

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

והקמירו אתו בני אהרן המזבחה על העלה אשר על העצים אשר על האש אשר ריח ניחח לה' ... (ז-ה)

Over the final decades of his life, the home of the great *Tzaddik* and *Rosh Yeshivah*, **R' Yaakov Kaminetzy ז"ל**, on Saddle River Road in Monsey, NY, was the address for thousands of people seeking guidance. They ranged from the leading figures of the *Torah* world to simple Jews, and their concerns covered the gamut from the most pressing issues confronting *Klal Yisrael* to the choice of an appropriate *cheder* for one's child. People who would have normally have been too intimidated to bring their problems to someone of his stature did not hesitate to speak to R' Yaakov. His humor, simplicity, and practical, down-to-earth manner put people immediately at ease.

Despite his advanced age and the multiple demands on his time, R' Yaakov was remarkably accessible to the public. He never had a *gabai* or *shammes* of any kind controlling access to him. "I don't want to become a prisoner in my own house," he would say. He or the *Rebbetzin* usually answered the phone themselves, and when he wanted to speak to someone, he called him himself. Even when advanced age forced him and his *Rebbetzin* to have a young man in the house to answer the phone or door, it was never his function to prevent people from speaking to the *Rosh Yeshivah*.

He was acutely aware of the heightened sensitivities of teenagers. Upon seeing a young teenager who had grown rapidly since he had last seen him, R' Yaakov quoted the description of Shaul as "a head taller than anyone else in the nation" (*Shmuel I 9:2*) and mentioned that height is a sign of *malchus* (kingship). He knew just the right thing to say.

Even the feelings of a toddler were not beyond his purview. Once he was watching the young toddler of a close *talmid* walking towards her father, who was holding out a candy for her. When the father drew his hand further back to encourage the child to take a few more steps, R' Yaakov reprimanded him sharply. "How can you fool the child like that and make her feel bad? Give her the candy at once." Had R' Yaakov's love of children not been genuine, they would never have responded to him as they did. Children have a sixth sense for artifice. But another calculation also lay behind his every action with children. He never lost sight of the fact that the impression he made on people - and youngsters, in particular - could be the means of sparking in them a desire to become just like him. Once he happened to find himself in a doctor's office with a non-religious boy. Realizing that he would not be able to speak to the boy, but very much wanting to create a connection to this *Yiddish neshama*, R' Yaakov played catch with him instead.

"It was the only way I could leave him with a pleasant memory of what a *frum* Jew is," he explained.

During one of their regular Wednesday learning sessions, R' Yaakov mentioned to his son R' Avraham, that a father and daughter would be coming for a brief visit and he wanted R' Avraham to remain in the room. That request was quite out of the ordinary, as R' Avraham usually stepped out of the room when visitors came in order to allow them to talk in private. When the visitors arrived, the first few minutes of the conversation were taken up with small talk about the father's business and the daughter's schoolwork. In the course of the conversation, R' Yaakov suddenly clapped his son affectionately on the back and said, "This is my baby, Avraham."

A short time later, the father and daughter departed. Since R' Avraham was then a man in his late forties, he was eager for some explanation of his father's unexpected reference to him as a "my baby." At their next Wednesday learning session, R' Yaakov explained what had taken place. The father had always had a warm relationship with his daughter, his youngest child, until he made the mistake of introducing her once as his "baby." The daughter felt humiliated and had virtually stopped speaking to her father. Distraught, the father had consulted with R' Yaakov, who told him to bring his daughter on Wednesday when R' Avraham would be in Monsey. Shortly after the meeting with R' Yaakov, the greatly relieved father called to say that as a result of the visit his relationship with his daughter had never been better.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN
אנכי אנכי הוא מכה פשעך ... (ישעי' צג-כה)
Yeshaya HaNavi reprimands *Klal Yisroel* for failing to recognize *Hashem's* rule, for not adhering to the *Torah* and *mitzvos*, and for forgetting to bring *korbanos* in the *Bais Hamikdash*. *Yeshaya* states, "אנכי אנכי הוא מכה פשעך" - "I am protesting against your transgressions," but why does the *Navi* reiterate the word "אנכי" twice?

R' Shmaya Tomashuv ז"ל (Siyata Dishmaya) explains that the **Alshich Hakadosh** writes in *Shir HaShirim* how the famous words, "היךך יפה רעיית היךך יפה עיניךך" are doubled in order to stress that even though at times *Klal Yisroel* may falter, they are still a beautiful nation. And in fact, although it was a terrible sin, *Klal Yisroel* were not fully responsible for the *Chet HaEigel* since the troublesome *Erev Rav* created it,

and were the driving force feeding misinformation to the fragile nation about *Moshe Rabbeinu's* whereabouts.

Thus, based on the words of the *Alshich*, the *Navi's* intention in using the double wording can be understood to say that the first "אנכי" is a reference to *Klal Yisroel's* part in the sin while the second "אנכי" clarifies that even though the people sinned, the bulk of the blame falls on the *Erev Rav*, and that is the reason why *Hashem* is "מוחה פשעךך" - willing to forgive his beloved children for such a grave sin.

Furthermore, the seemingly extra word in the *Navi's* statement of "אנכי אנכי הוא מוחה פשעךך" implies that it was due to the above reason - and only for that reason - that *Hashem* was indeed willing to look the other way.

וכל קרבן מנחתך במלח המלח ולא תשבות מלח ברית אלקיך מעל מנחתך על כל קרבני תקרבים מלח ... (ב-ג)

Rashi quotes the famous words of *Chazal*, further elaborated upon in the **Tikkunei Zohar**, that *Hashem* promised the salt that it would be used on all the *korbanos* that *Klal Yisroel* will bring. As we know, the waters of the world had been split between the skies and the earth at the beginning of creation. At the time, the water on earth complained that it was now much removed from the close proximity to *Hashem* in Heaven that it once enjoyed. To pacify those waters, *Hashem* promised that its salt would be used on the sacrifices in the *Bais Hamikdash* and would ascend on high before the *Kisei Hakavod*, while the water itself would be used on the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* for the all-important *nisuch hamayim* ceremonies.

Based on this *Chazal*, the **Yismach Moshe, R' Moshe Teitelbaum ז"ל**, expounded on the well-known *posuk* in *Eicha*: "שפכי כמים לבך נחם פני ה'". A person should pour out his heart "כמים", like those waters who desired to remain close to their Creator. If a person begs with all his heart and soul for true *kirvas Elokim*, he stands a better chance of having it granted.

Similarly, **R' Ahre'le Belzer ז"ל** would explain the *posuk*, "על נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם בכינו", as follows. At the time of the *churban*, as *Klal Yisroel* was being led into exile, we also sat and wept copious tears. The word "גם" indicates that we sat and cried with someone. With whom? Were there other people also crying, like the Jewish people? The answer is that without the *mizbeach* that was in the *Bais Hamikdash*, the salt and the water couldn't be used for *avodas Hashem*. They fulfilled no higher purpose anymore. Thus they wept. And we cried too, for also having lost that closeness to *Hashem*.

Perhaps that is why tears have a salty taste, unlike other water which is sweet, in order to remind us that when we cry and pour out our hearts, we should strive to connect to the Almighty, just as the salt did. Crave that relationship!

As we enter this special month of *Chodesh Nissan*, may we be *zoche* to regain that *kesher* through the rebuilding of the *Bais Hamikdash*, and may *Hashem* allow us to see the fulfillment of the dictum, "בניסן נגאלו, ובניסן עתידין ליגאל".

משל למה הדבר דומה

אדם כי יקרין קרבן לה' ... (א-ב)

Even as a young child, the famed **Sanzer Rebbe, R' Chaim Halberstam ז"ל**, was renowned for his love of *Torah* and *mitzvos*. Once, an adult spotted little Chaim'ke murmuring to himself with great seriousness. "Why are you talking to yourself, Chaim'ke?" he asked.

The young boy answered, "I'm reviewing the 613 *mitzvos* of the *Torah*. I want to know them all by heart."

"Wouldn't your time be better spent studying *Chumash* or *Mishnayos*?" asked the man.

Young Chaim'ke answered, "One day, I happened to overhear a conversation between two of the Czar's soldiers. 'Do you remember what our commander instructed us to do during the military mission we'll be carrying out tomorrow?' the first soldier asked his comrade.

"Of course," replied the second soldier. "Every evening, I

לעמלי נשמת אבני מורינו רבינו הרב חיים יוסף בן ר' ישראל אברהם קויפמאן זצ"ל

מחשבת הל"ב

review all of the commander's orders. A good soldier must know all the military commands by heart. If even one soldier doesn't bother reviewing the military orders and makes a mistake on the battlefield, this can cause all the soldiers to lose the battle!"

"When I heard that conversation," concluded young Chaim'ke, as he spoke to the questioner, "I thought to myself that we *Yidden* are soldiers in the army of *Hashem*! Our 'military commands' are the *mitzvos* that *Hashem* has given us and commanded us to obey. Since I want to be considered a good soldier in *Hashem's* army, for that reason, I constantly review all the *mitzvos* until I know them by heart!"

נמשל: The *Sefer* of *Vayikrah* is all about *avodah*, doing the service of *Hashem* through offering sacrifices. In today's day and age, many of us don't fully comprehend or even appreciate this service. However, we still have our own ways to serve *Hashem* which take the place of our *korbanos*!

דרגה יתירה

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SELOMO
This week we begin *Sefer Vayikrah* which deals with the many different sacrifices that were brought in the *Mishkan* and *Bais Hamikdash*. According to the basic understanding of the *posukim*, the holiest sacrifices were offered on the northern side of the Temple - בצפון - before *Hashem*. These include the *Korban Olah*, *Chatos* and *Shlamim*, among others. However, it is possible that a deeper understanding of these words may be offered as follows: The holiest sacrifices that a person makes are "בצפון" - hidden away and out of sight. It is those moments of self control and self-sacrifice, those acts of kindness that nobody knows about, the things that one relinquishes or actually performs that are most difficult for him to do, that is "קדש קדשים" - truly the holy of holiest in the eyes of *Hashem*.

In our personal relationships, especially in marriage there are many opportunities to achieve this lofty level of making private sacrifices for another. For this reason, explains **R' Eliezer Kahana ז"ל Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath**, that when a couple gets divorced the *Gemara* in *Gittin* tells us that the *mizbeach* cries. Why specifically the *mizbeach*? He answers that the *mizbeach* is the place of all sacrifices, and in a marriage if there is no sacrificing for one another then there is no relationship.

The word "קרובן" comes from the root "קרוב" which means close. This is a fundamental key to all relationships. The way to come close to another person is not only by giving to them, but by giving up - FOR them. Each time we keep our mouths shut instead of exploding in anger, or do things the other person's way even though we know better - and each time we sacrifice for another without anybody but *Hashem* knowing - we have surely brought the holiest *korban* imaginable.