

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

וענית ואמרת לפני ה' אלקיך ארמי אבד אבי וירד מצרימה ויגד שם במתי מעט ... (כו-ה)

In the beginning of *Parshas Ki Savo*, there is a *mitzvah* that involves making a speech. The *mitzvah* is *Mikrah Bikkurim*, the formal declaration a person recites upon bringing the first fruits of his crop to the *Bais HaMikdash*. In connection with this *Mikrah Bikkurim* speech, the *Torah* writes: “*V’anisa V’amarta.*” **Rashi** writes that this specific idiom indicates that the declaration is to be made in a loud voice. The *posukim* read on this occasion are not to be said silently. They are to be said out loud. Why? Because the declaration of *Mikrah Bikkurim* extols the praises of the Almighty. The Jewish farmer is not praising or patting himself on the back for his diligent observance of the laws. He is recounting what the *Ribono shel Olam* did for him. At such a time, it is appropriate that everyone should hear what is being said.

After the *petirah* of the **Imrei Emes of Ger**, his son **R’ Yisroel Alter ז”ל**, took over the mantle of leadership of the *Gerrer Chassidus*. The **Beis Yisroel**, as he was known, was referred to as the “*Sharfer (sharp) Rebbe*” as he had a unique and insightful way of looking at things. He tried to elevate his *chassidim* and all those who came to him, to rise at least one level higher than their current *madreigah*. There are countless stories of individuals who met the *Rebbe*, relating how he had a tremendous spiritual impact on them and how this strong impression will never leave them.

The *Beis Yisroel* was once informed about an orphan whose father had passed away a little while ago, and the boy was sent to learn in one of the large *yeshivos* in *Bnei Brak*. Fearing that the child might get swallowed up in the huge institution, the *Rebbe* asked one of his relatives to find a *yungerman* in that city who can keep an eye out for the boy and make sure he was doing well. The *Rebbe* told him to reach out and locate someone capable who can look after both his physical and spiritual needs, but the man should not know that it was by the request of the *Gerrer Rebbe*.

The relative did as he was asked. He sat down that day and penned a long and detailed letter to a *yungerman* that he was acquainted with, asking him to take on this huge *mitzvah*. The *yungerman* received the letter and happily accepted upon himself this task. He immediately made a connection with the young boy and brought him food. He also set up a daily learning session and worked with the orphaned boy to ensure that he kept up with the rest of the class in his studies.

The *Rebbe’s* relative heard the news that the *yungerman* was seeing to the boy’s needs and at his next opportunity, made a point to inform the *Beis Yisroel* that the task was accomplished. R’ Yisroel was happy to hear these tidings and told the man, “Don’t forget to send this *yungerman* a proper thank you for the task he has accepted upon himself.”

A few short days later, the *Beis Yisroel* asked his relative if he wrote the letter of thanks yet. The relative replied that he hadn’t yet sat down to write the letter because he was hoping to meet the *yungerman* in person in a few days, when he would tell him personally. The *Beis Yisroel* was displeased with this response. “When you asked him for a favor, you wrote a long letter detailing all the things that needed to be done. But now, when it comes to thanking the man for his actions, it is quite sufficient to simply meet him and tell him a few words of thanks in person?”

The *Beis Yisroel* looked sharply at the man and continued. “The correct way to thank somebody for a favor should be at least comparable to the way somebody asks another for a favor. We see this from *Bikkurim*, where *Rashi* teaches us that the *Mikrah Bikkurim* must be done ‘*b’kol ram*’ - in a loud voice. Why must one talk loudly? Because *Bikkurim* is a way in which a person expresses his *hakaras hatov* to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. He thanks the Almighty for all the good He has given him, and that he is not ungrateful. Now, just as when a person *davens* for his needs, he raises up his voice and calls out with great devotion, אָמַר ה' הַרְשִׁיעָה נָא - after his request is fulfilled, he must now thank *Hashem* in the same manner - by raising up his voice and expressing his gratitude in a loud and heartfelt voice. The least you can do is write the letter!”

The relative sat down at once and penned a long letter thanking the *yungerman* for looking after the orphan boy.

ובנו בני נכר המתוך ומלביהם ישרתונך כי בקצפי הכיתוך וברצוני רחמתך ... (ישעי' ס-)

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

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In this week’s *Haftorah*, *Yeshaya HaNavi* declares that in the times of *Mashiach* “*Aliens [foreigners] shall rebuild your walls, their kings shall wait upon you - for in anger I [Hashem] struck you down, but in favor, I [Hashem] take you back.*” What indeed is the connection between the fact that foreigners will rebuild the Land of Israel and the fact that *Hashem* will repatriate *Klal Yisroel*?

R’ Ezriel Zelig Noach Kushlevsky ז”ל (Ein Tzofim) explains that the suffering of *Klal Yisroel* throughout the ages is immense and it is almost as though the Jewish people are simply fated for hardship. However, *Yeshaya HaNavi* delivers a wonderful prophecy in which he declares that not only will foreigners rebuild the walls of the holy city of

Jerusalem, but that their kings will wait upon the members of *Hashem’s* chosen people. Such a thing is so out of the realm of normalcy that it sounds too good to be true. Yet, *Yeshaya* declares that it will happen.

Says R’ Kushlevsky, the correlation between *Yeshaya’s* assertion that foreigners will rebuild the Land of Israel and that *Hashem* will bring *Klal Yisroel* home is the very fact that both are abnormal and out of place. Just as it won’t be normal for foreigners to rebuild *Eretz Yisroel* and for kings to wait on ordinary Jews, in the same manner *Hashem* will set aside His “normal” practice of exacting judgment upon sinners – in this case *Klal Yisroel* – and bring us back to the land of our forefathers with love and care.

את ה' האמרת היום להיות לך לאלקים ... וה' האמריך היום להיות לך לעם סגולה (כו-ה)

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

מחשבת הלב

On this *posuk* we find a rare comment from **Rashi**, in which he states: “אין להם עד מוכיח במקרא” - There is no explicit proof to the root of the words, “האמרת... האמריך” in this context. **Rashi** could not source the definition from the *Torah* itself!

And then he continues and says, “*However, it appears to me that the expression denotes separation and distinction.*” In other words, both *Klal Yisroel* and *Hashem* designated and chose each other.

Finally, **Rashi** closes with a *posuk* from *Tehillim* (94:4) “ותאמרו כל פועלי און” - the nations of the world glorified. The *posuk* is seemingly a very different meaning than **Rashi’s** first one of *havdala*. Furthermore, **Rashi** in *Tehillim* has a third definition, “ישתבחו” - praising, as it says “האמרת-האמריך”. Now we have a contradiction! Two different meanings, neither one like the other!

Maybe we can reconcile this dilemma based on the *Targum*, and connect all the dots. The *Targum* (see also the *Gemara Brachos 6a*) says “חטבך” means carved out a piece. *Hashem* carved us out from the other nations and we are His piece. In other words, we, as *Yidden*, were singled out and maintain an exclusive relationship with *Hashem*.

In a marital relationship, one of the key factors to success is to make the spouse separate, special, unique. How does one do that? By glorifying and putting the other on a pedestal. By constantly complimenting and singing praises to them and to others, this causes good feelings and affection. I know someone who is always gushing about his spouse even though the spouse is not perfect at all. Yet, if you are constantly and consistently espousing their qualities to them and to others, you will feel that they are indeed special. Thus all three definitions of **Rashi** work in harmony.

May it be *Hashem’s* will that the next *posuk* “ולתתך עליו עול כל הגוים” comes to fruition even before this upcoming new year!

משל למה הדבר דומה

ואמרת אליו הנדתי היום לה' אלקיך כי נאתי אל הארץ ... (כו-ג)

משל: **Reb Yankel** as he was known, had the best daughter in town - or so he thought. Either way, he demanded no less than the “perfect” *chossin* for his perfect daughter. Unfortunately, it wasn’t so forthcoming. Finding perfection is not easy. As his daughter was getting older, he realized that he probably ought to settle for something a little less than perfect or his daughter would never get married.

“Okay,” he finally told the *shadchan*, “I’m open to some ideas. I’m willing to try any type of boy, provided, that he is a smart boy. I will not accept an unintelligent boy no matter what!” The *shadchan* agreed and a few days later, he called back, singing the praises of certain boy. “Gold, I tell you! This boy is simply a *goldene neshama*,” the *shadchan* said. “However, there is a catch ... the boy has a stutter.”

“Not a problem,” **Reb Yankel** replied dismissively, “there

are numerous solutions for such a problem and I’m sure my daughter can learn to live with it.”

When the boy came to the door, he gave a hearty “*Shalom Aleichem*” - except that it took him close to a full minute to get the words out! **Reb Yankel** called the *shadchan* yelling, “I said anything but dumb. This is not the boy I’m looking for!”

The *shadchan* was taken aback; true he had a stutter but that didn’t make him dumb or unintelligent.

“Well he is,” explained **Reb Yankel**, “because if he was a smart boy, he would have begun his hearty ‘*Shalom Aleichem*’ – a minute before he knocked on the door!”

משל: *Rosh Hashanah* is around the corner, and although no one is perfect even after *Rosh Hashanah*, the least we can do is to be smart. With adequate preparation before the *Yamim Noraim*, we can present our case before the Almighty in a manner that will find favor in His eyes. In that vein, we will all merit a year of success and happiness, Be”H.

היה כי תבוא אל הארץ אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך נחלה וירשתה וישבת בה ... (כו-א)

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

דרגה יתירה

The **Sifri** writes that the *zechus* of entering the Land of Israel was a reward for performing the *mitzvah* of *Bikkurim*. The obvious question is: they didn’t do this *mitzvah* until they entered the Land? How could entering the Land be a reward for doing the *mitzvah*? The answer given is that while the Jewish people were still in the *Midbar*, they were so eager and excited to perform the *mitzvah* of *Bikkurim*, that they accepted it upon themselves wholeheartedly, to the point that *Hashem* already counted it as if they did the *mitzvah*. In that *zechus*, they entered and conquered the Land!

What a tremendous lesson for us! Yes, it is true that we must go out and do good deeds, especially before *Rosh Hashanah*, when we hope to tip the scales in our favor. But *Hashem* is so kind to us, He is “*Metzaref machshava tova l’maase*” - He counts a good thought as if we actually did the good deed! Very often we plan, we try, we extend great effort to do something worthwhile and for some reason or another it doesn’t work out. It was not meant to be. Do not get discouraged! If you did everything in your power, *Hashem* counts the good intention as if you actually did the action! You will get the full reward!

Contrary to the secular world, where the main focus is the final product, and if you don’t produce, your efforts are worthless, in the real world, the *Torah* world, when it comes to spirituality, learning *Torah* and doing *mitzvos*, it is the exact opposite. *Hashem* wants our effort! He is interested in our thoughts, our intentions, what is in our hearts, and not necessarily in the finished product. In the physical world, we honor and respect people who do big and great things. However, in the *Olam HaEmes*, *Hashem* honors people who tried their best, even if in the eyes of the world they did not succeed! We must redefine the word “success” according to the *Torah* and not get discouraged when things don’t work out the way we wanted! The end result is the way *Hashem* wanted and accepting and being happy with the *ratzon Hashem* is the greatest way to serve Him in this world!