

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו ... (יב-ג)

Many have heard stories of people who performed *Bris Milah* in Communist Russia, despite threats of a 10-year Siberian sentence. And the story of the woman who risked her life in a Nazi Labor Camp to circumcise her 8-day old son is amazing. But seeing this same devotion and commitment to *Bris Milah* in Grass Valley, California, in 2018 by an Israeli woman is nothing less than incredible. "I won't be able to live with myself if I don't give him a *Brit* on the 8th day," was what she said.

Rabbi Nochum Yusewitz, Director, Chabad of Grass Valley, recalls that Galit told him she just had a baby after he sent her an invitation on Thursday to a *Shabbos* dinner geared to Israeli families. She was so happy that he reached out to her, as her baby was born on Tuesday and she wants to give him a *Bris*. Only one problem: her husband, a non-believer, is opposed. She wanted to make sure that she doesn't need to worry later on about losing custody of the child or being sued for doing a *Bris*.

We began making phone calls, said Rabbi Yusewitz, first to the *Mohelim* in the area to check availability and then to ask for advice in her situation. We kept hearing again and again – the father needs to agree. We also had no reassurance for her that she won't get into legal problems. But by that time, Galit had already made up her mind, she was going to do it no matter what it took! Her baby will not grow up uncircumcised. No matter at what price or consequence, this was not up for discussion. In fact, she was so disgusted that her husband opposed the *Bris* – something that is so dear to her. With no clear information from *Mohelim*, we turned to a *frum* attorney we knew. We asked him if he can direct us to an attorney who might be able to give some reassurance to the woman, to the *Mohel*, and to us, that we can go ahead with it. Of course, as many Jewish attorneys as were asked, that's how many different opinions we got. From "definitely don't do it" to "absolutely nothing wrong with it". Within a few hours, we found an attorney who was committed to see the *Bris* happen, and in its proper time! "I would be honored to represent her pro-bono and would do whatever research needed to get up to speed," he replied.

We put Galit in touch with Yaakov Delshad, an attorney from LA, who reassured her that the law is on her side. We don't know much of what he told her, all we know is that when she called us afterward, she and her mother were in tears, touched that an attorney, many miles away, cared about her and had her back, supporting her courageous decision to do a *Bris*.

Sunday evening, after speaking to Galit, Mr. Delshad sent a message to a group of attorneys, and then to family and friends: "The *Bris* will cost over \$1,000 (*Mohel*, transportation, etc.). If anyone is interested in giving *Tzedaka* to help with the cost, please let me know. When the *Shulchan Aruch* says that the *Bris* obligation is on *Beit Din*, it literally means that the obligation falls on all Jews to help. With a little *Ahavah Chinam* ... may *Hashem* repay our kindness with the coming of *Moshiach*!"

Over the next few hours, donations starting coming in on our website from attorneys, and others whom we've never met. "מי כעמך ישראל" - within 24 hours, the entire *Bris* was paid for – including the *Mohel's* plane ticket!

Galit was overwhelmed with gratitude. Emotional and speechless. For us, as *Chabad Shluchim* in a remote city, this entire story reminded us what a caring extended family we have! The day before the *Bris*, Galit mentioned something about the beautiful *Bris* pillows they have in Israel. She was wondering where she can buy such a thing. We located a beautifully embroidered *Bris* pillow and arranged for it to be picked up. Galit couldn't believe it – a real *Bris*! Turns out the *Bris* pillow had just been donated to some *Shluchim* a few weeks prior and Galit (to whom it meant the world) was the first one using it.

At 8:00 on Tuesday morning, 27 *Tammuz*, Michael Or had his *Bris* at Chabad of Grass Valley. The grandparents were in tears and Galit happily danced out of our house, overjoyed to hold her "Kosher Baby"! It was a day to remember for all!

P.S. Unknown to us until later, Galit had slipped out of her house 2 days before the *Bris* with the baby (to a hotel) so that her husband shouldn't stop her from going to the *Bris*. Her husband then took her to court for custody on the day after the *Bris*, and the *Bris* was brought up to use against her. The judge instantly dismissed it. "It's a done deal, there's nothing to talk about!"

כל העם הארץ יהיו אל התרומה הזאת
לנשיא בישראל ... (יחזקאל מ"ב-ג)

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

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In the opening words of the *Haftorah*, *Yechezkel HaNavi* declares, "In this contribution [terumah], the entire population must join with the *Nasi* of [Bnei] *Yisroel*." While this seems straightforward, *Chazal* argue about whether *Klal Yisroel* are meant to join the *Nasi* in his personal contribution or if they are to join together in a communal one.

R' Don Yitzchak Abarbanel ז"ל (Mashmia Yeshua) explains that *Yechezkel* clearly states "לנשיא בישראל" - which literally translates as "to the *Nasi* in *Yisroel*." As such, it must be that *Yechezkel* meant that the *Nasi* is to act as an emissary for the Nation and it is therefore, incumbent upon the whole population to join with him in his contribution.

The *Abarbanel* continues that this contribution is not

meant to be a one-time offering. In fact, year in year out, on the first day of the month of *Nisan*, the *Nasi* will offer this *korban*, which obviously begs the question: what for?

The answer, says the *Abarbanel*, lies in the significance of the month of *Nisan*. *Nisan* is known as the month of freedom and *Chazal* repeatedly stress the importance of the month and how, if utilized properly, can ultimately change a person's life for the better. *Yechezkel's* declaration that in the times of the third *Bais Hamikdash* everyone is to join with the *Nasi* in a communal contribution to *Hashem*, is meant to serve as a reminder for us in our times, that although a person may make a personal contribution, it's the communal acts of *chessed* that make the ultimate difference in our lives.

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר. דבר אל בני ישראל
לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר ... (יב-א.ג.)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE
FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L

מחשבת הלב

There are a number of points to ponder in this *posuk*. Firstly, why was it necessary to say "אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר"? It would have sufficed to say "אשה כי תלד זכר", which is the normal way to read it. Secondly, why does the *posuk* change its tense from present - "תזריע", to future - "וילדה"? And finally, why does it say the word "לאמר" twice? (See the **Ohr Hachayim Hakadosh**)

As this week marks the third *yahrzeit* of our *Zaida* ז"ל, the **Baal Machsheves Halev**, I would like to offer a *pshat* that is clearly in his style. *Klal Yisroel* celebrates *Yamim Tovim*. We have a חג האסוף (a festival of gathering) and a חג הקציר (festival of cutting). But what about a חג הזריעה (a festival of planting)? Shouldn't planting be an important thing to celebrate? After all, you cannot cut and gather unless you first plant! So why don't we commemorate this event like we do the others?

I once saw a fantastic *pshat* which says as follows: When a person tills and seeds his soil, he cannot know what the outcome will be. The same goes for planting. How can one know? Will it turn into a bumper crop? Will it succeed? It is only at the time of harvesting that one may reap the benefits of his labor. For this reason, we don't celebrate a חג הזריעה.

With the word "לאמר", the *Torah* is telling us - the men - and again, a second "לאמר" for the women of valor - that we reach the stage of "אשה כי תזריע" - when we have invested endless hours of *tefillah* and tears for our children. However, what we are *davening* for may not yet be evident. We cannot yet see if our efforts are producing that "bumper crop" - the children of our dreams. Thus, says the *posuk*, "וילדה זכר" - the future still holds hope. Our aspirations will *Bezras Hashem* materialize.

Never give up - keep on *davening* for their *hatzlacha*. Keep on watering your seedlings by showering them with love. And may we all celebrate our own personal חג האסוף and חג הכלל en masse in this *Chodesh Nisan* חגבא עליו לטובה.

משל למה הדבר דומה

אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר ... (יב-ב.)

משל: As much as he desperately wanted to just sit and learn, R' Chaim Kanievsky ז"ל gave away many hours of his precious later years to help people with their problems.

One very distraught man came to R' Chaim in tears. He explained how he was married for a number of years already and has still not merited having children.

R' Chaim listened patiently and responded in a cryptic manner: "Put out a *sefer*," said the *Tzaddik*. Undaunted, the man immediately set out to accomplish the task at hand.

A few months went by and the man worked diligently until he felt ready to release his hard work. Sure enough, it didn't take long after it's release and the married couple had good news to share: they were expecting a child!

When this "miracle story" was told to R' Chaim, he humbly replied, "Miracle? It's a *Gemara* in *Chulin 59b*."

Well, not exactly, but sort of. The *Gemara* relates that due to his vast *Torah* learning, *Rav Shmuel ben Rav Avahu* knew it was permitted to eat the fat of the *karkoz* goat. He said about himself, "מפרי יח-כ" מפרי פי איש תשבט בטנו". In other words, *Torah* learning is referred to as "פרי בטן" (offspring). R' Chaim humbly pinned the "miracle" on *Chazal*!

A little while later, an updated edition of the *sefer* was produced and they merited a second child! With a third edition, came a third - and with the fourth edition, a fourth child!

R' Chaim related that when R' Isser Zalman Meltzer ז"ל put out the last volume of *Sefer Even Ha'azel*, he exclaimed to those around him, "*Mazel Tov*, I had another child!"

נמשל: Writing a *sefer*, or taking part in such a lofty accomplishment, is a powerful form of spreading *Torah*. *Chazal* tell us, "ותלמוד תורה כנגד כולם". This tremendous *mitzvah* is equal to all other *mitzvos* in the *Torah*. Hence, every word of *Torah* is a merit for the one who spreads it.

החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים ראשון הוא
לכם לחדשי השנה ... (פרשת החדש - שמות יב-ב.)

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

דרגה יתירה

Parshas HaChodesh has arrived! The culmination of the 4 *parshiyos* that we read from *erev Rosh Chodesh Adar* until *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*. It is the preparation for the *Geulah*! *Hashem* says to us, his future *kallah*, "*HaChodesh Hazeh Lachem*," I am giving you, my dear *kallah*, the ability to be in control of time. You can choose how to use your time. You have the power to be *mekadesh* it and make the most of your days! You also have the power to start again if you make a mistake. Just as the moon renews itself every month, I give you the chance to always renew yourself and our special relationship. This is the gift *Hashem* gives us on that "last date" before the engagement, because that is all we need to know before we jump into this special *kesher* with *Hashem*. If we know we can always start again when we make mistakes, then as long as there is a way to restart ourselves and get back on track, we really have nothing to worry about. This is the culmination of the month of *Adar*, the month of joy!

And this is what leads us right into the *Yom Tov* of *Cheirus*, of freedom to truly love *Hashem*. It is the time of our engagement when *Hashem* says to us, "*V'erastich li l'olam*" - You are engaged to me forever! Now, what do you tell an engaged couple? May you be *zoche* to build a BAYIS NE'EMAN B'YISROEL! So, this really is our *beracha* to ourselves, and this is what *Pesach* is all about! It is about being *ne'eman*. Being loyal to *Hashem* and having EMUNAH in Him. One thing we are certain about is that *Hashem* has *emunah* in us. We say it every morning in *Modeh Ani* - "*Raba Emunasecha*"! How great, *Hashem*, is Your *emunah* in me! *Hashem* gives me back my *neshama* every day and believes in me that I will use it well.

Now, OUR job - and this is what the entire *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* is for - is to empower us with real *emunah* in *Hashem*, and that is the way to truly be *b'simcha*. This was the message all along in *Shekalim*, *Zachor*, *Parah* and *HaChodesh*. The message that we are completely in *Hashem's* embrace of love - to truly be happy and enjoy all the gifts *Hashem* has given us in this world.