



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

זהו לכם הטמא בשרין השרין על הארץ החלד והעכבר והצב למינורו וגו' (יא-כב)

The rural village of Kerestir (Bodrogeresztur), in northwest Hungary, was the home of the great *Tzaddik*, **R' Yeshayale Steiner ז"ל**, beloved and affectionately well-known to all as **Reb Shayele Kerestirer** (*Yahrzeit* is 3rd of *Iyar*). Reb Shayele was extremely humble, always referring to himself in the diminutive (Shayele). He was relatively unknown until he hosted the **Munkatcher Rebbe, R' Tzvi Hirsch Spira ז"ל (Darchei Teshuva)** for a *seudas Rosh Chodesh*. Reb Shayele accorded the *Rebbe* much honor and sat him at the head of the table. After everybody washed their hands and made the *beracha* of *Al Netilas Yadayim*, Reb Shayele made the blessing *Hamotzi* on the large *seudah challah* and began cutting. But instead of eating right away, he continued slicing until he got to the middle of the big *challah*. Then, holding a large piece of the fresh doughy *challah*, he motioned to a guest sitting all the way at the other end of the table to come take the piece of *challah*.

As the fellow was slowly making his way to the front of the table, the *Munkatcher Rebbe* banged on the table a few times, signaling to Reb Shayele that he should hurry up and take a bite of the *challah* already as there was too long of a delay (*hefsek*) between making the *beracha* and eating the *challah*. Reb Shayele didn't react and waited patiently until the fellow obtained his piece and began eating. Then Reb Shayele began eating his piece and sliced a piece for everyone else.

In response to the *Munkatcher Rebbe's* surprised look, Reb Shayele explained that as he began cutting the *challah*, he noticed that a guest at the other end was eagerly eyeing the *challah*, his mouth salivating for a piece. Just by looking at his face, it was obvious that he was famished and weak from hunger. Yet, it was also obvious that he was missing almost all his teeth. It would not be right to give him a slice with crust that would take him a long time to eat. So, Reb Shayele explained, "I cut him a piece of *challah* from the middle so there wouldn't be any crust and this way he could eat it right away!"

The *Munkatcher Rebbe* would often repeat this story and after that, word of Reb Shayele's love and generosity spread, and, to his delight, more and more people came. He always made sure that plenty of food would be at his *tish* and no one would go hungry. It was said, that on *Rosh Hashana*, one of the holiest days of the year, when most *Yidden* were engrossed in their prayers and other *Rebbes* were fasting, in deep meditation, intense contemplation, and preparation of the sounding of the *shofar*, Reb Shayele personally sliced and served *kokosh* (chocolate) cake and other sweets to his *chassidim*. Reb Shayele had an overpowering love for his fellow Jews and took orphans into his home lovingly raising them as his own children.

His greatest pleasure was to host a very elaborate *Melave Malka*, the meal that follows *Shabbos*. Often he would have his *chassidim shecht* fresh chickens for his meal. He is famous for his ability to ward off mice and here's how it came about.

One *Motzei Shabbos*, while Reb Shayele was eating his special *Melave Malka* meal, a *chasid* came to him with an urgent request. He was a rich man who had a warehouse full of food products and he made his living buying and selling these products. For the past number of months, his warehouse had become infested with mice who were eating his grain and other commodities, as well as his entire livelihood. He asked Reb Shayele for a blessing that the mice should leave his warehouse.

At that time, each small town in Hungary had a local church pastor, who wielded a considerable amount of clout in town. Some of the pastors were kind towards the Jews and others were very harsh. Reb Shayele asked the *chasid* if the pastor of his town was kind or harsh. The *chasid* replied that he was very harsh and would decree terrible things against the community.

Reb Shayele thought for a moment and then instructed the *chasid* to go to his warehouse and make the following announcement: "Shayele says to go to the house of the pastor." The *chasid* followed the *Rebbe's* advice and almost instantaneously, hundreds of mice raced out of his warehouse all heading in the direction of the pastor's large estate.

The *chasid's* business was saved and ever since, Jews who have been plagued with this problem have successfully posted **Reb Shayele's picture to accomplish the ridding of mice from their homes and businesses. Zechuso Yagen Aleinu.**

ולמיכל בת שאול לא היה לה ילד  
עד יום מותה ... (שמואל ב' 1-כג)

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

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

The *Aron Hakodesh* had no permanent home until the newly crowned king decided to move it to *Yerushalayim*. *Dovid Hamelech* accompanied the *Aron* with joyous singing and dancing, but his wife Michal, disapproved of his behavior claiming it was unbecoming for a king, and she was punished for her disapproval by not meriting to become a mother. While most punishments have a direct connection to a person's sin, Michal's punishment seems to have none. Why is that?

**R' Elya Baruch Finkel ז"ל** explains that Michal accused Dovid of belittling himself in the eyes of "אמהות" - maid-servants, which is a reference to the Jewish women who are often referred to as maidservants since they are subservient to *Hashem*. However, *Chazal* explain that with the proper

diacritical signs, the word "אמהות" can also mean "mothers" - which is how it is understood here, and which emphasizes the Jewish women's proper approval of Dovid's dancing.

Thus, Michal's true punishment was for her choice of words and she therefore did not merit to become a mother. Interestingly, *Chazal* say that while she did not merit to become an actual mother, she did merit to have a child who died immediately in childbirth, since her punishment was only that she wouldn't be a mother. We often forget that some words have more than one meaning and when we just "say things," people might possibly be slighted inadvertently. We must always be careful of what we say so that devastating inadvertent consequences could be avoided from the start.

ואת שעיר החמאת דרש דרש משה והנה שרף ויקצה  
על אלקוד ועל אתמר בני אהרן הנתרם לאמו ... (י-כג)

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

# מחשבת הלב

These words are symbolic in the sense that they represent half the words of the *Torah*. I saw a *pshat* written that half of the *Torah* is dependent on being "דורש", searching, seeking, and asking. The pitfalls we sometimes succumb to could have been prevented, had we checked and double-checked the far-reaching ramifications of our misdeeds.

The *posuk* in *Tehillim* (10-13) says, "לא תדרש ... על מה נאץ רשע". In other words, the wicked person's demise is due to the fact that he his not being a דורש, he didn't think into the effects of his actions. Thus he became a *rasha, lo alainu*.

As an observation, the word "דורש" isn't a common word in *Tanach*. Most times it's associated with a person either being "דורש" or not being "דורש" - seeking out *Hashem*. For example: 1) ומה ה' דורש ממך 2) ולא דרש בה' 3) אשר דרש את ה' בכל לבבו

That association is obvious; a person must constantly be דורש to be meticulous in *Bein Adam L'Makom*. In two other places, however, we do find this word used: 1) עד דרש אחך אתו 2) דרש טוב לעמו

Perhaps we can interpret this to mean that a person must seek out his brother. He must be vigilant in *Bein Adam L'chaveiro* just as he vigilant in his *Bein Adam L'Makom*, as well. Moshe became *Rabbeinu*, the *Rebbi* of all of *Klal Yisroel*, because he excelled in both. This is what the *posuk* is teaching us: "דרש דרש משה" - Moshe was always "דורש" in his relationship with *Hashem* and in his numerous relationships with his fellow *Yidden*.

This should be our guiding light as well. As the *מי הספירה* have commenced, during which the 24,000 *Talmidim* of Rabbi Akiva perished in a short period of time, we must pay careful attention to all those around us. *B'zchus* our ability to be being דרש our family, friends and neighbors, may Hakadosh Boruch Hu be דורש us as well and bring an end to this long Golus.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

והצא אש מלפני ה' ותאכל אותם וימתו לפני ה' ... (י-כג)

**משל**: One of the great *Chassidische Rebbes* of the 19th century was **R' Duvid (Dudke) Hager ז"ל**, of Zablów. He was married to Pessil Leah, the only daughter of **R' Moshe Leib of Sassov ז"ל**, and a very righteous woman.

It happened once that R' Duvid became mortally ill. His fever rose and he was confined to his bed. Doctors arrived to administer medication, but after a few attempts, even they gave up and told the family that the Grand Rabbi was not going to survive this deadly illness.

Not everyone accepted the doctors' grim prognosis, however. *Rebbetzin* Pessil Leah adamantly refused to believe that all hope was lost. She took her weathered *Tehillim* in hand and sat herself down at her husband's bedside. She began to say *Tehillim* with such fervent concentration that nobody could even move her. She cried

כל מפרסת פרסה ושסעת שסע פרסת  
מעלת גרה כבהמה אתה תאכלו ... (יא-ג)

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

## דרגה יתירה

As we pack up the last remnants of *Pesach* and store them away for next year, we are meant to stop and think: what have we stored away in our hearts and minds to take with us from this fabulous holiday for the entire year? What can we do to "hang on" a bit to this special feeling? So, we read *Parshas Shemini* and learn a great lesson about our rich Jewish heritage.

The *parsha* discusses the *simanim* that make an animal kosher. The two signs that make an animal befitting for Jewish consumption are "מעלה גרה" - chewing it's cud, and "מפריס פרסה" - split hooves. These signs actually teach us a lot about *Yiddishkeit*. The act of chewing one's cud is the idea of going over the past. Taking what one previously received and benefiting from it again and again. Split hooves, on the other hand, is a sign that reflects moving forward - when one sticks his foot out. *Yiddishkeit* is a combination of the two. The *Torah* was given to us many generations ago and all the *mitzvos* were written in stone. Literally etched into the stone! Each commandment is an expression of *Hashem's* will that can never be changed. It is studied and learned, and studied again and again, each time revealing a deeper and more profound Divine wisdom. This is the heritage that we "pass-over" from generation to generation.

At the very same time, we must always continue moving forward, advancing with the times and applying *Torah* ideology to modern situations, as our great contemporary *Gedolim* every day. As the world progresses with technological advances, the words of *Torah* must be applied and utilized daily to achieve the maximum in this world we live in. We surely must be cautious that no negative influence affects our lifestyle, but we must take all the positive powers of the world and allow the *Torah* to shine and affect the many assimilated Jews who need to come home. May we join the kosher signs of "looking back" and "forging ahead" to pass our beautiful *mesorah* down to all future generations.