

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאודך. והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך ... (ד-ו-ה)

In order to feel close to Hashem we have to perform *mitzvos* with enthusiasm. There has to be a feeling of freshness. If we learn *Torah* and observe *mitzvos* out of force of habit, we will not experience *dveikus* with Hashem. This is why the **Sifri** explains that *Ahavas Hashem* comes through fulfilling the *posuk*, “*And these are the words that I command you today.*” We have to approach the *Torah* each day as if it is being given right now. With this attitude we will merit to be “*makir es Hashem u’midabeik b’drachav.*” We will recognize Hashem and attach ourselves to His ways.

There was once a Yid named Chaim who lived in Montreal, Canada. Chaim was facing great financial hardship and after much evaluation, he decided to move to an unknown part of Canada, where he thought things would be better for him and his family. When the holy **Tosher Rebbe, R’ Meshulam Feish Segal-Lowy zt”l** heard about Chaim’s intentions, he approached him, eager to understand his reasons for such a drastic decision. With genuine curiosity, the *Rebbe*, known for his great compassion to fellow *Yidden*, inquired about the availability of a *minyan*, a *mikvah* and a *cheder* in this new city. Regrettably, Chaim admitted that these essential aspects of Jewish life were absent in his intended new home.

Perplexed by this revelation, the *Tosher Rebbe* delved deeper, hoping to uncover the motives driving Chaim’s life-altering decision. With honesty and openness, Chaim revealed a heartbreaking incident that had shattered his trust and significantly affected his circumstances. During a business trip to Antwerp, he came into possession of a substantial sum of money. Tragically, the fortune inexplicably vanished at the airport, leaving him penniless. He searched everywhere but without success. Overwhelmed by despair, he returned to Montreal burdened by the weight of his financial troubles.

Moved by Chaim’s plight, the *Tosher Rebbe* made earnest efforts to dissuade him from leaving. He offered to assist him in his financial struggles, however, Chaim remained determined to relocate, impervious to the *Rebbe’s* appeals. Reluctantly, the *Rebbe* watched as Chaim prepared to depart, seemingly resigned to his fate.

Merely a day after the *Rebbe* spoke to him, a stranger approached Chaim in the street. For some reason, this stranger seemed strangely familiar, and with a sense of recognition, he said to him, “Do I know you from Antwerp? You look familiar.” Chaim’s heart skipped a beat as the stranger uttered words that would forever alter his destiny.

“I have carried the burden of guilt since that day at the airport,” the stranger confessed to a shocked Chaim. “I couldn’t bear the knowledge that I had taken your money. It has bothered me every day since then. Here, please accept it back.” With these words, the stranger handed Chaim the exact sum of money that had vanished years earlier.

Overwhelmed by disbelief and gratitude, Chaim was profoundly impacted by this twist of fate. Abandoning his drive to move away, Montreal once again became his home, and he and his family continued to thrive in familiar surroundings.

Twenty years later, as the sad news of the *Tosher Rebbe’s* passing resonated throughout the community, Chaim found himself face-to-face with the stranger once again. They stood at the *Rebbe’s* gravesite, reflecting on the profound impact he had on their lives. “I suppose this is our third meeting,” Chaim remarked, acknowledging the Divine forces that had brought them together once more. However, the stranger humbly corrected him, saying, “No, this is not our third meeting - this is only our second encounter. Although I told you I stole your money, I did not actually take it. The truth is, the *heilige Tosher Rebbe* gave me that money and asked me to approach you as if I was the one who stole it.”

Tears welled up in Chaim’s eyes as he realized the depth of the *Rebbe’s* wisdom and his extraordinary act of love. The *Rebbe* had orchestrated this entire sequence of events to teach Chaim a valuable lesson about compassion, and the capacity for growth and change. A *Yid* must remain firm in his surroundings and always look to embody Hashem and His impeccable *middos* of mercy, forgiveness and empathy in our lives. (Adapted from Stories to Inspire - 718-400-7145 - Call Now & Be Inspired!)

תורת הצבי על הפטרות A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN נחמו נחמו עמי יאמר אליכםם ... (ישעי' ב-א)

The *HafTORah* of *Shabbos Nachamu* and its famous words of “*נחמו נחמו עמי*” - “[*be*] comforted, [*be*] comforted, My Nation” is the declaration of Hashem through his emissary *Yeshaya HaNavi*, comforting *Klal Yisroel* in the aftermath of the terrible *Churban*. The question here is famous and there are many approaches to understand it: Being that every word in *Tanach* is measured, it is quite striking that the *Navi* - and by extension the Almighty Himself - seemingly used the same word “נחמו” twice to bring home the same point. Why?

R’ Avraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra zt”l explains that when one suffers a tragedy - even something minor - it can take quite a while for him to work past it and get back to his life. More often than not, human nature is to wallow in our own

misery and feel depressed for a period of time. A person will often gravitate towards taking some measure of solace in feeling bad for himself. That is where it is everyone else’s job to come by and comfort the person who is depressed and lift him up out of his state of misery and sorrow.

So, just like it may take more than one person to lift another out of grief, the repetition of the words “נחמו נחמו עמי” is Hashem’s way of indicating that His Divine comfort will be administered immediately to His beloved Nation, and will do it repeatedly. Despite the destruction and devastation wrought by the *Churban*, Hashem informs *Klal Yisroel* that he will see to it that His children will be comforted - even if it takes repeated attempts.

ועברתם שם אלהים מעשה ידי אדם עין ואבן (ע”ו) ... ובקשתם משם את ה' אלקיך ומצאת (השובה) (ד-ב-ח-ב)

At a time when, *nebach*, the worshiping of *avoda zara* was rampant, the *Torah* states that Hashem will scatter us around the globe. There’s something unique about the choice of words “ועברתם” and “ובקשתם” - two polar opposites - a time of sin and a time of *teshuva*. Yet, the *Torah* uses the same word “שם” there. What is the reason for this change?

Perhaps the *machshava* is as follows. The message being conveyed here is that even at our very lowest spiritual point we must not ever give up. Even if a person falls to a low in his personal service of Hashem, he cannot give up and think that there is no path back for him. The reason is because “משם” - from that low point he will rise, ascending higher - “ומצאת” - and he will find his way back home.

In particular, on *Shabbos Nachamu*, I believe this is an extremely comforting idea. Yes, we have lost the *Bais HaMikdash*, our spiritual center, and yes, we have endured a great deal of pain and suffering throughout the many years of *golus*. However, nevertheless, it is “משם” - from there, from that low vantage point that we can bounce back, reaching higher, becoming stronger and closer. We can correct our faults and fix our mistakes, enabling us “ומצאת” - to find Him.

There is another dimension here as well. The *posuk* says “ובקשתם”, you will search, plural, and ends with “ומצאת”, you will find Hashem, singular. It is possible to suggest that although *Klal Yisroel* as a whole entity searches for meaning and *kirvas Hashem*, each *yachid* in his own right, and *dor* in their own time, has a unique job.

Yehi Ratzon, may it be the will of Hashem *Yisbarach*, that we each find that niche, בכלל ובפרט, *B’ezras Hashem*, this will afford us the appropriate *nechama* even in the midst of our long and tedious *golus*, with the השלישי

משל למת הדבר דומה

ואתם הדבקים בה' אלקיכם חיים כלכם היום ... (ד-ד)

משל: There was once a high-ranking minister who had a prized race horse. He had gone to great lengths to procure this horse and he watched over it with the utmost care.

One day he needed to travel to a distant country. Since he wouldn’t part with his precious horse, he took it along with him, together with his entourage of soldiers, and they headed out on their long journey.

At one point, they came to a jungle area, known to be extremely dangerous. Besides the animals and harsh weather that plagued the area, there were many competing gangs. The minister set up camp and made a rotation of soldiers to stand guard. At night especially, the minister had an extra soldier stand guard over his prize horse and warned him about falling asleep. “Think of deep philosophical questions to keep you awake,” he suggested. Soon the minister was fast asleep.

לעמלי נשמת אבני מוריו רבינו הרב חיים יוסף בן ר' ישראל אברהם קויפמאן זצ"ל

מחשבת הל"ב

Two hours later, the minister jumped out of bed and rushed to check on the guard. Thankfully he was awake. “I’m thinking,” the guard said, “When you bang a nail into wood, where does the wood go?!” Amazing question!

Another two hours later, the minister again jumped out of bed and found the guard pondering: “Every bagel is missing the hole in middle - where does it go?” “Fabulous! Keep pondering these amazing questions,” said the minister.

As light broke, the minister came to check on his horse. He found his “brilliant” guard pondering yet another question: “I’ve been standing here the whole night watching over his majesty’s horse,” he said, “but my most difficult question still has no answer: where could his horse have gone...?”

נמשל: In *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* long speech recorded in *Sefer Devorim* there is a constant reminder about *emunah*, belief in Hashem. Sometimes, simple belief with the proper actions behind it is greater than the greatest thinkers in the world.

דרגה יתירה EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHELOMO

The word “חיים” means life. It is an unusual word. Even when describing one life (singular), we use the word “חיים” (plural). Furthermore, most plural words end in “*im*” as in “שנים מיים”. The word “חיים” ends with “*ayim*” such as the words “רגלים עינים”. What is the difference? Well, feet (רגלים) work together because they work opposite each other. When one foot is up, the other foot is down. This is the only way one can walk. It is the same with our eyes (עינים). We don’t just have two eyes that see exactly the same thing, as one. It is precisely because we have two eyes that are complementing one another that we can enjoy the depth and perception of the world around us.

Thus, we can understand that the word “חיים” refers to life, whereby a person lives with the ability to work and interact with others that are opposite him. This is what Hashem wants from us in this life. **R’ Yisroel Reisman shlita** explains that people are under the misconception that a day in which everything goes their way and everyone agrees with them on everything (!?) is a great day! What a life! Nobody argues with anything they say and they can do whatever they want, whenever they want to. On the other hand, a day in which there are differences of opinions, feelings, and even opposing outlooks or views, is a stressful and bad day. How wrong they are! Truly LIVING - the way Hashem wants us to - is by working side by side, in tandem, with those who are completely different than we are. Rather than getting annoyed by our differences, we must choose to focus on the strengths that can be brought out by complementing each other.

“ואתם הדבקים בה' אלקיכם” - if we truly want to be close (דבקים) to Hashem, “חיים כולכם היום” - then ALL of you (כולכם), no matter how opposite you are from one another, must learn to work together as a team. Life is about opposites attracting and coming together in unity. Then, and only then will you be truly ALIVE, achieving the purpose of LIFE.