

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויוֹלֶךְ ה' את הים ברוח קדים עזה כל הלילה וישם את הים לחרבה ויבקעו המים. ויבאו בני ישראל בתוך הים כיבשה ... (יד-כאבב)

The *Medrash* tells us that even after *Hashem* told the Jewish people to move forward and Moshe stretched his staff over the water, the sea did not split. When did it finally split? After a single Jew name *Nachshon ben Aminadav* jumped into the water without any deliberations except knowing that this was what *Hashem* wanted - it was this act that triggered the mighty miracle of the Splitting of the Red Sea. *Chazal* teach that the same thing applies to a *shidduch*: To make a match, one must be prepared to jump into the sea. It's impossible to guarantee that any *shidduch* will work out. However, after doing one's best, he or she needs to have faith in *Hashem* that it will work, and then just jump into the water, at which point the sea will split.

When reports of the destruction of the Jewish community of Krakow reached Jerusalem in the early 1940's, **R' Moshe Mordechai Biderman ז"ל** was inconsolable. He wept over the bitter end of the city where he had spent many years of his youth, and which he carried with love and longing in his heart until he was old. Jewish Krakow was filled with thousands of *chassidim* and *anshei maaseh* (men of action), who formed a bridge to past generations, and R' Moshe Mordechai, who since the dawn of his childhood had always been thirsty to hear about the righteous people from past generations, enjoyed relating stories and sayings from his youth. R' Moshe Mordechai particularly loved to recount stories of Reb Mendel Kinsker, a very old man, ninety years old or more at the time of R' Moshe Mordechai's youth, but his memory was fresh and retold pleasant stories from ancient times that would flow from his mouth on various occasions.

In one of the conversations with Reb Mendel, he told him a wonderful personal story. "I was an older man, and I didn't do well in matchmaking. I didn't have any money either and in the meantime I was getting older. One of the *shadchanim* in the city knocked on the door of a well-known gentleman, amongst the wealthiest men of Krakow, and proposed his daughter to me. The rich man, to put it mildly, did not like the idea, and in return for the humiliating offer, kicked the matchmaker out of his magnificent house. However, *shidduchim*, as we know, are from the *Aibishter*, and apparently in order for this match to take place, the rich man had to lose all of his assets and become destitute. And you know what? This is what happened ..."

Reb Mendel continued. "Very quickly the rich man lost his fortune in a difficult matter, and then the hard-working matchmaker's path was already paved. He didn't work too hard, and the match was concluded. This is what is called, '*Invei Hagefen B'invei Hagefen*' - an expression for a good match being made. Two poor families matched with each other. I became engaged to the daughter of the previously wealthy man, and the city of Krakow rejoiced and was happy.

"The wedding day was approaching, and I thought to myself in sorrow, I am poor and wretched and I have nothing to go to the wedding with. I received a good and modest bride as gift from *Hashem*, but she is also poor and has nothing but her dress. A *chosson* and *kallah* need more. We need something special to come to our wedding with. What was left for me to do? I stood in *Beis Medrash*, *davening* from the bottom of my heart and shedding tears like water. From there, I left and went to the lottery booth and bought half a lottery ticket, since I didn't have more money and could not afford to purchase a full ticket. That's okay, I thought. Even winning half a lottery is something. But then I was told by the lottery seller, that the way it works at the time is that when a person buys half of a lottery, if his ticket wins the lottery, he is required to make an arrangement with the one who buys the other half, and divide it equally with that person. I didn't know who the other person was and I hoped it wouldn't be someone difficult. But either way, I could not think about that as I was busy with my wedding preparations.

Reb Mendel smiled. "A few days passed, and I went to check the results of the lottery as I usually did, and I saw that I had won! That is, half of the grand prize is mine, and it was a large amount. I became rich! Now I had to find out who my partner was in this win, and then the unbelievable became clear to me. None other than my bride - she was the one who bought the other half of my lottery ticket! Thus, a bride and groom who got engaged as poor and destitute, got married as extremely rich..."

ומשבת ארץ אל נהל קישון
את סיסרה ... (שופטים ד-ד)

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY
HAFTORAH BY AN UNEQUALLED HISTORIAN

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In the *Haftorah* of *Shabbos Shira*, the *Navi* details the "Shiras Devorah" - the unique *shira* sung by *Klal Yisroel* in the aftermath of the battle between the Jewish Nation (led by *Barak ben Avinoam* and the tribes of Naftali and Zevulun) and the army of the Canaanite General, Sisera. Interestingly, the *Navi* tells us that *Devorah HaNeviah* relayed *Hashem's* word to Barak as follows: "I will draw Sisera, Yavin's army commander, with his chariots and his troops, toward you." But surely Sisera intended to go out to battle either way. Why did *Hashem* need to force Sisera to engage?

The **Radak**, **Rabbeinu David Kimchi ז"ל** explains that Sisera's astrologists saw that while he would engage

in battle with the Jewish people, his zodiac sign would not leave the battlefield. General Sisera understood this to mean that he would die in battle. As such, he wanted to avoid the war at all costs. However, just as Pharaoh did not truly want to keep the Jews in Egypt or chase after them to the *Yam Suf* but *Hashem* hardened his heart to make him do it nonetheless, so too, here *Hashem* "drew out" the heart of Sisera and convinced him to go out to war despite his better judgment.

Often, we view hard events in our life as an impediment to our life plan, yet it is important to remember that those events may very well be our life plan - orchestrated by the master planner Himself.

והיה כיום הששי והכינו את אשר יביאו
והיה מנשה על אשר ילקחו יום יום ... (זו-ה)

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

מחשבת הלב

Klal Yisroel, during its travels through the hot and winding desert, was sustained by the heavenly, miraculous *mann*. The *posukim* describe how each Friday morning, the regular portion of *mann* would be collected by the Jewish people, only to find that it had doubled every Shabbos, for on the day of *Shabbos* itself, the day of rest, no *mann* descended. "And it shall be on the sixth day that when they prepare what they will bring ... Moshe and Aharon said to the children of Israel, [In the] evening you will know ... And [in the] morning, you shall see the glory of Hashem when He hears your complaints against Him..."

Perhaps we can explain these *posukim al pi drush*, homiletically. *Chazal* teach us that *Olam Hazeh* is likened to *erev Shabbos* while *Olam Haba* is compared to *Shabbos*. Hence, the well-known maxim, "מי שטרר בערב שבת יאכל בשבת".

On that note the *posuk* then reads as follows: On the 6th day - *Olam Hazeh* - "והיה ביום הששי והכינו" - prepare yourselves with צידה לדרך for *Shabbos* - the next world. *Hashem*, in His infinite kindness, will measure every minute effort expended on His behalf. Thus, it is possible that you will receive double - "זוהיה משנה". In addition, not only for the קיום מעשה will you be rewarded, but even for the שבואל תעשה, each time you abstain from transgressing an *aveira* you we get rewarded.

Then the *posuk* continues with a powerful idea. This world is cloaked in darkness and secrecy and yet we complain about it. The truth is, though, that we don't know what is truly good for us. Something may appear to us as being harsh, a *gezeira* or a *tzara*, but in reality it is beneficial. Hence says the *Torah*: "ערב... ובקר" - when you get up to שמים it will be clear as day that all your תלתיכם - complaining, was in vain. Through this, the proper ה' כבוד will be revealed.

Similarly, when *Moshiach* arrives, all past events will also become clear, and we will see that כל מה דעבד רחמנא לטב עביד. All that Hashem does is good. Yehi ratzon that we are zoche to witness this very soon. בעזרת ה'.

משל למה הדבר דומה

וישלך אל המים וימתקו המים שם שם לו חק ומשפטו ... (זו-ב)

משל: A simple tailor once invited the **Sochatchover Rebbe, R' Avraham Borenstein ז"ל (Avnei Nezer)** to the *bris* of his firstborn child, a baby born after fifteen years of waiting. Although he almost never took up such invitations, the *Avnei Nezer* surprised the tailor by agreeing to attend. When his *gabbai* heard this, he was shocked. The *Rebbe* almost never agreed to such requests, especially if it was far away. Here, he not only agreed, but to that of a simple tailor. "Rebbe," he begged to know, "What makes his *simcha* so unique?"

The *Avnei Nezer* replied: "This father made a great *Kiddush Hashem*, the likes of which I've rarely witnessed, and thus, I want to participate in this *bris*. You see, he told me that after his wife had been barren for fifteen years, *Hashem*, with His great mercy performed a miracle. This was

the first time someone told me that it was none other than *Hashem* Who made the miracle! Generally, people say that it was the **Kotzker Rebbe** or the **Radziner Rebbe** who performed the miracle through their blessings - but not *Hashem*. This father testified that it was *Hashem* Who was bringing about the miracle - this is a true *Kiddush Hashem*! Such a unique *simcha* - I want to participate!"

משל: *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the "Rebbe" of *Klal Yisroel*, performed such novel miracles, yet *Klal Yisroel* at that time saw it clearly as the "Hand of Hashem." We too must constantly remind ourselves how we are required to view all the good we have as coming from *Hashem*. Not "the power of my hand," my wisdom, or any of the other explanations; it's all from *Hashem*. We must remember this even by the miracles *tzaddikim* perform; they are also from *Hashem*, the result of their *Torah* study, righteousness and *tefillos* to Him.

זה א-לי ואנהו אלקי אבי וארמננהו ... (זו-ב)

INSIGHTFUL TORAH THOUGHTS ON THE WEEKLY
SEDRA TO LEARN AND TO ENJOY BY R' MOSHE GELB

גינפש

Chazal derive from this *posuk* the *inyan* of חידור מצוה, that one should strive to perform every *mitzvah* in a beautiful way. Simply put, this was said in a physical sense: one should wear a nice, clean *tallis*, write a *Sefer Torah* on quality parchment, with beautiful and clear *ksav*, etc. (*Shabbos 133b*). However, the **Brisker Rov ז"ל** adds another dimension here. He explains that חידור מצוה includes beautifying *mitzvos* in a spiritual sense as well, in other words by performing it in the most *mehudar* way possible and making sure to fulfill every detail of its *halachos*, even those which are not מעכב. In addition, the **Biur Halachah** (646:1) writes that being *machmir* for different *shitos* when performing *mitzvos* - that, too, is a form of חידור מצוה.

Even adding something small can greatly beautify a *mitzvah*. **R' Moshe Sternbuch shlita, Raavad of the Eidah HaChareidis**, writes that **Rashi** explains the *posuk* of "וחמשים עלו בני ישראל מארץ מצרים" that four-fifths of the Jewish people died in Egypt because they did not want to leave. This seems a bit extreme. Was their sin so great that they deserved the death penalty? Answers R' Moshe, a generation that saw tremendous miracles in *Mitzrayim - giluy Shechinah* - ממש - a lot more *mesiras nefesh* was expected of them. He adds that the converse is also true. A generation such as ours, with the *hester panim* and *nisyonos* that we have today - the value of every little act of *mesiras nefesh* for *Torah* and *mitzvos* is greatly inflated. In fact, the great **R' Chaim Vital ז"ל** writes that one small positive action that we do is equal to several *mitzvos* performed in earlier generations!

Accordingly, every little bit that we can do to today to beautify *mitzvos* and make them more *mehudar* has a tremendous impact in *Shamayim*. Now, of course, everyone has some *mitzvah* in their lives in which they can improve, whether it is *tefillah*, *tznius*, *shemiras halashon* - whatever it may be. Let us make that *mitzvah* as beautiful as we can, by taking the time to review its *halachos* and be just a bit more meticulous in its fulfillment. Such *chizuk* will truly go a long way.