

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ועשת השן משפמ מעשה חשב כמעשה אפר תעשנו והב תכלת וארגמן ותולעת שני ויש משור תעשה אתו ... (כה-טו)

Parshas Tetzaveh enumerates the various stones of the *Choshen*, and the wondrous qualities and supernatural forces that the Creator implanted within these special stones. Some of them even retained the power to heal sicknesses.

A fascinating story is recounted in this regard for many generations. After the passing of the famed **Baron Rothschild**, his sons divided his assets and successfully ascertained the value of every item, until they reached a certain precious stone the size of an egg that shone in a myriad of colors. The experts could not accurately determine its value.

The brothers decided to travel to Turkey and request an interview with none other than the Sultan himself, who was renowned as an unparalleled expert in the field of precious stones. They were successful in their attempt to receive an audience with his majesty and when they showed him the stone that they had inherited, his eyes sparkled with delight. A stone so perfect that shone with so many colors would be the crown jewel of his treasury! Right then and there, he decided he must have it!

“In exchange for this stone,” proclaimed the Sultan expansively, “I am willing to pay half a million *Perah!*” *Perah* was the Ottoman currency of the time and half-a-million *Perah* was no small fortune. Although this was quite an offer, being erudite businessmen worthy of the Rothschild name, they refused the offer and insisted that they would not sell it for less than one million. They knew full well that a compulsive collector who found an item he was missing would pay any price in exchange. They receded from the Sultan’s palace and got back into their wagon, ordering the driver to head home.

When they passed the border, they turned into an inn and sat down to discuss their trip. A half-million *Perah* was a large amount and they also knew that the Sultan was “good for it.” They began to have second doubts and seriously considered heading back to Istanbul to take the Sultan’s deal. As they were talking, the frantic crying of a small child disrupted their conversation. The innkeeper’s infant son had taken ill and was running a high fever; nothing could calm him down.

The Rothschild brothers had been sitting at a table, carefully scrutinizing their precious stone, when the crying child happened to notice the shining object in their hands and his curiosity was piqued. It was so bright and inviting that the young boy walked over to their table and held out his hand to hold the precious stone. Unwittingly, they handed it to the little boy who immediately sat down on the floor and began playing with it. The child was delighted. He played with the stone happily, calmed down, and in a few short minutes, fell asleep. As soon as they saw he was a sleep, the brothers reached over and took the stone from his fingers, went to their carriage and told their driver to head back to Istanbul. They realized that the longer they held onto the stone, the greater the chance it could get lost or stolen and they were ready to take the deal.

They returned to the Sultan and told him that they reconsidered and were now consenting to his original price. “Show me the stone,” the Sultan said, not a little suspicious at the sudden change in their tone. He took it, looked at it carefully, and then stopped. Angrily, he asked, “Are you trying to mislead me? Show me the original stone!”

The Rothschild brothers exchanged looks of surprise and insisted, “This is the stone! There is no other.” This time, the Sultan got really upset. “Don’t play games with me - this is a simple stone! This is not the stone you showed me the last time you were here.” They were, however, known as honest and scrupulous people, so he began inquiring if the stone had changed hands in the interim, or if they had shown the stone to anybody who might have swapped it.

“No, not at all,” they answered, “it was only a small child - and he certainly didn’t switch it!” They told him of the sick boy and how they allowed him to play with the stone in order to quiet him down.

The wise Sultan exclaimed, “Now it becomes clear. This stone is capable of curing a certain illness that is otherwise untreatable. When you gave the child this stone, he drew from it all its power and was cured. It has now lost all its value - it is not worth a single *Perah!*” In a classic case of “*Venahafoch Hu,*” the Jewish businessmen were bested by the rich Arab!

עשה לך והביתה את עמלק והחמתם את כל אשר לו ... (שמיאל א' טו-ג)

The *Haftorah* of *Parshas Zachor* details *Hashem’s* command to *Shaul HaMelech* to avenge His honor and eradicate the nation of Amalek. Interestingly, one would think that the most important thing for the Jewish people upon entering *Eretz Yisroel* would be to build the *Bais Hamikdash*, yet the nation was first granted a king, then given the command to destroy Amalek, and only then, were they to focus on building a house for *Hashem*. Why is that so?

Rabbeinu Bechaya explains that while most leaders never bow to the wishes of their subjects and instead set their policies and expect the people to adhere to them, *Hashem* operates differently. The *Torah* serves as *Hashem’s* royal decree book, and those who follow the laws of the *Torah* and

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

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

do *mitzvos* merit great reward. Nevertheless, *Hashem* often acclimates Himself to the wishes of the people. Case in point - the establishment of the Jewish monarchy. *Klal Yisroel* were never intended to have a monarch or a king, yet *Hashem* foresaw a time when the people would demand a king “*like the other nations*” – who would serve as a general and lead them into war. As such, *Hashem* “altered the course of the world” and gave the people what they wanted.

So, now that the institution was established, *Hashem* channeled it to defend His honor and its first task was to eradicate Amalek, whose sole intention was to dishonor the great Name of *Hashem*, and only after that were the king and the people meant to focus on building the *Bais Hamikdash*.

ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל ויקחו אִלֶּךְ שֶׁמֶן וְיָתִיד וְתַתֶּן לָהֶם לְמַאֲדוֹ לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד ... (כו-ב)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPFMAN ZT"l

מחשבת הלב

Many commentaries comment on the omission of *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* name in this week’s *sedra*. (see *Baal Haturim*)

I saw the following *pshat* in **Sefer Birchas Av** from a *yid* in *Bnei Brak*, by the name of **R’ Avraham Baruch Fixler ז”ל**. He wants to say that the word “*Tetzaveh*” comes from the root “*Tzava’ah*”, a last will testament. The *yahrtzeit* of *Moshe Rabbeinu* often coincides with *Parshas Tetzaveh*. This week’s *parsha* was a personal moment for Moshe, not a typical communal commandment. Hence, it says “ואתה” - a singular command, and not “משה”. And what was his *tzava’ah*, his last will and testament? “ויקחו אִלֶּךְ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ” - *shemen zayis*, olive oil, is a metaphor for the *Torah*. Moshe’s message to *Bnei Yisroel* is that we must remain connected and immersed in *Torah* learning. Perhaps we may add that the word “וצוה” can also mean companionship as in the word “צוותא” from the *Gemara*. Through *Torah* learning, we connect to the *mesorah* handed down from *Moshe Rabbeinu* until this very day, as it is written “אכרו תורת משה עבדי”.

Additionally, the *Torah* may be conveying to us the following *machshava*. Although Moshe is no longer alive with us today, yet all that we have, all that we have gained throughout the years, is in his merit and we carry on his legacy. The same is true regarding any *niftar*, whether he is an *adam gadol*, an *ehrliche yid*, or simply an *isha keshaira*. They may not be with us physically, but their impressions and lessons are everlasting, helping us forge ahead from generation to generation..

This *Shabbos* we *lain Parshas Zachor* in which we are commanded to remember, with distaste, the abominable actions of *Amalek*, and recognize the hideous *chilul Hashem* that they caused, to this very day. We must remember, as well, the many *kidushei shem shamayim* that our holy *Zaidas* personified and lived with. May we merit to be reunited with them while at the same time, celebrate the eradication of *Amalek* and the complete and ultimate coronation of *Hashem, b’karov!*

משל למה הדבר דומה

לעשות אותם ימי משתה ושמוחה ... ומתנות לאביונים (אסתר ט-כב) **משל**: Before accepting his esteemed position as *Rav* of Apta, **R’ Avraham Yehoshua Heschel ז”ל**, better known as the **Ohev Yisroel**, served as *Rav* in the city of Yassi (Lasi). His first *Purim* as *Rav*, he received a beautiful *mishloach manos* basket from an esteemed member of the community. One item in the arrangement in particular, seemed to catch the attention of the *Rav*; a bowl filled with golden coins.

His son watched in astonishment as his esteemed father toyed with the coins, fondly caressing them as he rolled them around his palm. He knew his father scorned money. What had caused the sudden change in his attitude?

After watching his father for a while, he finally mustered up the courage to question his puzzling behavior. “Father,” he asked, “how is it that you seem to be deriving so much

pleasure from the money you received as a gift? You generally detach yourself from all importance to money, often refusing to even look at it or handle it!”

The *Ohev Yisroel* smiled at his young child and explained: “That is indeed the case all year round. On *Purim*, however, we are especially commanded to perform the *mitzvah* of *matanos l’evyonim*. Since I shall be performing a *mitzvah* with these coins today, I wanted to first attach some importance to them on a personal level, in order to develop a sense of fondness toward them. After all, how can I perform a *mitzvah* with something I am so repulsed by?”

נמשל: The *parshiyos* of donating and building the *mishkan* are very much connected to the *mitzvah* on *Purim* of *matanos l’evyonim*, as both impart a message of intrinsic value: The importance of giving something that is precious to one’s self, for the sake of *Hashem*.

אשר קרך בדרך ויוגב בכל כל הנחשלים אחריך ואתה עיף ויגע ולא ירא אלקים ... (דברים כה-ה)

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

דרגה יתירה

What was it about *Amalek* that made them so sinister, so diabolical, so inherently evil, that we are commanded to erase them from this earth? Why *davka* this nation - *Amalek* - must be wiped away, with not so much as a “*zecher*” of who they were? The answer, says **R’ Avraham Chaim Feuer shlita**, was their impetuosity, their desire to jump ahead of all the other nations of the world and attack *Bnei Yisroel*, to “*cool off the boiling hot bath for others.*” (**Rashi**) This desire to attack first, to kill without thought, was a trait that Haman, a descendant of *Amalek*, gleaned from his progenitors and it was his hurried and harried attempt to destroy the Jewish people that ended up being his downfall.

It also proves another aspect of the *Haman/Amalek* connection. *Chazal* tell us (מגילה יב): “*The common man pushes himself in front (he leaps ahead of others to get to the top).*” A simple fool rushes in to be first, not caring if it kills him. An aristocrat exudes patience, restraint, nobility of character. It is what sets him apart from a commoner.

The **Vilna Gaon ז”ל** underscores the contrast between *Esther HaMalka* and the other contestants who vied for the royal appointment as Queen of Persia. The *Megillah* states (יב-ב): “*And when it was the turn of each and every maiden (נערה ונערה) to come before the King Achashverosh.*” The melodic notes, the “*trop*” above the words “*each and every maiden*” are known as “קדמא ואולא” which literally means “*they went forth early.*” Every other girl competed to be the first to see the king. This act, though, betrayed them and revealed the commonality that disqualified them from the throne.

“*And upon the arrival of the turn of Esther bas Avichayil.*” Here, the musical note is a “פניחה” four times in a row, implying: rest, rest, rest, rest. Not only did Esther not push herself forward, she restrained herself and went with reluctance and calm. She required no tiara; her nobility of character had already crowned her as a true queen.