon, the two sons of Ariel Sharon. A Sharon family member got on the phone and explained that their father, the Prime Minister, is lying in a coma in Sheba Medical Center in Tel HaShomer, for quite a few years already, and the doctors have tried just about every medical procedure to save him. Nothing has worked. The family hired some of the best doctors in the world to see if there’s anything to do - no matter how impossible the odds or how far-fetched the remedy. As of now, there’s no cure in sight.

The family member finally got to the point. Someone had told them about Rabbi Blau and how he was in a vegetative coma for months, with the same diagnosis as their father. And suddenly, he woke up from the coma and his health has been totally restored. They were requesting a meeting to possibly learn what forms of treatment were done to bring him back from the dead; would he teach them the “secret” formula that had allowed him to beat the odds and regain his health? They were prepared to pay whatever he asks to help them in their quest for the cure. Name your price, they said, we beg you to help us.

Reb Amram smiled inwardly and replied, “I am sorry to hear about your father and the suffering your family is going through. From a medical standpoint, I cannot imagine that more was done for me than for your father. In fact, no doubt, you have done much more to cure your father than was done for me.”

There was a pause at the other end. “So you’re saying you don’t know? It was a miracle?”

Reb Amram replied, “It was better than a miracle. *Bezras Hashem Yisborach*, I have been blessed with many children and over one hundred grand and great-grand children. All of them are *shomer Torah* and *mitzvos*. Each and every one of them spent every day of my illness *davening* to *Hashem* and performing acts of goodness as a *zechus* for my recovery. Their actions and their prayers not only stormed the heavens, but it broke through the heavenly gates! That’s the whole ‘secret’ - that’s the ‘miracle.’ If you can somehow do that, maybe you can invoke Divine mercy and merit a miracle too!”

עגלה יפה פיה מצרים קרין מצפון  
כא בא ... (דמדה מ-ב)

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY  
HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In this week’s *Haftorah*, *Yirmiyahu HaNavi* describes the punishment *Hashem* visited upon Egypt centuries after they enslaved the Jewish people. *Nevuchadnetzar, King of Bavel*, would come from the north with a vast army and the Egyptians – including the brash Pharaoh – would quiver out of fear and flee. Ironically, in his prophecy, *Yirmiyahu* said, “*Egypt was a fair calf; destruction from the north is coming...*” Why did the *Navi* compare Egypt to a calf?

**R’ Don Yitzchak Abarbanel *zt”l*** explains that *Chazal* compare Egypt to a fattened calf because just like a fattened calf has grain, and an innate beauty to it, so too, the land of Egypt was indeed deemed a beautiful place on earth. However, that is not where the comparison ends. The

**Abarbanel** explains further that a calf gives off an aura of beauty since it appears to be a docile and placid animal, that will do the will of its master calmly. Besides, the fatter and plumper it becomes, the better tasting it will be when it is eventually slaughtered to serve its purpose on this world. Yet, while the calf appears to mind its own business, it is growing stronger and larger every day making it very dangerous should it somehow get out of control.

So too, the Egyptians were a sophisticated people who created a beautifully looking land, however, that beauty was only a mask for their true sadistic nature which they suddenly unleashed upon the Jewish people during their long and terrible exile.

ודעה כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר מה זאת ואמרת אליו  
בחוק יד הוציאנו ה' ממצרים מבית עבדים ... (י-ד)

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

# מחשבת הלב

In the *Hagaddah shel Pesach*, **Rashi** says this question is being asked by the *Tam*, the simple son. He says this is the type of question commonly asked by a “*tinok tipeish*” - an ignorant child. All he’s capable of asking is: “What’s this?” The *Tam* asks his question simply, sincerely and calmly. “*Machar*” - on the morrow. Not in a provoking, harsh way as the *Rasha* who says “*Zos*” in his query, intimating that he must know now, BEFORE performing the *mitzvah* (see the **Kli Yakar** for further elucidation). Our response to the *Tam* is also soft. “*V’amarta*.” As we know, *amira* is a softer method of speech; as opposed to *dibur*, which is considered harsher. We use this to explain the reason behind the *mitzvah* of *pidyon bechor*.

However, the last *posuk* seems out of place and doesn’t flow with the rest of our response to the *Tam*. We respond that *Hashem* killed the firstborn of the Egyptians and therefore we must offer ours to *Hashem*. And then the *Torah* continues with; “והיה לאות על ידכה ולטוטפת בין עיניך כי בחוק יד הוציאנו ה' ממצרים”. The connection is seemingly lacking. Perhaps we can answer based on a thought I saw in the name of **R’ Moshe Feinstein *zt”l***. The *Gemara* says that *tefillin shel yad* should be worn covered, while *shel rosh* is worn exposed for all to view. R’ Moshe explains: Before we can preach to others, we must first make sure we conduct ourselves properly. Hence, the *shel yad* is covered, to project its power of *kedusha* inward; cleansing us. We must better ourselves before serving as role models. Only after that is accomplished may we don the *shel rosh* - uncovered; so all can be spiritually elevated by seeing it. Then, and, only then, can we serve as teachers and mold the young.

Now, we can understand how the *Torah’s* response to the *Tam* is actually one seamless thought. We are reminded, before teaching others, to examine ourselves first, practicing what we preach before imposing our ideals onto others.

## משל למת הדבר דומה

וראה את הדם על המשקוף ועל שתי המזוזות ופסח ה' על הפתח (יב:בג)

According to the **Rambam** (*Hilchos Mezuzah 5*), *Mezuzos* should be checked twice every seven years on a private property (like a home) and twice every 50 years on public property (*beis medrash* and *shul*). *Al pi Kabbalah*, the room that one attaches a specific *mezuzah* to has a connection to that specific room and each *mezuzah* should be marked clearly as to which room it came from. There are numerous stories of people who became ill and found *posul mezuzos* in rooms they frequented. Most *sofrim* will tell you that the highest quality *mezuzos* should be placed on the front door, the bedroom, the kitchen, and so on.

One such story occurred not long ago when a man came to **R’ Chaim Kanievsky *shlit’a*** with a serious issue to discuss. His pre-adolescent son does not stop eating! He is huge for his age and there is no mystery as to how he got so big. He literally cannot help himself from eating, chewing,

devouring anything and everything in sight. The family hides the food from him but he either finds his own or finds the family stash. What can they do to stop the massive boy?

In characteristic form, R’ Chaim barely looked up from his *sefer*, while intoning, “Check your *mezuzos*.”

No sooner said than done. Incredibly, within a few hours, the *sofer* called him to say that he found a mistake in one of the *mezuzos*. In the second *parsha* of *Krias Shema*, the *posuk*, “ונתתי עשב בשדך לבהמתך ואכלת ושבעת” was written “ואכלת ואכלת” two times! No wonder he couldn’t stop eating!

**משל**: Just as *Bnei Yisroel* were commanded to put the blood of the *korban Pesach* on their doorposts to protect them from the plague, on that fateful night of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, we are commanded to place a *mezuza* on our doorposts to protect us from harmful elements that mean us harm. If even one word is incorrect, it can cause so many problems for those living in the home and every Jew must see to it that he protects the *mezuza* that protects him.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM  
THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

## דרגה יתירה

We are living in a world of *hester panim*. *Hashem* is hiding, and our job is to find Him. During *Makas Choshech* 4/5 of the Jews died in Egypt. That means that four out of every five Jews did not make it out of Egypt. Why? What did they do that they did not deserve to experience the *Geulah*? *Chazal* teach us they were lacking in *Emunah*. They didn’t really believe the *Geulah* would come, that they would really leave *Mitzrayim*. *Hashem* said, “If you don’t believe that I will take you out of this *Galus*, then I won’t.” And they died in *Mitzrayim*, during the plague of darkness, so the Egyptians would not be privy to this *chilul Hashem*.

The other day I was playing UNO with my son. It is a lot of fun, but the most interesting thing about this game is just when you think you have a plan, the game changes. You think you have the winning card, and then someone changes the color, or you have to swap cards with the person next to you. When you have one card left, you have to call out UNO; otherwise, you cannot win. I told my son, from now on we are calling this game EmUNO. And when you have one card left that you think will be the winning card, you have to call out, EmUNO. Because you never know what is going to happen next. Just when we think we have it all figured out we come to the realization we know nothing. The only thing we can hold onto is our emUNO that *Hashem* is running this world. *Hashem* is in charge of every tiny detail of our lives, and only He knows what He is doing.

**R’ Ezriel Tauber *zt”l*** used to say that right before *Moshiach* comes, there will be *Chevlei Moshiach*. The word *Chevel* means a rope, and *Hashem* will shake up this world from one end to the other. There will be such upheaval and confusion, the only thing we can do is hold on tight to our EMUNAH. We must hold onto that rope that is shaking us up and down and believe with all our hearts that the *Geulah* will come. There will be a *Moshiach* very soon, and we wish to be around to greet him.