

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

שבת משובש לבנו נהפך לאבל מחולנו ... למה לנצח תשכחנו תעובנו לאורך ימים וגו' (איכה ה-טו.ב)

The day of *Tisha B'Av* is a sad one, however, many *Chassidim* felt that all the pain and suffering notwithstanding, a *Yid* must always be *b'Simcha* - "מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה תמיד" - and this includes *Tisha B'Av*. It is told that a *Yid* once came to the **Tchebiner Rov ז"ל, R' Dov Berish Weidenfeld ז"ל**, and told him about one of the great *Rebbes* of the previous generation, **R' Shmuel Dovid Halevi Ungar ז"ל** from **Nitra**, who was known for his "*Koach Ha'bechi*" - his powerful cries that rent the Heavens. Especially on *Tisha B'Av*, said the *chasid*, nobody cried harder than the *Nitra Rebbe*.

The *Tchebiner Rov* smiled and said that he knew about this special *koach* that R' Shmuel Dovid had, however, he looked at it a bit differently. "By us, my father (**R' Yaakov Weidenfeld ז"ל, Baal Kochav Yaakov**) would tell us that even on *Tisha B'Av*, if not for a little *simcha*, we would have been destroyed as a nation. How so? Because when the wicked prophet Bilaam was hired to curse the Jewish people and bring about their total destruction, he searched for a specific moment when he knew that the 'anger' of *Hashem* could manifest itself on *Klal Yisroel* and he chose that moment to curse the Jewish people. When was that moment? Bilaam figured out that it was the day of *Tisha B'Av*, a day when *Klal Yisroel* is sad and at their lowest point. Without *simcha* and joy, he knew *Bnei Yisroel* would be vulnerable to his curse.

"But what Bilaam did not realize was that there were a few '*Yungerleit*' who were among the people who did everything with great joy and happiness. When Bilaam saw this, he knew there was no way for him to win and that was when he uttered those immortal words, 'הן עם לבדד ישכון ובגוים לא יתחשב'. He said, 'Such a nation that even 'לבדד' - when they are alone and reading the words of 'איכה ישבה בודד', they are still capable of 'ישכון' - of residing with the *Shechina*, which will only come when a person is *b'simcha*, such a people cannot be cursed and brought to destruction.'"

The **Rebbe of Ropschitz, R' Naftoli Hurwitz ז"ל**, would comment as follows: "When a *Yom Tov* follows immediately after *Shabbos* (on Sunday), we eat a shortened *Seudah Shlishis*, and we say, '*Shabbos, Shabbos*, we have here a very special guest, who only comes around three times a year (*Shalosh Regalim*). Let us make way for him.' However, when *Tisha B'Av* falls out right after *Shabbos* (like this year), we lengthen our *Seudah Shlishis* with *niggunim* and *zemiros* and *divrei Torah*. We say, '*Shabbos*, you are our special guest who comes once every seven days. *Tisha B'Av* ... we wish you wouldn't have come altogether. But now that you're here, you can wait until we finish enjoying our previous guest.'"

It is told that one year, when *Tisha B'Av* began on *Motzei Shabbos*, the **Rebbe, R' Yitzchok of Vorka ז"ל**, was conducting his *Seudah Shlishis* together with a large group of his *Chassidim*. Many of the most prominent people came to be with the *Rebbe* for *Shabbos Chazon* and now, they all sat and stared at their *Rebbe*, as he seemed to be in a trance, a state of *dveikus* that appeared to be otherworldly. The *Chassidim* assumed that the *Rebbe* would conduct his *Seudah Shlishis* quickly, so they could all go home and prepare for *Maariv* and *Eicha*, but this was not the case. R' Yitzchok continued to sit in his place and he would suddenly expound on some esoteric thought related to *Malchus Bais Dovid* and the future rebuilding of the *Bais HaMikdash*. Then, he would return to his trance-like state, while the *Chassidim* continued to sing *zemiros* and *niggunim*. This went on late into the night and nobody had the temerity to say anything to the *Rebbe*.

One of the *Chassidim* remarked to his friend that perhaps they should be worried because as they all knew, the great **Chozeh of Lublin ז"ל** would also enter a trance-like state of *dveikus*, and he passed away on *Tisha B'Av*. Finally, after many hours, one of the *Chassidim* went into the kitchen and told the *Rebbetzin* of his concerns. Instantly, she stormed into the dining room and began yelling, "Aren't you ashamed? *Yidden* are all going to *Eicha* and *Kinnos*, and you are still sitting here in your *Shabbos* clothes?" The *Rebbe* woke up from his trance and concluded the *seudah*. The *Chassidim* were forced to sneak back to their homes and change out of their *Streimlach* and *Shabbos* clothing, before heading to *shul* for *Kinnos*.

איכה ... קריה נאמנה מלאתי משפט צדק ילין בה ועתה מוציאים וגו' (ישעי' א-כא)

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

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

The *Haftorah* of *Shabbos Chazon*, which also marks the final *Haftorah* of the three weeks of calamities, depicts *Yeshaya HaNavi's* divine summons to serve as the prophet whose eyes were opened by *Hashem* to gain the proper perspective in evaluating the true character of Jewish life in *Yerushalayim*. *Yeshaya* laments the underlying causes of the destruction of the city and the holy *Bais HaMikdash* – one of which was the *Navi's* description of "*righteousness lodged in her (Yerushalayim), but now murderers.*" But if the inhabitants of *Yerushalayim* were once righteous, why don't they deserve some clemency for their righteousness?

R' Yonason Eibeschutz ז"ל explains that *Yeshaya's* choice of words "צדק ילין בה" - is a rather strange way to describe

Klal Yisroel's righteousness, and the reason for his word choice is because the word "ילין" which normally means to lodge, has the same root word as "מלינים" which means to postpone or procrastinate. Human nature is to procrastinate and so even though *Klal Yisroel* did acts of charity, they were often postponed leaving the recipient stranded for longer than necessary. However, when the tide turned and corruption set in, *Klal Yisroel* had no compunctions to murder people immediately – as in the case of *Zechariah HaNavi*.

So, *Klal Yisroel*, for all their past righteousness, lost any right to clemency once their morality became distorted, since the glue which holds a Jew together is always his inner compass which directs him to do what's right.

ואצוה את שפטיכם בעת ההוא לאמר שמע בן אדוכים ושפטיכם צדק בין איש ובין אחיו ובין גרו ...

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

מחשבת הלב

In a literal sense, the *posuk* is dictating to a Jewish judge his moral obligations and responsibilities. The words "בעת ההוא" - "*at that time,*" seem superfluous here, for this conduct is applicable for all times and all ages and never expires. If so, why does the *posuk* say the words "בעת ההוא"? What is the lesson we are meant to learn?

My *machshava* here is as follows. The *Torah* is telling a Jewish judge what his job description is. Be a judge, at that time - "בעת ההוא" - only during your time at work; not when you leave the courthouse. When you are not in *beis din*, judging others is no longer your job. We sometimes have the urge to be judgmental and criticize people. That is not the correct approach.

The **Chasam Sofer ז"ל** explains this *posuk* homiletically. He says that each judge should listen to his brother, his peer, not the *baal din*. Hear what your fellow judges have to say, and then - "ושפטיכם צדק" - always be *dan l'kaf zechus*. Whether the person is an "איש" - greater than you, or "אחריו" - your equal, or even "גרר" - someone lesser than you, in every case, do not rush to judge. Each *Yid*, no matter who he or she may be, is great. Give them the benefit of the doubt.

Our *Elter-Zaide* (great-grandfather) was sitting on his porch one *Shabbos* when he observed a son of an acquaintance rushing by. He called to him asking where he was running. The young man replied that a "*Chashuva Yid*" was making a *simcha*, and he was hurrying to wish him *Mazel Tov*. He told me he will never forget the *Zaide's* reply. "*Un velecher Yid iz nishit choshuv?*" Loosely translated, tjhis means, "Is there a *Yid* that is NOT *choshuv*?"

If we internalize this message, and improve our relationships, it will inevitably bring to an end the scourge of *sinas chinam* and enable the *Bais Hamikdash* to descend, bringing, once and for all, an end to all our *tzaros*. ציון במשפט תפודה ושביה בצדקה.

משל למה הדבר דומה

וימרו בני הבנים בתקותי לא הלכו ואת משפטי לא שמרו (הוקא' כ-כא) **משל**: To *daven* at the *Mekomos Hakedoshim* (holy sites) is a rite of passage for many *Yidden* and even the greatest *Gedolei Hador* would conduct prayer sessions at specific sites. One of the places that **R' Chaim Shmulevitz ז"ל**, the great Rosh Yeshivah of Mir in Jerusalem, used to visit every month was *Yad Avshalom*, the monument of the son of King David, who revolted against his own father and ultimately met an untimely death. Each month on a set day, R' Chaim would pour out his heart to the Almighty on that site. R' Chaim would raise his eyes to Heaven in prayer and say: "Master of the Universe, who is the most despicable human being possible in the world? Surely a son who tried to kill his own father. No doubt that no one could ever forgive him for such an appalling sin. Yet, we find that when Avshalom was killed by Yoav, *Dovid Hamelech* wept bitterly and said, '*O*

my son Avshalom, my son Avshalom! Would Hashem have let, I would have died for you.' (*Shmuel 2 19:1*). *Chazal* even tell us that King David succeeded in freeing Avshalom from *Gehinom* and bringing him into *Gan Eden*.

"Why did he do this for such a terrible person? Because he was his father, and a father's love and mercy is totally unconditional, even for such a terrible son as Avshalom.

"Master of the Universe," R' Chaim would conclude, "You are our Father. Even if we are as bad as Avshalom, and have revolted against You, *Chas V'Shalom*, Your love towards us never ceases. Please, show us your affection, protect us from evil, and bless us with all that is good."

נמשל: *Hashem's* love for us is eternal. We must recognize the good that our Father in Heaven does for us and repent our ways and resolve to be better. Then *Hashem* will quickly return us to our home and land where we will, once again, live with Him in harmony and devotion forever.

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל בעבר הירדן במדבר ... (נ-א)

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

דרגה יתירה

It is interesting to note that this year, the ninth of *Av* falls out on the day after we read *Parshas Devarim* which begins with the words: "*These are the words that Moshe said,*" when he rebuked *Klal Yisroel* for their sins. The sins of the Jewish people seem to follow us throughout the generations. We are taught that any generation in which the *Bais HaMikdash* is not rebuilt, is as if they destroyed it due to their sins. Yaer after year, we are still mourning the destruction of our Holy Temple and therefore we can unfortunately surmise that indeed we have sinned and continue to sin, *r'l*. But instead of being depressed, it would be more practical that we actually attempt to improve our situation. Sounds like a good idea - but how?

Before rebuking a friend, one must follow the clear guidelines of the *mitzvah* of *Tochacha*. *Tochacha* which is the "art" of rebuke, applies to "עמיתך" - a member of one's nation, not just any random person, but an individual one cares about. It must be done correctly, with the proper intent. It must be said with love; it must not be said in a way that can embarrass another; it should only be said if one is sure it will be well received. This last guideline is one that you can never be 100% sure about, and therefore most people conclude, about *Tochacha*, that one should not give it! If so, then why is it a *mitzvah* in the *Torah*, and why do we learn so much about the concept of rebuking another Jew?

Perhaps the answer is - "אלה הדברים" - It is time for us to hear "these words." Instead of looking to find fault in others, perhaps we should we giving to *Tochacha* - to OURSELVES! It is time for us to do some serious soul-searching in order to analyze our actions, renew our goals and rebuke ourselves for repeating the same old sins of previous generations.

This year, let us make a real difference and turn sadness into joy, by being the generation that rebuked ITSELF. If we correct our own actions, then we will be the generation that not only rebuilt ourselves, but also rebuilt the Holy Temple!