



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

ואחיכם בית ישראל יבכו את השרפה אשר שרף ה' ... (י-ו)

The **Ohr Hachayim Hakadosh** explains that the words of the *posuk*, “*And your brothers, the House of Israel, shall cry for the burnt offering that Hashem burned,*” was in fact a commandment, not just a comment. *Hashem* was intending to bring a harsh decree upon the Nation with multiple casualties, but instead, He took away two great *Tzadikim*, Nadav and Avihu, the sons of *Aharon Hakohen*. His intention was to see how the people will react. If *Klal Yisroel* will go ahead and properly mourn the loss of Nadav and Avihu, then *Hashem* will consider this their sacrifice instead of the harsh decree, i.e. as if the decree was already burnt. This then is the meaning of the *posuk*, “יבכו את השרפה” that *Klal Yisroel* was commanded to cry over the deceased *Tzadikim*. If they will properly fulfill that part, *Hashem* said He will consider it “אשר שרף ה'” as if the harsh decree was already executed. Hence, we see from here that the mourning itself of great *Tzadikim* is an atonement and protection from harsh decrees. This is the same for all *Tzadikim*, says the *Ohr Hachayim*. If we mourn their loss properly and realize what we have truly lost and all that it entails, we won’t need to worry that there are hard times on the horizon.

During the last few weeks of his life, **R’ Yisroel Belsky ז”ל** was bedridden in the hospital with the dreaded disease of cancer. Even after a few rounds of treatment, nothing seemed to be working and the doctors feared the worst.

His family gathered at his bedside for what they expected to be the last time they would be able to talk to their father, and by large one of the *Gedolei Hador*. The Belsky children living in *Eretz Yisroel* quickly headed to the airport and managed to get on a plane to go see their revered father one last time. All except for one son, **R’ Elimelech Belsky shlita**, who decided not to go straight to the airport but instead he made a detour along the way. He traveled to Bnei Brak and arrived at the lofty address of **Maran HaRav Chaim Kanievsky ז”ל**. He needed to ask the *Tzaddik* if it was really necessary to travel to New York or maybe he should wait. Situations like these sometimes improve and deteriorate from one minute to the next. He couldn’t afford the time and energy to jump on a plane with every beckoning call of the doctor. He would seek the advice of R’ Chaim and in this way, he wouldn’t have to live on an airplane for the foreseeable future.

Indeed, the answer was forthcoming: R’ Chaim said he need not go! R’ Elimelech accepted the words of the *Tzaddik* and turned around. He headed straight back to his home.

Sure enough, the situation improved. Not that it got much better, but at least it didn’t get much worse. Two weeks went by in a stable situation when suddenly R’ Belsky’s condition took a sharp turn for the worse. Again, the doctor informed the family they should prepare for the end and again R’ Elimelech headed to seek the advice of R’ Chaim.

This time however, the answer he received shook R’ Elimelech to the core. R’ Chaim said, “Go to America, and bring your father back ...” R’ Elimelech understood the message and immediately boarded a plane.

It was only a few hours later that *Klal Yisroel* was informed of the *petirah* of one of its luminaries. R’ Yisroel Belsky was taken from their midst. R’ Elimelech didn’t make it in time for the *petirah* but he did make it in due time for the *levaya*. He followed the words of R’ Chaim and traveled to America to bring his holy father back for *kevurah* in *Eretz Yisroel*.

In *Parshas Shemini*, *Aharon Hakohen* loses his two elder sons. His reaction was silence: “*Vayidom Aharon.*” But now is not the time to keep silent. We must thank *Hashem* for the incredible gift that was **R’ Chaim Kanievsky ז”ל**. Few are able to match the amount of *Torah* he was able to learn daily. Yet, we can learn from him, to make ourselves accountable for a certain daily quota. Whatever we can learn - a page in *Chumash*, a *Mishna*, or a *daf* in *Gemara*, will count towards keeping the world in existence. We can also learn the *Gadol Hador’s seforim*, to keep his lips moving in *divrei Torah*.

As we mourn the immense loss of *Maran Sar HaTorah* and tell over stories about his greatness, let us appreciate the gift that *Hashem* gave the world for 94 years, and help the *neshama* of this *Gadol Hador* by perpetuating his *Torah* learning.

ויאמר דוד אל מיכל לפני ה' אשר בחר בני מאבד ומכל ביתו לצות אחי נגיד ... (שמואל ב' ו-כג)

With the stabilization of *Dovid HaMelech’s* reign, he felt it was finally the right time to bring the *Aron HaKodesh* to its permanent home in *Yerushalayim*. Amidst the joyous festivities, Dovid’s wife Michal (who was also *Shaul Hamelech’s* daughter), observed her husband dancing frivolously and she voiced her disapproval claiming that his behavior was inappropriate and not befitting a King. While *Chazal* say that Michal was wrong, Dovid’s response to her that *Hashem* has chosen him over her father seems unneeded and to some even downright petty. Why did Dovid say that?

**R’ Menachem Mendel Schneerson ז”ל (Likutei Sichos)** explains that with this statement Dovid not only explained to Michal why he had danced so carefree, but also what the

underlying issue was that caused Shaul to lose his kingship. Dovid argued that Shaul’s failure to eradicate the nation of Amalek completely was due to the fact that his commitment to Divine instruction had been compromised by his own reason and logic. Dovid contended that his carefree dancing demonstrated his complete submission to *Hashem* which defied all logic that would dictate that a King present himself with a certain decorum. At this particular moment Dovid felt that it was proper for him to separate himself from the rest of *Klal Yisroel* in celebrating this momentous occasion.

Sometimes people feel like their stature sets the tone for their behavior. While this is mostly true, a person needs to learn when those points of social etiquette can be suspended.

ואחיכם בית ישראל יבכו את השרפה אשר שרף ה' ... (י-ו)

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

# מחשבת הלב

The **Chayei Adam**, in his *hesped* for the **Vilna Gaon ז”ל** made the following statement: The *Gemara* in *Berachos 56b* states that one who sees a pot in his dream should hope for peace. Why? The *Gaon* explains that the essence of a pot is to promote peace. Peace between the fire beneath it and the water within it, for without the pot, the fire would be extinguished by the water. Hence, dreaming of a pot gives hope for *shalom*. The *Chayei Adam* explains that many times there exists a *midah* of *din* in this world, like a fire. The *Talmid Chacham* who is immersed in *Torah* (אין מים אלא תורה) serves as the pot of water, which protects us from the flame. When the *Tzaddik* is *niftar*, the water and the pot are gone. Sadly, we are left with nothing to prevent an inferno. Therefore, says the *posuk*, the solution is to cry copious tears. These tears, will act to keep the fire at bay.

There is really nothing to say. No words can adequately express the loss that *Klal Yisroel* has suffered with the passing of **R’ Chaim Kanievsky ז”ל**. We can only shed tears. Our hearts are broken as we realize how vulnerable and delicate we are. Perhaps, if we keep his *Torah*, his lessons and his legacy alive, we can still keep the pot full of his vast, endless water.

On that note, I’d like to share a small *vort* from R’ Chaim on this week’s *parsha* found in **Ta’ama D’Kra**. He explains why “מעלה גרה” - chewing of the cud, is a *siman* of *tahara*, the sign of a kosher animal. R’ Chaim writes that if an animal can regurgitate a few times to ensure that its food is sufficiently ground to enable proper digestion, it demonstrates that it is not a lazy animal. This is a *siman tahara*. Laziness is a *siman tumah*. That’s how R’ Chaim himself lived, constantly reviewing and scrutinizing the halacha כלה התורה כלה. Let us all try to emulate his ways in small steps, ensuring that his pot never empties. May *Hashem* accept our *siman tahara* and may the *tzaddik* be a *meilitz yosher* for all of *Klal Yisroel* to bring *yeshuos* and *moshiach b’karov*.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם ... (ב-ב)

**משל**: In 2011, at one of his weekly *Motzei Shabbos* lectures, **Chacham Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef ז”ל** offered a prayer for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who was going through a difficult time healthwise, as well as politically. The *Chacham* explained that in 1984, he had met with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. There had been plans for the construction of a highway in Egypt that was to run through an old Jewish cemetery in that country in which *Torah* sages from previous centuries were buried.

Knesset member Aryeh Deri and Chacham Ovadia immediately traveled to Egypt and arranged a meeting with the President of Egypt. After explaining to Mr. Mubarak about the disgrace that would be caused by razing the ancient cemetery and requesting to change the highway’s route, Mubarak agreed, despite the cost involved.

In 2011, R’ Ovadia recounted this story and then concluded to his spellbound listeners, “After we finished that meeting, the President asked everyone to leave the room except me. He then told me, ‘Rabbi, please bless me. I believe in your blessing.’ I put my hands on his head and blessed him with the blessing: ‘May your presidency last for many years to come.’”

“This was 28 years ago and his authority has lasted for over 30 years which rarely occurs in a country like Egypt where leaders are deposed almost on a regular basis ...”

**משל**: The blessing of a righteous person is felt immediately. After the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, *Moshe Rabbeinu* and *Aharon Hakohen* emerged and blessed the Nation as they stood outside. It was a jubilant time, made even more joyous by the blessing of these two leaders of the people. When the *Shechina* finally settled on the *Mishkan*, it was clear that *Hashem* was satisfied with His Nation and they felt doubly blessed.

ותצא אש מלפני ה' ותאכל אותם וימתו לפני ה' ... (י-ב)

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

# דרגה יתירה

The **Cheshev Sofer** quotes a *medrash* that states the following: the reason the two sons of Aharon died was because they brought wine into the *Ohel Moed*. Their intention was to drink and become “happy” in their service of *Hashem*, however, it was for this reason that they erred. True *simcha* does not come from outside, external sources, like wine or alcohol. True *simcha* comes from *Avodas Hashem*!

There is a tremendous lesson here for all of us, especially now as we become busy with pre-*Pesach* preparations. The message to be learned is not that external sources that boost our *simcha* is bad. No! We definitely can do things to help bring us into a “*simcha* mode” as part of our *avoda*. But we must KNOW that the greatest joy in the world comes from simply doing *Avodas Hashem* properly! Acts of *Tzedakah* and *chessed*; *davening* a *gevaldiga Shemona Esrai*; listening to a *Torah shiur* or just sitting and *shteiging* in learning - THIS brings a person to true, authentic happiness. If living a real *Torah* life is not giving you satisfaction, then you are doing something wrong! If you are going through the motions of *Yiddishkeit* without feeling true *simcha*, then it is time to stop, reevaluate and begin to truly LIVE with *Dveikus B’Hashem*.

Too many people search for happiness in foreign places. People turn to alcohol, banned substances, smoking, vacations, entertainment and all sorts of pleasurable activities to fill a void that is gnawing at them. Many people are on anti-depressants and other forms of medication, or seek professional therapy to experience joy. Well folks, I am here to tell you that the world’s greatest anti-depressant, the best therapy and safest, most long-lasting pleasure ... is TORAH and AVODAS HASHEM! Try it. Throw yourself into your *Pesach* preparations and think how fortunate a Jew is to be free from all the nonsense of the world. As the saying goes: TORAH - learn it, live it, and experience the joy of a lifetime!

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

# תורת הצבי על הפטרות