



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ומכה אביו ואמו מות יומת. וגנב איש ומכרו ונמצא בידו מות יומת. ומקלל אביו ואמו מות יומת ... (כא-טו.ו.ז.)

Why is the *posuk* about the penalty for kidnapping flanked by the two *posukim* that detail the punishment for hitting/hurting and cursing a parent? **R' Shimon Schwab ז"ל (Maayan Beis HaShoevah)** explains that when parents are more interested in what they get out of the relationship, when they hover over their young and become the scriptwriters and directors of their children's lives, they rob them of their own personalities. They are being molded in the image of others, who don't have their best interests at heart. Their parents have, in a real sense, hijacked or kidnapped the life that could have been. The *Torah* is alluding to this vital and true role of a parent. Yes, the child who attacked a parent is at fault for his assault of the parent, whether it is verbal cursing or physical blows. He deserves the penalty enumerated in the two *posukim* (15 and 17). Yet, at the same time, the crime described in the middle *posuk* has also been violated. His parents are guilty of a real form of kidnapping - robbing a young child of his very essence, his very soul.

In the *Sefer Bedidi Hava Uvda*, authored by **R' Shmuel Dovid Friedman *shlita***, there is a powerful story with a strong and poignant message. The story is about a very wealthy man whose father acted a bit eccentric and would walk around in filthy rags, unclean and unhinged. This embarrassed the wealthy man immensely and he decided that although his father had no place else to live, he would not allow him into his palatial home. If someone would ask him why he treated his father like a stranger this way, he would emphatically explain that it was not befitting for him, the son, to observe his father behave in this manner, but instead of bringing him into his home and providing him with proper clothing, he chose to ignore him. The elderly man lived and slept in the streets of the city.

This went on for quite some time. One winter's day, the young son of the wealthy man - a grandson of the homeless man - was walking in the street and saw the old man scrounging around in the garbage. He was unclothed and talking to himself. The little boy watched in horrified fascination as his own flesh and blood, his father's father, was laying in the dirt, grime and snow-covered street without a proper garment, no coat or gloves to protect him from the elements. The old man was trembling from cold. The young boy decided that he needed to help his grandfather. He ran into his warm and cozy home and told his father that they have to provide the grandfather with better clothing. It was not right to simply leave him outside freezing and trembling, without doing anything on his behalf.

The father was busy reading a book and didn't even look up. With a wave of his hand, he told the boy, "I don't care what you do for that old man. If you want, you can go up to the attic. I remember that there is an old garment there. Maybe even something warm. Take it down and bring it to your grandfather, if you want."

The son went up to the attic and the father went back to his book. After quite a while, the father looked up from his reading and realized that his young son still had not come down from the attic. He became concerned lest something happened to him. He got out of his chair and hurried over to the attic stairs. With urgency, he called up to the boy, "My son, is everything okay up there? Why are you not coming down?"

The son replied, "I was delayed because I was cutting the garment into two parts, one for my grandfather and one for you, my father. I figured it was a good idea so that when you will become an old man and I will throw you out of the house in the winter like you've done to your father, I'll send you the other half of this garment..."

The father recoiled at the words of his son. It was spoken not out of malice, but with a simple expectation that this is how it will be. At once, he understood the message: His son planned to do to him exactly what he was doing to his father. As a result, he began to reflect on his misdeeds and then went to get his father. He brought him back into his home, gave him a warm and comfortable room, and provided him with proper clothing and hygiene. The young boy smiled.

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY AN UNEQUALLED HISTORIAN

The *Haftorah* of *Shabbos Rosh Chodesh* details the final prophecy of *Yeshaya HaNavi* in which he presented visions of *Klal Yisroel* returning to *Eretz Yisroel* falsely convinced of their own righteousness, where they reject and mock those who truly fear *Hashem*. *Hashem* declares that "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool." This is a reference to the *Bais HaMikdash* which is *Hashem's* house on earth. But why was this statement important at this time and place? Surely in his final prophecy to a sinful nation *Hashem* could have sent *Yeshaya* a more appropriate line of rebuke other than discussing how *Hashem*, who is wholly spiritual, still maintains a "foothold" on our physical earth.

**R' Hershel Bournmiz *shlit"a*** explains that *Chazal* often

describe the *Bais HaMikdash* as the conduit through which all spirituality stems from. It was literally a place devoid of physicality in an otherwise physical world. He explains that the **Radak** writes how *Hashem* never needed the physical house *Klal Yisroel* built for Him nor the sacrifices they brought there. Rather, *Hashem* wanted the *Bais HaMikdash* built so that his children, *Bnei Yisroel*, would have a place to go to *daven* and feel His presence undoubtedly sparking profound levels of *teshuvah* and elevated levels of servitude.

Thus, even as *Klal Yisroel's* future looked bleak, *Hashem* sent *Yeshaya* a prophecy about the "physical" presence of *Hashem* in His holy house, to remind the Nation that *Hashem* always awaits our wholehearted remorse and repentance.

אם ענה תענה אתו כי אם צעק יצעק  
אלי שמע אשמע צעקתו ... (כב-כג)

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

# מחשבת הלב

The **Kli Yakar** asks a question here. If the *Torah* warns us not to pain people, then why is this given in a singular form; it should have been said רבים? בלשון רבים? The **Mechilta** says that the prohibition of paining someone isn't limited to those that the *Torah* enumerates, but extends to each and every *yid*. Therefore, says the **Ohr HaChayim Hakodosh ז"ל**, the *Torah* wrote "אתו" in a singular form, to say that only these people mentioned explicitly - "אתו" - warrant such a harsh punishment. If one pains other people, he is still עובר לא, however, the punishment isn't so extreme.

The *Chofetz Chaim* himself answers his own question a bit differently. *Hashem*, our ultimate הרחמן, also feels the pain of others. Thus, says the *posuk* "אם ענה תענה אתו" - it is *Hashem* Himself you are inflicting pain on! We now understand the word "אתו" versus "אותם". But what about the word "כי"? It would have sufficed to say "אם צעק".

There's a *psbat* from the *sefer* *in the name of the קול אליהו*. The *Gemara* in *Bava Basra* (16) says that Penina would taunt Chana. Even though she meant it לטמה to get Chana to *daven*, nevertheless, says the *Gemara*, she was punished. And for every child Chana subsequently had, Penina lost two, לא עליי. Seemingly, Penina's ruse worked well, as Chana did cry and beseech the Almighty. Why then was she so harshly punished?

We see from here that when it comes to paining others there are no excuses. Even if you mean it לתועלת, it won't be justified. This idea is what the *posuk* is telling us. "אם ענה תענה אתו" - if you pain someone - "כי אם" - even if your intention is "צעק יצעק" - that they should call out in *tefillah*, it won't help because - "שמע אשמע" - I will hear and avenge their distress.

Let us all do what we can to empathize and shoulder the burden of our brethren who are suffering. We *daven* that *Hashem* hear our supplications and *bentch* us with a טובך חדש אדר with all its *simcha*, good will, and *besuros tovos* for *gantz Klal Yisroel*.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

ואלה המשפטים אשר תשים לפנייהם ... (כא-א)

**משל**: The **Yid Hakadosh of P'shischa ז"ל** once said: "When I was a little boy, my *aleph-beis* teacher taught me a very important lesson. He showed me a little symbol and told me it was called a *yud*. The letter *yud*. From then on, I knew that the word *Yud* meant a Jew.

"Sometime later, we came across two *yudin* written next to each another, in one word. I asked my teacher for an explanation, and he said, "That is *Hashem's* name."

"Still later, I saw the symbol marking the end of a *posuk*, which looked to me like two *yudin*, one on top of the other. I asked my teacher if this, too, was *Hashem's* name? He replied with something that changed my life forever. He explained that when the *yudin* are next to one another, on the same level, that is *Shem Hashem*, but if one is above the

other, then it cannot be *Hashem's* Name.

"I learned from this that only when *Yidden* treat each other as equals - not putting oneself above others - can *Hashem* dwell amongst them. If a Jew cheats or undermines his friend, *Hashem* removes himself from amongst them and they are left on their own to fend for themselves!"

**משל**: *Parshas Mishpatim* is all about the laws of *Bein Adam L'chavero*, the laws about how one man must treat another. *Chazal* say (*Avos* 2:7), "The more charity, the more peace."

**R' Yisroel Belsky ז"ל** explained this *Mishna* as follows: When a person gives in to the claims of another and treats it as if he is giving charity, he is spreading peace in the world. In that merit, *Hashem* dwells amongst us and all the blessings of the world that follow are because of him. If we can only realize this when faced with a quarrel with another, we can be sure our reward is infinitely huge in the World to Come.

שבקעת ה' תודה בין שניהם אם לא שלה דו  
במלאכת רעהו ולקח בעליו ולא ישלם ... (כב-כג)

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

# דרגה יתירה

In *Shemona Esrei* we say a beautiful *beracha* in which we *daven* for the ability to achieve the greatest heights in our *Bein Adam L'chavero*: "Hashiva Shofteinu K'varishona" - *Hashem* please return our judges to us as in the beginning. We wish to have the kind of judges and leaders who are examples of fine behavior and *middos tovos*. But this doesn't only apply to our judges and leaders. It applies to ourselves who are always judging others as well. We continue in the *beracha*, "V'haser Mimeni Yagon Va'anacha," we beg, "Please *Hashem* remove from us grief and sighing." Much of the aggravation and pain that we experience in life is due to the way people treat us and the way we think people should treat us. If only we could train ourselves to accept the pain and look away, we would find tremendous favor in the eyes of *Hashem*. We end off this *beracha* with the words, "Baruch Ata *Hashem Melech Ohev Tzedakah Umishpat*." *Hashem* You are the King, You are the only one who is in charge of this world and You love when your children treat each other with *tzedakah* and *mishpat*.

This *beracha* comes right after the *beracha* of gathering all the Jews together in the time of the *Geulah*. The blessing of *Kibbutz Galuyos*. We must know that the only way to bring all Jews together is by acting in the way taught to us by *Avraham Avinu*. Here in *Eretz Yisroel*, we have begun to hear and feel the footsteps of *Moshiach*. The tremendous yearning for *Geulah* and *achdus* that has come about between so many different types of Jews is mind-boggling and extremely heartwarming. Many people are willing to put away their differences for the sake of *Klal Yisroel* which is surely bringing the *Geulah* closer every day.

Yesterday, I was visiting my daughter and I told my 4-year-old grandson that I am going to *daven* *Minchah*. He quickly jumped up and ran to bring me a *siddur*. As he handed the *siddur* to me, he came closer and whispered in my ear, "Please make sure to *daven* for *Moshiach!*" May our *tefillos* of *tzedakah* and *mishpat* finally bring the long awaited *Geulah*.