

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

אבינו מלכנו שמע קולנו חוס ורחם עלינו ... קבל ברחמים וברצון את תפילתנו (פדר אבינו מלכנו)

In “Avinu Malkeinu” we say the words: “Our Father, our King, hear our voices, take pity and have mercy on us.” These words are immediately followed by: “אבינו מלכנו שמע קולנו חוס ורחם עלינו” - “Our Father, our King, accept our prayers with compassion and favor.” Chacham Rav Elazar Abuchatzeira ז”ל explains that these two prayers are not the same. There is a fundamental difference in the manner in which a person *davens*. When one *davens*, his simple *tefillos* require “רחמים ורצון” - “compassion and favor” in the eyes of Heaven before they can be accepted. If he is worthy, then his requests will indeed be granted. On the other hand, when one raises his voice (קולנו) to the Almighty, crying out to Him from the depths of one’s heart, those cries are “heard” immediately, and do not require any further compassion in order to be accepted. When *Rochel Imeinu* cried for her children in exile, this did more than all the *tefillos* of the righteous, including the *Avos*. As the Zohar writes (אחרי ו): “Anyone who cries as the Torah is being read on Yom Kippur (which discusses the death of Nadav and Avihu), is guaranteed that his sins will be forgiven and that he will never lose a child in his lifetime.” Is this not a guarantee worth acting upon, to ensure the safety of one’s family for the coming year?

A terrible event occurred on Yom Kippur of 1973. Reb Ben Tzion Fellman left his house early in the morning to go to *yeshivah*, so he could learn before *davening*. On the way, he saw R’ Aharon Leib Steinman ז”ל coming from Rashbam Street on his way to *Kollel Chazon Ish*, where he *davened Shacharis K’vasikin*. Reb Ben Tzion wondered why he was coming from Rashbam Street when he lived in a totally different direction, on Chazon Ish Street. He asked the *Rav*.

R’ Aharon Leib told him that he had an unusual dream the night before in which he saw the words of the *piyut* “Ana B’koach.” The words in the second line, whose initial letters spell “KRA SATAN” (tear the *Satan*), appeared before him, but the letter *reish* had detached from the rest of the word and was floating above it. It was an amazing dream, especially since he had dreamed it on the night of Yom Kippur. Who knew what it meant? He surely didn’t. So he hurried, first thing in the morning, to the home of the *Steipler Gaon, R’ Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky ז”ל*. Surely the *Steipler*, with his *ruach hakodesh*, would know what it meant. When the *Steipler* heard the dream, he was dumbfounded. Without a word, he handed a *Sefer Tehillim* to R’ Aharon Leib and they both said *Tehillim* together for a long time to annul whatever decree the dream was warning them about. That’s why R’ Aharon Leib wasn’t coming from his own apartment on the morning of Yom Kippur.

The explanation of his dream wasn’t long in coming. That afternoon, sirens broke the awesome silence of the holy day. The Yom Kippur War had begun. A war unlike any other. Arab legions used a surprise attack against the Defense Forces of Israel, which suffered between 2,521 and 2,800 killed in action. An additional 7,250 to 8,800 soldiers were wounded.

When *davening* in the *Vasikin minyan* had finished - even before the sirens sounded - Reb Moshe Borenstein saw how white-faced and worried R’ Aharon Leib looked. He asked if he felt all right. The *Rav* replied that he was worried about his dream. Reb Moshe was also concerned about the dream. With heavy hearts, they wished each other “*Gmar Chasima Tova.*”

Reb Moshe then went and told Reb Naftali Nebenzahl about the dream, and the story went around to all the *talmidei chachamim* in the *yeshivah*, who knew that they had to expend extra effort in their *davening* to have the decree annulled.

Once the sirens began to sound, everyone understood the dream’s message. Later, when R’ Aharon Leib met Reb Moshe before *Mincha* at the *Ponevezh Kollel*, he said, “*Nu*, maybe this is the explanation of my dream...”

When the war was over, Reb Ben Tzion visited the *Steipler*, who was talking about the great miracles that had occurred during the war. When the topic of the dream came up, the *Steipler* said, “Who knows what might have happened had we not said *Tehillim* together early that morning?” He went on to say that *tefillos* that are *davened* with intense concentration and effort before a tragedy strikes are much more effective than *tefillos* that are *davened* during the tragedy. (Adapted from “A Treasury of Stories” Part I.)

ותורת הצבי על הפטרות
יאמר איהם שאוני הדייני אל הים
ישתק הים בעליכם ... (מפטר יונה א-ב)

In the final year of his life, the *Mashgiach* of *Chevron Yeshivah, R’ Leib Chasman ז”ל*, was greatly weakened from fasting on Yom Kippur, and immediately upon the conclusion of *Neilah*, he left the *yeshivah* to walk home. There were still a few minutes left until the fast would end, and a *minyan* of *talmidim* accompanied him to his home.

As they sat together in his home waiting until the time to *daven Maariv*, the *Mashgiach* said over the following:

“In *Maftir Yonah*, we find that the *Navi Yonah* told the sailors on the ship, ‘Lift me up, and cast me into the sea.’ One might ask: why did Yonah have to say, ‘Lift me up’ - it would have sufficed for him to say, ‘Cast me into the sea.’? But Yonah wanted to accentuate the moment they lifted

him up to emphasize the importance of even one final second of life. We have but a few minutes left of this holiest of all days, Yom Kippur. Let us not waste them!”

For forty days - from *Rosh Chodesh Elul* until the conclusion of Yom Kippur - each and every Jew is striving toward the ultimate goal of complete repentance and drawing himself closer to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. This is what we yearn and strive for - to do everything in our power to fulfill this special and crucial desire. On Yom Kippur, as we conclude *Neilah* and look ahead toward the night when we can break our fast and go back to our regular lives, it behooves us to remember that those last few minutes are precious. Do *teshuvah* - even up to the very last minute!

על דעת המקום ועל דעת הקהל... אנו מתירים להתפלל עם העבירים ... (סדר קול נדר)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPFMAN ז"ל

מחשבת הלב

As we usher in Yom Kippur, with that sublime and surreal *tefillah* moment known as “*Kol Nidrei*”, we welcome with open arms, all segments of Jews; from the best to the worst - even the sinners. Why is it so vital that this invitation be proffered precisely at this propitious moment?

It would seem that in order to actuate *Hashem’s* benevolent forgiveness of our transgressions there must be present a unity of sorts - an *achdus* among us. This is true for at least two reasons. Firstly, when *Hashem* sees His flock caring for each other, He will wish to do the same. Secondly, the Jewish nation as a whole is, in essence, singularly pure and holy. In (ד-ו) שיר השירים we read, “כולך יפה רעייתי ומום אין בך”. This unblemished beauty is only possible if, and only if, we are one people. One nation. As one עם קדוש we can be deserving of *כפרה*.

The *Zohar* speaks very harshly regarding the *tefillos* of some during the ימים נראים. He says we should be *davening* for *מים שמים*, but instead we call out for our own needs, “כדודש שם שמי” [The *Baal Shem Tov ז”ל* says though, nowadays, since we aren’t on such a high *madreiga* - it’s acceptable not to live up to the standards of the *Zohar*.] But how can we address and maybe correct the issue raised by the *Zohar*? Perhaps we can say as follows. The *כלב*, as the *Gemara* says, thinks only of its own needs, and is not *מהנה* others. So if we selfishly *daven* for ourselves - that is the *Zohar’s* concern. We are being selfish and not thinking of other people’s needs. But if we have in mind that with the blessings received, we will give, help and care for another, that’s not the nature of *כלב* and is deserving of being answered *לטוב*.

Similarly, if we don’t just beg *Hashem* for ourselves, but have in mind that our friends, neighbors, and maybe even a competitor, also have their *bakoshos* answered, that will trigger a showering of *beracha* for all. הירצון שתחל שנה וברכותיה

משל למה הדבר דומה

ושבת עד ה' אלקיך ושמעת בקולו ... (דברים ל-ב)

משל: There was once a young teenager who was having a rough couple of years, to say the least. He had a fall out with his parents at a young age and it made him very angry. New friends seemed to bring him “relief” from his terrible predicament, so he followed them, unfortunately, down a path he never thought he’d go. Slowly, slowly he drifted away from *Torah* observance.

Years passed, some were better than others, but coupled by his strained relationship with family and old “religious neighbors,” he barely showed his face. He was off somewhere far away, and eventually he was almost completely forgotten about by those who used to be close to him.

And then suddenly it happened. After years of not showing his face, he suddenly began to frequent his house. Little by

little he opened up and started talking to the neighbors once again. It was as if a light switch had suddenly turned on.

Naturally, it was to everyone’s great interest what happened to him, but it wasn’t until an old friend asked him “What was it that brought you to do *teshuvah*?” that the young man answered: “Someone told me that every night, my parents leave the door of their home unlocked, anticipating my return. They never wanted me to find the door to come home locked, no matter when. I thought, ‘If my parents want so much for me to return to them, I cannot disappoint them!’”

משל: *Hashem* leaves His door open for us as well, so that when we return to Him, we will always find the path to repentance open. He is always available for us and for all of our needs. *Hashem* seeks a connection with us and therefore makes Himself available at any time we seek Him. How we hope and pray we will merit this soon!

כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לומר אתכם מכל המאתיכם ... (ויקרא מז-ל)

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

דרגה יתירה

What is the difference between “*כפרה*” and “*טהרה*” and why does the *posuk* tell us we need both? “*Kappara*” means atonement, from the word “*לכפר*” which means to cover. When we sin, we cover our *neshamos* with layers and barriers that separate us from *Hashem*. The more covered our souls become from sin, the more desensitized we become to spirituality. On Yom Kippur, we do *teshuvah*, which removes the coverings and allows us to return to a real connection to *Hashem*.

That leads us to “*Tahara*”! *Tahara* means purity, which is a state of being that is fully focused on *Ruchniyus*. “*Kappara*” is the way to get there, but “*Tahara*” means truly living with *Hashem*. Living for *olam haba* and not for *olam haze*! *Tahara* means living a physical life with a spiritual *kook* (focus)! When we say, “*וטהר לבנו לעבדך באמת*” - we ask *Hashem* to purify our hearts so that we can REALLY serve Him. Only with *Tahara* can we live life the way we are supposed to.

Sometimes we feel like all this talk about *teshuvah*, and changing ourselves is a bit heavy. “I keep *Shabbos*, eat *kosher*, send my kids to the best *yeshivos* and give *tzedaka* to the needy. Why should I change? What’s wrong with my nice *frum, Torahdik, yeshivish* life?” The answer is that although we live *frum* lives, our focus is mainly on the material. Imagine if tomorrow all food would have no taste! Everything we eat would be totally bland. What would you think? “Great! Now we won’t spend so much time eating and going to restaurants! We will be able to focus more on spiritual matters!” Or will you say, “No more BBQs, fancy dinners and delicious desserts? No way!” Some feel that life is just not worth living without physical pleasures! THIS is the focus we need to change! Our enjoyment in life should come from *Tahara* - living with *Hashem*. This is what we hope to accomplish this Yom Kippur so that we will be *zoche* to real life in this world. Physical existence with a spiritual *kook*!