

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויאמרו אל כל עדת בני ישראל לאמר הארץ אשר עברנו בה לתור אתה טובה הארץ מאד מאד ... (יב-זוה)

As the *Meraglim* (spies) delivered their poisonous report on the state of affairs in *Eretz Yisroel*, *Yehoshua bin Nun* and *Kalev ben Yefuneh* were shocked at the vitriol being espoused by their colleagues and immediately tried to refute their malicious words. However, rather than openly disparage the majority, which they believed - and rightly so - would not be accepted by the masses, they used a different method. **Chacham Rav Eliyahu Hakohen ז”ל (Megaleh Tzfunos)** explains that the two righteous spies attempted to reason with the Jewish people and employed the argument that the Land of Israel was given to their forefathers, to Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, and as children of such illustrious patriarchs, there was no reason to believe that they would not control the land. They said, “We are 'בן של קדושים' - the descendants of holy individuals, and *Hashem* is giving us the land - it is ours for the taking.”

An interesting story took place in *Eretz Yisroel* a number of years ago whereby two distinguished *Talmidei Chachamim* were embroiled in a halachic dispute. At one point, one of the scholars saw that his friend, who was from a very respectable *Yerushalmi* family, was acting in a manner that was not in accordance with a ruling from the **Pri Megadim**. He was surprised at this clear breach of authority and accused the other scholar of violating the *halacha*.

The second *Talmid Chacham* immediately defended himself saying, “This is the *minhag* in my family for years. I am a *בן של קדושים* and if this is how my illustrious forefathers did it, then this is how I will do it too.”

The first scholar was pensive for a moment and then shook his head, seemingly in disapproval, and muttered, “This is how your ancestors did it? Well, then, they are רשעים (wicked)!”

The second *Talmid Chacham* heard what he said and he was enraged. How dare he say such a thing about his family and his illustrious *yichus*? His family was one of the most exceptional families in *Klal Yisroel*, known throughout the world as leading *Torah* scholars, *Gedolim* and *Poskim*. Who was he to say such a terrible thing - that his ancestors are wicked people? What a *chutzpah*! To his credit, though, the man somehow managed to control his inner turmoil and rather than begin yelling and causing a public scene, he walked away. It was truly a feat of overwhelming determination.

A number of years went by and these two *Torah* scholars lost contact with each other during this time. A chance encounter at a wedding was the first time they met each other. The "בן של קדושים" decided that he could not contain himself any longer and he sat down next to the other man. In a pleasant tone of voice, he asked him why he had said those hurtful words to him years ago, disparaging his family and lineage, when he knew it wasn't true.

The first scholar looked at the man as if he had landed on the moon. “I disparaged your family? I know your family quite well, they are one of the most prominent in all of the land. I have absolutely no idea what you are talking about!” His face showed a complete lack of malice - or understanding - he really did not know what it was all about.

The second scholar reminded him of the time they were arguing about a certain *minhag* and how his family did not follow the ruling of the *Pri Megadim*, to which the man had called them “*Reshaim*” - wicked people.

The first man thought long and hard and then he jumped to his feet. “*Chas V'sholom!* I did not say they are 'רשעים' - with an 'ע'. I said they are 'רשאים' - with an 'א'. It has a totally different meaning!

“You clearly misunderstood me. What I meant to say was that because of their lofty status as a *mishpacha* renowned for their *Torah* scholarship, their leading roles in *Klal Yisroel* and their strength in *Psak Halacha*, they are 'רשאים' - they have a right to conduct themselves this way - and you do as well. However, the rest of us cannot learn from them and act accordingly as we are not on their level and we must follow the *psak halacha* of our great *Poskim*, like the *Pri Megadim*. I was not *arguing with you* - I was agreeing with you, and if this is how you wish to act, you have a ‘right’ to do so!”

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

The *HafTorah* compares the mission of the two spies sent by *Yehoshua Bin Nun* to scout out *Eretz Yisroel* prior to the invasion, to the spies sent by *Moshe Rabbeinu* many years before. *Yehoshua* chose righteous men of valor hoping that they won't repeat the mistakes of the first group. Interestingly, while describing the events, the *Navi* refers to the spies as "שנים אנשים מרגלים" and although one can easily understand what the words mean, the *Navi* could have simply said "שני מרגלים" which is grammatically correct.

The **Bnei Yissaschar, R' Tzvi Elimelech Spira ז”ל of Dinov (Derech Eidosecha)** explains that *Chazal* identify the two spies as *Pinchas Ben Yair* and *Kalev Ben Yefuneh*. As the two spies clandestinely entered the land, they were quickly

discovered and forced to hide in the home of *Rachav*, a woman who ran an unsavory business. The **Yalkut Shimoni** writes that although *Rachav* hid *Kalev*, *Pinchas* waved her off claiming that as a *Kohen* he was comparable to an angel, and an angel can appear and disappear upon demand.

Says the *Bnei Yissaschar*, the unusual wording of the *Navi* is meant to underscore the point that only when *Pinchas* and *Kalev* left from *Yehoshua's* presence were they a pair of two. Once they reached *Rachav's* house, they transformed into a spy and an angel, and were no longer on the same level.

And yet, *Pinchas* still completed his mission. One must never stop focusing on his own *Avodas Hashem* – even if those around him seem to have moved on to a higher level.

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

ישלח יהושע בן נון מן השמים שנים אנשים מרגלים ... (יהושע ב-א)

ראשית ערסתכם הלא תרימו תרומה בתרומת גרן כן תרימו אתה ... (זו-ב)

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

מחשבת הלב

The **Chasam Sofer ז”ל** has a beautiful approach to explain this *posuk* with the *derech of drush*. But perhaps we can preface that with a short *machshava* on the previous *posuk*, “והיה באכלכם מלחם הארץ תרימו תרומה לה”.

The *Torah* is teaching us that when you eat from the bread of the land, even when you partake in the *gashmiyus* of this world, always remember to give a tenth (*terumah*) to *Hashem* and recognize that the *tachlis*, the purpose of it all, is the service of *Hashem*. As we know, one of the actions that create the obligation of *hafrashas challah* is pouring water onto the flour. *Chazal* tell us: "אין מים אלא תורה" - all our actions in this world must be through the prism of the *Torah*.

On that note, the *Chasam Sofer* says a remarkable *vort*. The "ראשית עריסותיכם" (first of your dough) is referring to a child that is in an עריס, a cradle. We must give our children a proper *Torah* education, from when he is very young, as the letters of the word TERUMAH spell "תורת משה". We must do so even if we don't think they'll be successful "כתרומת הגרן", like *terumah* which is only a tenth. So why should I bother if only 1/10 of *talmidim* will succeed? Says the *Torah*, "לדורותיכם”.

My *machshava* here is that even if we don't know what will happen to them, nevertheless, the *ratzon* of *Hashem* is to try. We must make every effort to allow our children to rise up and succeed. Firstly, because you never know who will succeed. But even more so, the impact of a parent, *rebbe* or teacher's efforts can affect a child for all generations. The child will at least be imbued with a sense of responsibility toward a life of *Torah* and maybe his children will be that 1/10.

As we've said many times, our job on this world is not to make the calculations, but rather to just invest the effort, and let *Hashem* do the rest. *B'ezras Hashem*, for that effort, He will bless us with *bnei Torah* and *nachas* from all our progeny!

משל למה הדבר דומה

וימתו האנשים מצאי דבת הארץ רעה כמנפה לפני ה' ... (ד-לו)

משל: When a *bochur* from *Yeshivas Kol Torah* in *Bayit V'gan*, was mentioned for the daughter of a sister of **R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ז”ל**, she wished to speak to her brother, the *Rosh Yeshivah*, to find out what type of boy he is. She came to R' Shlomo Zalman's house one evening, and waited until all the other people had left. When only she and the *Rebbetzin* were in the room, she turned to her brother and asked about the boy and if it was a good *shidduch*.

R' Shlomo Zalman immediately replied, “He is a good *bochur*.” Then, before she could leave the room, he asked his sister if she was planning to go visit another sister (*Rebbetzin* Laizeron) who lived just a few blocks away. She said she was on her way there to visit right now.

She left and went to her sister's home. She remained for a short while and as she was walking out of the house, she saw

her brother, R' Shlomo Zalman, standing at the corner, apparently waiting for her to come outside.

She walked over to him and he said to her in a soft and pleasant tone, “You asked me about that certain *bochur*. One does not ask such questions in the presence of other people. Only when one is alone.”

His sister was surprised. “Other people? It was just you, me and the *Rebbetzin* in the room.”

R' Shlomo Zalman replied, “What? Do you think my *Rebbetzin* should hear *lashon hara* about *bochurim* in the *yeshivah*? This boy is not for your daughter!”

משל: The *parsha* of the *Meraglim* comes on the heels of the previous *parsha* involving the *lashon hara* that was spoken about *Moshe Rabbeinu*. There are so many instances in daily life where a person can speak or hear *lashon hara*, and even something so innocent, can turn into something so dangerous.

A person must be so vigilant about the words he speak.

ותשא כל העדה ויתנו את קולם ויבכו העם כלילה ההוא (ד-יא)

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

דרגה יתירה

When the spies returned after a forty-day visit to the Holy Land, they brought great calamity upon the Jewish people by causing them to lose all hope of conquering and enjoying the land that *Hashem* had chosen for them. The people cried uncontrollably over their “misfortune” and as a result, *Hashem* informed them that on this day - the Ninth of Av - in many future instances, they will truly have what to cry about. And, as we all know, *Tisha B'av* is a day that was marked for terrible Jewish suffering. The question is why? Why do we suffer on this day? What was so terrible about the report of the spies? In essence they did exactly what *Moshe Rabbeinu* asked them to do. They spied out the land and reported on what they had seen. They did not lie. They said exactly what they saw. What then did they do wrong?

The **Netziv, R' Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin ז”ל** explains that they were considered sinners because discussing the shortcomings of *Eretz Yisroel* is not just issuing a report about the land - it is an embarrassment to the King - *Hashem*, the King of all Kings! Embarrassing another person is a sin; how much more so to “embarrass” *Hashem* Himself!

It is very easy to find and point out flaws in others. To some people, it really appears that nothing is good, everything is flawed. They are not satisfied with their spouse, their children, their job, their neighbors (their mother in law!). This is a terrible attitude. One should realize that such an outlook is not just negative, it is sinful! This terrible *middah*, besides turning one into a miserable person, actually puts one in the category of a *rasha*! A wicked and sinful individual!

The reason why *Hashem* chose “light” as His first creation, before any other, is so that we should “see the light” so to speak, and illuminate every person in our lives with the glow of positivity and appreciation. This attitude will not only allow us to be truly joyous - "עבדו את ה' בשמחה" - but will put us into the category of *Tzaddikim*, for this is the mark of a truly righteous person.