

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ושמעו לקולך ובאת אתה וקני ישראל אל מלך מצרים ואמרתם אליו ה' אלקי העבריים נקרה עלינו ... (ג-ד)

One of the greatest *Rebbes* of the previous generation was **R' Aharon Rokeach ז"ל**, the **Belzer Rebbe**. He was known for his total and complete dedication to the servitude of the Almighty while shunning all worldly comforts. From a very young age he seemed to survive on miniscule meals and denial of sleep, and as if he was completely detached from his physical body, he would spend hours on end *davening* and learning *Torah*. He was known for his great holiness, so much so that one of the *tzaddikim* of the generation said regarding him, "Apparently, the *Yetzer Hara* has forgotten about him."

Young Ahrele, as he was known, became deeply attached to his *Zaida*, the **Mittler Belzer Rav, R' Yehoshua Rokeach ז"ל**, who stood at the helm of the *Belzer* dynasty until his *petirah* in 1894. R' Yehoshua encouraged his grandson to spend his youth steeped in *Torah*, and taught him *Torah* that only he was privy to. Nowhere in Galicia was the environment as ripe for *Torah* growth and development as among the *yosheim* of the *Belzer Beis Medrash*. Some of the most learned *Talmidei Chachamim* were followers of Belz, including **R' Moshe Greenwald ז"ל (Arugas HaBosem)**, **R' Sholom Mordechai Schwadron ז"ל (Maharsham of Brezhan)**, and, later, **R' Chanoch Dov Padwa ז"ל (Cheishev Haephod)**.

The **Tchebiner Rav, R' Dov Berish Weidenfeld ז"ל**, was a close friend of Ahrele. He related that even as a *bochur*, the future *Rebbe* was already fluent in all of *Shas* as well as all four sections of *Shulchan Aruch*. The *Tchebiner Rav* saw the notes on the **Ketzos Hachoshen** written during R' Aharon's youth and was amazed by the depth of the *chiddushim*.

On one occasion, R' Aharon traveled to Kobrin to attend to an important matter. While there, he found himself in a *Beis Medrash* where a group of *avreichim* were learning *Torah* with great intensity. One of the *avreichim* was the future *Rosh Yeshiva* of Kamenitz, **R' Boruch Ber Lebowitz ז"ל**. R' Aharon already had a reputation as a supreme *Torah* scholar and some of the *avreichim* asked if he could give over some of the *Torah* that he learned on their *sugya*, from his *Zaida*, the *Belzer Rebbe*, R' Yehoshua. R' Aharon agreed and delivered an in-depth *shiur* to the eager group of *avreichim*.

Of course, in the style of Lithuania, the *avreichim* challenged him on almost every word and *chiddush* that he said. They bombarded him with questions and tried to poke holes in the *shtikel Torah* as he was delivering it.

All the while, R' Boruch Ber stood near R' Aharon and acted as a "watchdog" of sorts, defending every word that the future *Rebbe* said, and no matter how many questions were thrown at him, R' Boruch Ber answered up each and every *kushya* with brilliance and intrepid fearlessness. This went on for some time and as R' Aharon spoke and the *avreichim* shouted out their questions at him, R' Boruch Ber stood guard and with aplomb, "swatted" them away.

When R' Aharon finished the *shiur* and the *avreichim* were satisfied with the outcome, he approached R' Boruch Ber and asked him, "It seemed that you were working really hard to answer up all the *kushyos* that were posed on my *heiliger Zaida's Torah*. I was wondering about that. Why did you expend so much energy to resolve each question?"

R' Boruch Ber, foremost *talmid* of **R' Chaim Brisker ז"ל**, author of *Birkas Shmuel*, and renowned all over the world as one of the deepest thinkers and analytical minds of recent memory, also had a practical side to him. He smiled at the young future *Rebbe* and replied, "When it comes to a *Rebbe* of *Chassidim*, the most important thing is *Emunas Chachamim*. The *Chassidim* hang onto every word, nuance, action and movement of their *Rebbe*. Nothing is more important and valuable than the honor and respect of a *Chassidish Rebbe*. As a result, when you are saying over the *Torah* of a *Rebbe*, it cannot remain unanswered. Every attack on the foundation of his words, must be repelled. I was forced to expend as much energy as needed to respond to all the questions from the *avreichim* for had they remained unanswered, people might lose their faith in the *Rebbe's* words." R' Boruch Ber mused for a moment and then said, "By *Litvish Roshei Yeshiva* it is not like this. If someone has a question on his *shtikel Torah ... nu nu* it's not the end of the world if it is left unanswered!"

יהיה ביום ההוא יתקע בשופר גדול וכאן האובדים בארץ אשור ... (ישעי' בוי-ג)

Yeshaya HaNavi relates that although *Yaakov Avinu* and his family endured numerous trials and tribulations in their long journey from *Eretz Canaan* to Egypt, to the desert, to *Eretz Yisroel*, and eventually into exile, *Klal Yisroel* will ultimately enjoy the day, "When a great ram's horn shall be sounded, and the strayed who are in the land of Assyria and the expelled who are in the land of Egypt shall come and worship Hashem on the holy mount, in Yerushalayim."

Chazal say that the aforementioned ram's horn will come from the ram that *Avraham Avinu* sacrificed at the *akeidah* instead of his son *Yitzchok*. But *Avraham Avinu* sacrificed that ram as a *korban olah* which must be fully burned on the *mizbeach*, so how would there be anything left over for *Klal*

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

Yisroel to use when *Moshiach* arrives?

The **Ramban, Rabbeinu Moshe Ben Nachman ז"ל** provides us with a remarkable answer, that when the time comes for the ram's horn to be used, *Hashem* will gather up all the ashes from the burnt *korban olah* and piece them back together thereby enabling the horn to be used once again.

While this esoteric answer seems a bit uncharacteristic of the holy *Ramban*, it does serve to draw a similarity between the ingathering and reconstruction of the ashes of the horn in Messianic times, to the ingathering and defragmentation that will take place amongst the many different factions of *Klal Yisroel* in those times.

May those days come speedily and in our days.

ויאמר אליקים אל משה אודה אשר אודה ויאמר כה תאמר לבני ישראל אודה שלחתי אליכם ... (ד-ג)

Rashi explains this *posuk* as follows: "I AM THAT I AM - I will be with them in this sorrow - I will be with them in the subjection they will suffer at the hands of other kingdoms (*Berachos* 9b). Moshe said to Him: Ribono shel Olam, why should I mention to them other sorrows: they have enough with this sorrow! Hashem replied: Moshe, You have spoken correctly"

Hashem assured *Moshe Rabbeinu* that he would be with *Klal Yisroel* in all subsequent *golus'n* as well. The **Chasam Sofer ז"ל**, who had a special affinity to the **Ramban**, said that the *Ramban* once came to him in a dream and told him the following *pshat* regarding the above words: I will be there for those who look for Me. If a person chooses to live their life without acknowledging the presence of *Hashem*, then I won't be there for them. Alternatively, if one is always searching for *Hashem*, he will ultimately be successful in his search. One must never stop seeking out and ultimately finding *Hashem*.

This brings to mind two famous anecdotes. Someone once challenged a child, who eventually grew up to be the well-known *tzaddik*, **R' Heschel of Krakow ז"ל**: "If you tell me where *Hashem* is, I'll give you a *zloty* (small coin)."

The clever child responded sharply, "And I'll give you two, if you can tell me where He isn't!"

The next anecdote though, complements the *Ramban's pshat*. The **Kotzker Rebbe ז"ל** was once asked where one can find *Hashem*. He said in his sharp, inimitable way, "He can be found wherever we allow Him in!"

As the section of the *Torah* known as *Sefer Shemos*, which deals with the *Golus Mitzrayim* and the subsequent *Geula* begins, let us focus on recognizing the *hashgacha pratis* that envelops us on a daily basis, *Hashem's* ultimate protection, thus forging an everlasting and close relationship with our loving Father, who is there for us always and everywhere!

משל כמה הדבר דומה

ויאנחו בני ישראל מן העבדה ויועקו ותעל שועתם אל האלקים (ב-ג) **משל**: Chaim met his good friend Yossi in the street and his jaw dropped. "Yossi," he cried out with joy, "you look so good! You were *mamash* so sick just a few weeks ago - how are you back on your feet looking fit and healthy in such a short amount of time?"

"*Baruch Hashem*," replied Yossi sheepishly, "I'm really lucky. I am really feeling much better!"

"So what was it?" pressed Chaim. "Did you see that famous professor from Paris that I told you about?"

"No," Yossi answered.

"Ahhh, so you did that special treatment from Belgium we spoke about?" Again, Yossi shook his head.

"Also not?" Chaim was piqued. "Don't tell me you stuck with good old Dr. Brown here in Manhattan? I mean he's the best here in town, but"

יהיו בימים ההם ויגדל משה ויצא אל אחיו וירא כסבלתם ... (ג-א)

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

דרגה יתירה

We are all familiar with the famous **Rashi** that the meaning of "*Vayigdal Moshe*" - and Moshe grew up, is that *Moshe Rabbeinu* placed "his eyes and his heart to feel the pain of his fellow Jews." Moshe was growing up in the palace of Pharaoh, completely exempt from the slave labor of the Jewish people. But he put his eyes in the right place! He put his heart in the right place and he went out to help others. He chose to be focused on others, rather than self-focused. This is the meaning of growing up!

My father, **Rav Pinchos Hoffman שליטא**, loves to say over the following idea at every *Bris* in the family. We give the baby a *beracha*, "*Zeh Hakatan Gadol Yehiye*." This is the small one, he should become big! Obviously we are not referring to his physical size! What exactly are we blessing the baby? When you want to know the meaning of a word in Hebrew, you look at the very first place it is found in the *Torah*. There you can understand the true significance of the word. So, the first place in the *Torah* that we see the words "*Gadol*" and "*Katan*" are by the luminaries. The sun is called the *Maor HaGadol* and the moon is called *Maor HaKatan*. The sun is the quintessential GIVER! It provides the entire world with light and warmth. Everything that it has, it shines outward. The moon, on the other hand, has absolutely no light of its own. It is a *TAKER*. It takes the light of the sun and reflects it. Since the sun is a giver, it is called *Gadol*, big, and since the moon is a taker, it is called *Katan*, small.

This is the true significance of these words. Being big has nothing to do with how old you are. There are older people who never grow up, because they never learn how to truly care and give to others. And then there are young people who willingly give up their time, their money and their honor to go out of their way for others. These people are called *Gedolim*! So, we give the new baby a heartfelt *beracha*: "*Zeh HaKatan Gadol Yehiye*" - now you are small. You are a taker! But B"H, *GADOL YEHIYE!* You should become a GIVER! You should be the kind of person who always thinks about others - like *Moshe Rabbeinu!*