



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

וכפר את מקדש הקדש ואת אהל מועד ואת המזבח יכפר ועל הבהנים ועל כל עם הקהל יכפר ... (מג-ל)

The *avodah* of *Yom HaKippurim* is long and intricate, and although today we do not have a *Bais HaMikdash* in which to perform the lofty service, we have *tefillah* in its place, which serves to remind us of what once was and to allow us to attain atonement through our prayers. This applies not only to *Yom Kippur*, but to *tefillah* all-year round.

In the structure of our *davening*, there are a variety of customs, not all of which are truly substantive, and in many cases, they are merely a matter of local practice. Yet, those people who subscribe to any particular opinion often become overly defensive if anyone wishes to introduce another format, as though the latter was some sort of cardinal sin.

It is told that in one synagogue in Eastern Europe, on the *Shabbos* on which we bless the new month of *Iyar*, a dispute arose among the worshipers as to whether the prayer “*Av Harachamim*” (Merciful Father) is recited or omitted. Each side had its proponents, and no one seemed to remember what the established practice had been from years past. After loud arguments that ruined the tranquil spirit of the day, it was finally decided to consult the oldest citizen of the community, who, being one of the synagogue’s original founders, would certainly know which was the accepted practice. This elderly man was too weak to attend *Shabbos* services, so someone was dispatched to his home to ask him.

When the messenger placed the question before him, the elderly man quickly sized up the situation, and assumed the role of halachic arbiter. He wiped off his silver-rimmed glasses, took a sip of hot tea, and relished the anxious anticipation of his reply. Then, he announced, “As I recall, my child, the established practice in our synagogue since its founding is that on *Shabbos Mevorchim*, the *Shabbos* that we bless the new month of *Iyar*, there is always a *machlokes* as to whether or not to say ‘*Av Harachamim*.’ That practice shall remain in place!” And then the old fellow broke into hearty laughter.

Often though, a practical joke or words spoken in jest without thought, can lead to misunderstandings which have the potential to do harm. For example, one year, late in the day on *Yom Kippur*, the **Kedushas Yom Tov, R’ Chananya Yom Tov Lipa Teitelbaum ז”ל**, of **Sighet**, went into his private room a few minutes before *Neilah*, and remained there for quite some time. People began wondering what had happened to the *Rebbe* and what was taking him so long. One man even approached the *Rebbe*’s young son, Yoelish, who was still a child at the time, and asked him if he knew where his father was.

Yoelish smiled and answered the man, tongue firmly planted in cheek, “He probably went inside to take a bite to eat before *Neilah*!” No sooner had the words left his mouth, did the young boy regret saying them to some random man whom he did not know. Maybe the man actually believed him and thought that his father, the *Tzaddik*, was really eating on *Yom Kippur*! Search as he might, the boy could not locate the man, and this caused him no small amount of distress.

The *Kedushas Yom Tov* passed away in 5664 (1904) and his son, **R’ Yoel Teitelbaum ז”ל**, went on to become the famous **Satmar Rebbe**. On one occasion, the *Satmar Rebbe* traveled to Chicago in 1953, to raise funds for the *Satmar Mosdos*, and many people came out to greet the renowned *Tzaddik*, and receive a blessing from him. One elderly man sat before R’ Yoelish and reminisced how many years previously, he had been in Sighet and spent *Yom Kippur* with the *Kedushas Yom Tov*. He could not seem to recall the precise year but he did remember that right before *Neilah*, the holy *Rebbe* went into his private room and a young child who was there told him that the *Rebbe* was hungry and took a bite to eat!

R’ Yoelish jumped up and cried, “That young child was me, and *chas v’sholom* that my holy father should eat on *Yom Kippur*!” With a reassuring smile, the *Satmar Rebbe* explained to the witless old man that all those years previous, he had made a joke and regretted it immediately. He could not contain his excitement and relief at having been afforded the opportunity to make amends for a humorless jest that had left his mouth close to sixty years ago. R’ Yoelish would always warn people to be ultra-careful to watch what they say because not everyone is given the same chance like he was for *teshuvah*!

ויאמר לו ידונתן מחר חדש ... (שמואל א’ כ-ה)

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

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

The *Haftorah* of *Machar Chodesh* depicts the events surrounding the *Rosh Chodesh* *Shodah* in the palace of *Shaul Hamelech*, and how *Dovid Hamelech* - who was on the run from *Shaul* - used it to determine *Shaul*’s attitude towards him.

The *Navi* states, “*And Yonason said to him (Dovid), tomorrow will be the new moon...*” Interestingly, *Yonason* was already speaking to *Dovid* prior to this statement, so why does the *Navi* reiterate that “*Yonason said to Dovid*”?

**R’ Shaul Brach ז”ל, (Rav of Kasho, Hungary)** explains that *Chazal* note that these *seudos* were of mandatory attendance and it was quite significant for *Dovid* to choose not to attend. In a way, *Dovid* was rebelling against the crown and could have been sentenced to death for his action.

So, what was it that made these *seudos* so significant?

He explains that there is a well-known *Medrash* depicting a feud between the sun and the moon at the dawn of creation. The moon was jealous that it would have to share the “spotlight” with the sun, and it complained to *Hashem* who in turn reduced its size and strength considerably.

Says R’ *Shaul*, since the the *Rosh Chodesh seudos* were held to celebrate the new month, *Dovid* understood that it was the appropriate time to test the trait of jealousy. He understood that the evil spirit which was upon *Shaul*’s head caused him to be jealous of *Dovid*’s success, and as such *Dovid* saw the *Rosh Chodesh seudah* as the perfect time and place to see how far that trait of jealousy would go.

ובא אהרן אל אהל מועד ופשט את בגדי הכר אשר לבש בבואו אל הקדש והניחם שם ... (מג-כג)

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

## מחשבת הלב

At the conclusion of the awe-filled *Yom Kippur avodah* performed by the *Kohen Gadol*, the garments he wore while doing the *avodah*, were to be removed. The *posuk* says ‘והניחם שם’, and he shall place them there. **Rashi** explains that those *bigdei kehuna* must be buried never to be used again. The obvious question is, why not? The *Kohen Gadol*, no doubt, attained such an exalted spiritual level - wouldn’t it behoove them to recycle those very special clothes yearly and use them again?

The *machshava* that the *Torah* may be conveying is, that each year’s *avodah* is different. A person must always strive to reach new heights; never remaining stationary. So, what worked one year, may not work the next year and as a result, might have to be adjusted therewith. The efforts one invested last year may have to be increased this year. But the point is, in *ruchniyus*, there is no *chazakah* that what was, what spiritual level that was attained through however much effort was infused, will continue to be for the coming year, and even further. Rather, each year must bring one to new spiritual heights.

There is an additional thought here too. On *Yom Kippur*, we commit ourselves anew. We fast and *daven* with great *kavana* and beg the Almighty for forgiveness so we may be *zoche* to a good year. But as we leave that lofty level and get busy with our mundane lives, we tend to regress a bit. Says the *posuk* ‘והניחם שם’ - leave it there, a *zeicher*, a reminder, of what we have just achieved, and what we committed to for the future. This serves as a compass to help us keep our bearings.

As the glorious *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* is receding in our rear-view mirror, and we resume our normal routines, many of us have little more than expanded waistline to serve as that reminder. This should not be. Those who don’t must do their utmost to try to remember, on their own, the magnificent heights reached last week and to strive higher and higher B’ezras Hashem.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

את משפטי תעשו ואת חקתי תשמרו ללכת בהם ... (יה-ד)

**משל**: The house is famous. 23 *Rechov Rashbam* was the address that anyone in need of assistance - a *beracha*, advice or the *Rebbe*’s food - could turn to. It was clear to one and all that no matter whether it was understanding a difficult passage in *Torah* or some other mundane matter, **R’ Chaim Kanievsky ז”ל** and his *Rebbe*’s where always there to help.

As huge as the apartment may have been in relevance, the actual square footage was tiny. And yet they managed to raise their eight beautiful children in harmony. The *Rebbe*’s famously allowed R’ Chaim to sit and learn *Torah* undisturbed while she attended to all of the household needs. Indeed, he was out of the house and not with the kids much of the time, however, when he was available, he enjoyed interacting with them very much. For many years he would recall the following incident.

דם הישב לאיש הזוא דם שפך ונכרת האיש הזוא מקרב עמו ... (ד-ז)

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

## דרגה יתירה

The *Torah* teaches that if a person sacrifices an animal outside the *Ohel Moed* - “דם שפך” - he has spilled blood. Whose blood has he spilled? The animal’s blood? Well, of course he has! That is no *chiddush*! So whose blood are we talking about?

**R’ Avigdor Miller ז”ל** describes what it was like to go up to the *Bais HaMikdash* and bring a *korban*. It was a life-altering experience! Just entering the holiest place and seeing the *Kohanim* in their special clothing doing their special *avodah* was absolutely awe-inspiring! And then, as the *korban* is being brought on the *Mizbeach*, one has in mind that it is really HIM that is being sacrificed! It touches him to the very core of his being! Then he would go home and tell his family all about the experience, describing it all in explicit detail, showing how affected he was. No doubt, he becomes a changed man! Not at all the same person he was before. And thus, one who forfeits this opportunity and brings his *korban* elsewhere ... spills blood. He has murdered the person he COULD have become. The blood he has spilled was his very own blood! He committed suicide!

This idea can be applied to any opportunity in life where one can *shteig*, grow, and be inspired - and he doesn’t seize the moment! When a person is too lazy to get off the couch to hear a great *shiur* or do a wonderful *chessed*. Killing time is first degree murder! “דם שפך” means that one has spilled the blood of time, and once time is gone, it never comes back.

The root of the word “הזדמנות” - opportunity, is ZMAN. “זמן” means time and the message is that every single moment of time that one is given in this world is a glorious opportunity to grow, to change and to come closer to *Hashem*. Some people wait for opportunities to fall into their lap, but they don’t realize that if you are alive and breathing at this very moment then the greatest “הזדמנות” has fallen into YOUR lap and it is YOUR choice to use it or lose it! In fact, the word “הזדמנות” also carries in it the word “דם” - blood. Let us stop spilling our own blood and utilize every moment to become who we really can be!