



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

כי כל איש אשר בו מום לא יקרב איש קור או פסח או חרם או שרוע ... (כא-ה')

Throughout the world, patients waiting for liver transplants are prioritized based on the severity of their illness, as measured by what's called the Model for End-Stage Liver Disease (MELD) score. The score uses blood tests to determine how urgently a patient needs a liver transplant within the next three months. The sicker one is, the higher the score. Another important determination is if the liver is a match from the donor to the recipient. Better matching of the donor organ to the recipient will improve transplant outcomes and benefit the overall waiting list by minimizing failures and the need for re-transplantation. Very often, patients become quite sick by the time they receive a call to have their liver transplant. Not all survive. Some patients grow worse suddenly, and become too sick to receive a transplant.

There was a religious woman from New York, sick with liver disease *r"l*, who was approved for a liver transplant, however, she waited over five years to get a call from the national registry or any transplant center to schedule her transplant. Her husband was a *Baal Tzedakah* who supported institutions as well as individual Jews. One of the Jews he supported was a *Yerushalmi Yid* who would frequently travel to *kivrei Tzaddikim to daven* for this woman and for others. One year, a few days before *Lag BaOmer*, the man called and asked the *Yerushalmi* if he could make a special trip to *Meron* in order to *daven* for his wife at the *kever* of *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai on Lag BaOmer*. He suggested that the *yid* go to *Meron* for *Shabbos* and remain there until after *Lag BaOmer*. "Unfortunately, my wife's health is deteriorating fast, and she needs *tefillos*. I'll pay for the taxi and for all the expenses involved." The *Yerushalmi Yid* obliged and went to *Meron* before *Shabbos*.

He spent almost every waking moment at the tomb of the *Tzaddik* and poured his heart out for her recovery.

That *Shabbos*, there was a fatal car accident in New York, leaving the driver dead. His liver was an exact match for this woman. However, there were two other people (not Jewish) ahead of her in line for the liver transplant. Time was of the essence and the transplant center at a nearby medical center tried to call the person next in line. After trying numerous times, they could not get hold of him. So the hospital moved on to the next person on the list. They called the second person in line to come down to the hospital for an immediate transplant. This man came directly to the hospital, but as they were prepping him for surgery, he suddenly became traumatized and refused to go through with the operation. No amount of coaxing or convincing could change the man's mind, and he quickly got dressed and ran out of the hospital.

Now, it was the religious woman's turn. The problem was, how would the hospital reach her if she wouldn't pick up the phone on *Shabbos*? One of the surgeons had the number of a prominent rabbi who he knew would pick up a phone on *Shabbos* in the case of medical emergencies and *pikuach nefesh*. From time to time, he had called and gotten through. The doctor called and the rabbi picked up the phone. "We have a viable liver for a religious woman. We need to get in contact with her immediately. The liver is just what she needs, but if she will not come now, it will be given away to someone else."

The rabbi understood the severity of the matter and decided that the first thing he would try is to call the woman's home directly. The hospital had tried but she did not pick up. (On one occasion when she was a very sick patient in the hospital, the hospital had called her home and they picked up because it was understood that it might be an emergency.) Perhaps they will answer the phone when he called. He dialed the number the surgeon had given him and a child picked up! The child hadn't thought about it and just miraculously (by Divine Providence) picked up the phone. Quickly, the rabbi was able to inform the family that she must get to the hospital immediately as this was *pikuach nefesh* and she might never get another chance like this. Indeed, the call and the transplant saved her life. Within weeks, the woman recovered fully from her disease.

The woman and her husband thank *Hashem* every day for this miracle. They believe it all happened because of the *tefillos* at the tomb of *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai*, the place which the *Shlah HaKadosh* testifies: "Miracles occur there."

הבהנים הלוים בני גדוק ... המה יקרבו אלו לשרתני ועבדו לפני (יחזקאל מו-מז)

In this week's *Haftorah*, *Yechezkel HaNavi* details how *Hashem* was pleased with the *Bnei Tzadok* who maintained the service of the *Bais Hamikdash* even when *Klal Yisroel* went astray. In the future when *Moshiach* reveals himself to the world, everyone will see *Hashem's* glory and might, and the *Kohanim*, specifically the *Bnei Tzadok*, will be the ones ministering the Almighty. But what is the significance of having only the *Bnei Tzadok* ministering *Hashem*?

The *Chida*, *R' Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai z"l* explains that *Chazal* tell us, "הבא ליטהר מסייעין אותו" - "One who comes to purify himself, [Hashem] assists him." This means that regardless of a person's spiritual status, if he wants to cleanse himself and draw closer to *Hashem*, the Almighty will indeed

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN תורת הצבי על הפטרות

make it easier for him to do just that.

Says the *Chida*, in the times of *Moshiach*, *Hashem* will use the *Bnei Tzadok* who epitomize the ideal of spiritual purity - since they always remained steadfast in their adherence to Him - to serve as role models for the rest of the nation.

Thus, it is extremely important for the nation to see the *Bnei Tzadok* at *Hashem's* side as they strive for greatness and spiritual purity. But more importantly, the *Bnei Tzadok* represent the idea of always being prepared and ready to do the holy work of ministering to the *ratzon* of *Hashem*.

So, even now when we await the arrival of *Moshiach* we can take a lesson from the *Bnei Tzadok* and try to prepare for that special time by working on our spirituality.

דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם מועד ה' אשר תקראו אתם מקראי קדש אלה הם מועדי ... (בג-ב)

The question here is obvious: "מה ענין שבת אצל המועדים"? Why is *Shabbos* mentioned right here and right now, at this juncture? (We'll get to *Rashi's pshat* soon. See also the *Vilna Gaon z"l* who has a brilliant interpretation.)

We know that the word "מועד" refers to a meeting place. Our *Yomim*, in which we are *עולה רגל*, is an opportunity to meet and connect with *Hashem* in a personal and private way. *Shabbos*, when we think about it, affords us this very same concept. Hence, it is also called a *מועד*.

Perhaps we can add the following *מחשבה*. *Shabbos* is a constant; it occurs every seventh day of the week. Its *קדושה* emanates directly from *Hashem*. *Yom Tov*, however is enacted through *beis din* and their *kiddush hachodesh*. Thus, when the *Torah* refers to *Shabbos*, it says *אלה הם מועדי* - These are My *Moadim*, the holy days of *Hashem*. On the other hand, when discussing the *Yamim Tovim*, the *מועדים*, the *Torah* states: "אשר תקראו".

*Rashi* we alluded to earlier, quotes *Chazal* and explains the needed connection. Anyone who does not keep the *Moadim*, it's as if he also defiles the *Shabbos*. What is the deeper meaning here? The *Ksav Sofer z"l* explains that people need one day off a week to enable them to relax, and rejuvenate. So the fact that one is not working on *Shabbos* does not necessarily mean that he's observing it *לשמה*. He's simply taking his requisite day off to recalibrate, as explained. But, by his being *לשמה* - one shows that his intentions in keeping *Shabbos* were pure.

Connecting to *Shabbos* is an *avodah*. Yet realizing that it's our weekly chance to advance our family's *kesher* with *Hashem* should make it easier. As *Chazal* teach us: when we properly honor the *Shabbos*, we hasten the *geula*. *כן יהי רצון*.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת שבע שבתות תמימת תחינה (בג-בז)

When the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe, R' Moshe Yehoshua Hager z"l*, attended the wedding of his *chasid* *Chatzkel's* daughter, he stayed a bit longer than usual and when he got up to leave the wedding hall, he requested of *Chatzkel* to call him when he got home. "*Rebbe*," *Chatzkel* said, "I don't want to *shtet* the *Rebbe*. There is a *mitzvah tantz* tonight and I won't be home until close to 4 am!"

But the *Rebbe* insisted. So, at 4 o'clock in the morning when *Chatzkel* got home, he dialed the *gabbai's* number who immediately went to the *Rebbe*, as he was instructed.

The *Rebbe* washed his hands and got on the phone. "The *chasuna* was really beautiful, no?" he inquired. *Chatzkel* affirmed, indeed it was everything he had hoped it to be.

"How many guests came?" The *Rebbe* inquired, "Which *Rabbanim* came later? Did so and so make it? And what

about so and so?" *Chatzkel* answered each question. The conversation continued for another 20 minutes as they discussed the different aspects of the wedding.

When the *Rebbe* eventually hung up, the *gabbai* could not contain his curiosity. This was the one of the most unusual things he'd ever seen. The *Rebbe* explained: "Chatzkel just married off his tenth and last child. Usually, when the family comes home after a wedding, they reminisce and rehash the entire event, discussing the guest, the band, the food and how it all played out. However, as you know, *Chatzkel* is a recent widower. I thought about how much pain he would have when he came home to an empty house. He needed someone to discuss the wedding with!"

The *forty-nine* days of *sefirah* are days of contemplation. We contemplate our personal thoughts and actions, as well as how we treat others. Only then are we ready for *Kabbolas HaTorah* and the *Yom Tov of Shavuos*.

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

The secret of success in *chinuch* is how we speak to our children. *Rashi* tells us that the reason it says twice in the *posuk* "TO SAY" ("אמור ואמרת") is to teach the adults what to say to children. And what should they say? "BNEI AHARON"! This is not only to WHOM it should be said; this is also WHAT should be said! In other words, says the *Cheshev Sofer z"l*, tell your children, "YOU are the great and holy children of Aharon. You must not make yourselves impure because YOU are special!"

The lesson here is that if you want to tell your child not to hang around with bad kids who influence him; if you want to tell your child not to be involved with internet, facebook and smartphones, for they are bad for his *neshama* - what will make your child listen to you? If you say you will be very angry and will punish him, he will probably figure out how to do it without you knowing. But if you tell him, "My dear child, you are so precious and beloved to *Hashem* and to me. You are all that I have and you are not like everyone else. You are special, you are holy, you have the potential for greatness that is not found by everyone. You should not make yourself impure because you are special!" This is the concept known as "*Past Nisht*" - it is unbecoming, it is not befitting someone of your stature to do something wrong - this is the proper way to educate children!

There are two paths in *avodas Hashem*: "סור מרע" - stay away from evil, and "עשה טוב" - do good. Says the *Kotzker Rebbe z"l*, the way to stay away from evil is by doing good! Only with good will one get good! It is not necessary to harp on the negative. Giving our children speeches on all the things they do wrong will usually create anger and resistance. Praising our children for what they do right and telling them how special they are - this will *Bezras Hashem* create self-confidence and pride in themselves and a desire to please their parents.

Talk to your kids like they are truly special and you will be pleasantly surprised!