

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

וישעה משה לקרא לרתן ולאבירם בני אליאב ויאמרו לא נעלה ... (צו-יב)

The **Medrash Tanchuma** states: “*Moshe sent to summon Dasan and Aviram, but they said, ‘We will not come up.’ ‘We will not go’ or ‘We will not come’ is not written here, but ‘We will not come up.’ As it says, ‘A fool’s mouth is his ruin!’ (Prov. 18:17:)* They opened their mouth for a calamity, by saying that they would die by going down and not coming up. Just as they spoke, so did they die. Moshe said, ‘Inasmuch as they did not want to come [to me], I shall go to them. Perhaps they will be ashamed and repent.’ When they saw him they began to curse and blaspheme, as stated, ‘and Dasan and Aviram came out standing.’ *Does one go out sitting, or lying prostrate? It is simply to teach us that they went out cursing and blaspheming.*”

There was once a couple that was experiencing *shalom bayis* problems. Counseling and therapy sessions did not help and it was decided that a divorce was necessary. Inquiries were made and a date and time was set for the husband and wife to appear in *Beis Din*, however, the woman refused to attend. She was bitter. She felt she was terribly wronged in the process and insisted that she would not accept a *get* under any conditions.

The husband arranged for the *get* to be written in the *Beis Din* of R’ **Moshe Feinstein ז”ל**, on the lower east side of Manhattan, and afterward, R’ Moshe appointed one of his *talmidim* to serve as a *shaliach*, a messenger, to deliver the *get* to the woman in the presence of two witness who were to accompany him.

The group set off for the woman’s apartment, located in one of the more seedier sections of Manhattan, but when they arrived, she refused to let them in and absolutely refused to accept the *get*. She yelled and screamed at them, but would not let them in. They had no choice but to come back to R’ Moshe and report that their mission was unsuccessful.

R’ Moshe was undaunted. In a flash, he grabbed his hat and coat and headed out the door, telling the messenger and witnesses to follow him. Together, they traveled back to the woman’s apartment, navigated through some unwelcome aspects of the city, and traipsed up four flights of stairs as the building elevator was not in service. R’ Moshe was not a young man and this trip was a bit arduous for him, but he never complained even once the entire time.

They knocked at the apartment door and a man opened it. It was her father. He saw the group of rabbis standing there in rabbinic garb and immediately let loose a barrage of insults, profanity and vitriolic words, in essence telling them to get out of here and his daughter was not going to listen to them. R’ Moshe just stood there and waited for the man to finish. When he finally did, the *Gadol Hador* gently explained that if he would allow them a few short minutes, they would be gone right away. It took some more convincing but eventually, the man allowed the group into the apartment.

The woman emerged from a side room and recognized R’ Moshe. She listened to him calmly explain how tragic it would be for so many people involved if this situation would continue to linger, and how important it is for her to accept the *get* and move on in life. His words struck a chord, and it wasn’t long before she willingly accepted the *get*.

R’ Moshe led the group of men outside and they began to walk back to his home. One of the men could not contain his curiosity and asked, “*Rebbi*, please forgive me for asking, but why did the *Rav* have to come in person? He is a widely respected *Rosh Yeshivah* and the head of the *Beis Din*. He could have sent numerous people, an unlimited amount of messengers until the job was done; yet he went himself and was made to suffer the indignity of insults, the strain of traveling and the effort of climbing so many flights of stairs. It is surely beneath his *kavod* to do these things.”

R’ Moshe stopped walking and looked at the man. “I don’t understand your issue. Do you think that in these types of situations, I need to be concerned with my own *kavod*? What about *kavod shamayim*? What about the honor of *Hashem Yisborach*? If she were to not accept the *get* and later got married again, can you imagine the disrespect to *kavod shamayim* that would bring? Is there a greater level of indignity and insult than that?”

ואם לא תשמעו בקול ה' ... והדתה יד ה' נבכם ובאבותיכם ... (שמיאל א' יב-יג)

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

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In stark contrast to his ancestor’s rebellious actions in contesting the leadership of *Moshe Rabbeinu*, *Shmuel HaNavi* devoted his life to correcting Korach’s malfeasance by always making sure to present the proper *Torah* perspective in everything. Interestingly, while giving his final farewell speech, Shmuel warned *Klal Yisroel* that if they were to disregard the word of *Hashem*, “*the hand of Hashem will be against you and against your fathers.*”

R’ **Eliyahu Steinberg shlit’a** (Vayochach Omesh) quotes *Chazal* (*Yevamos 63b*) that this punishment of the hand of *Hashem* would bring about the desecration of *Klal Yisroel’s* father’s graves. He explains that the **Radak** understands the word “באבותיכם” – “fathers” to be a figurative reference to

the king as we have seen with regard to *Yosef HaTzadik’s* assertion of his relationship with Pharaoh, King of Egypt (*Bereishis 45:8*). Says R’ Eliyahu, what’s fascinating is that the numerical value of the words “בכם ובאבותיכם” (plus two to account for the words themselves) is 545 – the exact *gematria* of the words “ולחוציא מקבריהם”. Remarkable as this may be, why should the previous generations have to pay posthumously for later generations wrongdoings?

R’ **Chaim Dov Rabinovitz ז”ל** (Daas Sofrim) explains that part of the blame for *Klal Yisroel’s* sins is placed on the ancestors of previous *doros* for having not properly prepared foundations for the next *doros*. As such, it is the אחריות of the present generation to set the course for generations to come.

ויקם משה וילך אל דתן ואבירם וילכו אחריו וקני ישראל ... (צו-כה)

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

מחשבת הלב

At first glance, the word “ויקם” (“*he got up*”) seems superfluous here in the *posuk* - of course, if *Moshe Rabbeinu* was sitting down, then he obviously got up. It would have sufficed just to say “וילך משה” - and Moshe “*went to them.*”

My *machshava* here is twofold. Sometimes when diverse opinions collide, *machlokes r”l* ensues, with each side believing that they are 100% correct and the other side is totally in the wrong. Each side is waiting for the other to acquiesce. The *Torah* says that while you may be right, take note and remember that “ויקם משה” - Moshe was the one who initiated the conciliatory process. *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the paradigm of humility and *anava* was showing the Jewish people how to deal with our differences. Furthermore, we find in *Parshas Chayei Sarah*, the *Torah* uses the words, “ויקם השדה”. The word “ויקם” connotes an *aliya*, an elevation of sorts. The *Torah* is teaching us that if you promote *shalom* - peace, by being the one to give in, by being the *mevater*, then “תקומה יהיה לך” - you will experience an elevation. You will rise to a new, exalted level. You will be like *Moshe Rabbeinu*. As the expression goes: “You can be right or you can be happy!” That is perhaps why the *Torah* chose this particular word - “ויקם” - to impart this lesson to us.

The letters of the name Korach also spell “קרח” - cold ice. Korach set up a cold front between himself and *Moshe Rabbeinu*. To thaw this icy feeling that *machlokes* breeds, Moshe tried to initiate warm feelings through warm words.

As we usher in the month of *Tammuz* in which the sad days of *Bein Hameitzarim* commence, it would behoove all of us to learn from the example that *Moshe Rabbeinu* set forth for us, teaching us how to make *shalom*, end our *sinas chinam*, and pave the way for us to be *zoche* to the *haaros panim* of *Hashem* through the *binyan Bais HaMikdash b’karov. Amen!*

משל למה הדבר דומה

ותפתה הארץ את פיה ותבלע אתם ואת בתיהם ... (צו-לב)

משל: There is a legend that is told about the great *Chacham* and chief rabbi of Constantinople, Turkey, **Rav Shlomo Eliezer Elifandry ז”ל**. Throughout his tenure in Turkey and before he moved to Syria, he was at the forefront of the battle against the *Maskilim*, who used their influence to destroy the religious values of the Turkish communities. Rav Shlomo Eliezer took them head on and would not budge an inch, in preserving the tenets of *Torah*-true Judaism.

The *Chacham* was once invited to the *Bar Mizvah* of the son of a wealthy individual, who also invited some of the more prominent *Maskilim* of the city. During the lavish meal, a scientific conversation broke out among the assembled, and a few of the “enlightened” members were pontificating on the topic of earthquakes and the scientific reasons why they occur. Each person presented his data and

much talk of fault lines and underground plates, was banded about. The *Maskilim* enjoyed the attention, proving their superior knowledge to the rabbis of the old guard.

Suddenly, Rav Shlomo Eliezer stood up and declared, “You think you understand why earthquakes occur? You think you are safe from earthquakes? Believe me, if *Hashem* wanted to split open the earth and swallow up all you wicked people, He does not need your reasoning to make it happen!”

Just as the *Chacham* uttered these words, a terrible hue arose from somewhere in the city as an earthquake took place and caused a great deal of damage. The people were shaken up by the power of the *Chacham* and even the *Maskilim* were terrified of him after that story took place.

נמשל: *Hashem* created a new creation specifically to swallow up Korach and his cohorts. These wicked people knew quite well that they were starting up with the Almighty, but their arrogance led them down the path to their own destruction.

כי כל העדה בלם קדושים ובתוכם ה' ומדוע תתנשאו על קדל ה' ... (צו-ג)

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

דרגה יתירה

What a shame it is, what happened to Korach! Korach had it all. He was from an illustrious family, he was a great *Torah* scholar, he was wealthy, dynamic and looked up to. But it wasn’t enough: he turned his gains into pains! The wicked Haman was no different. He, too, had it all. He was rich, powerful and respected by the King. He had the entire world bowing down to him - everyone, that is, except for one Jew named Mordechai. What did Haman say? “*וכל זה איננו שוה לי*” - “*Everything I have is worthless,*” if I don’t have the ONE thing that I want. Haman did not see that everyone else was bowing down to him; all he saw was that Mordechai was NOT! Very often this kind of behavior stems from “קטאה” (jealousy), “תאוה” (lust) and “כבוד” (honor). These three negative traits are so terrible that they can cause a person to not only go out of his mind, but even go out of his world! In other words, the person does not even see all the good things in his life and in the world around him.

Perhaps, though, the underlying root of all three issues is really one, and we can suggest a simple and practical solution for all three. There is a well-known *segula* of saying *Perek Shira*. It is a beautiful *tefilla* that quotes *posukim*, from all over *Tanach*, which are proclaimed by the animals, the birds, fish and the entire creation including the sky, earth, and everything in it. Each creation sings a song of praise to *Hashem* with it’s own unique verse. Why is this so effective? What is it all about? R’ **Gamliel Rabinowitz shlit’a** explains that the main point of *Perek Shira* is about APPRECIATION. It is to think to oneself, “The mountains and oceans are praising *Hashem* - what about me? What is MY special *shira*, MY unique gratitude to *Hashem* for all that He has given me?” The *segula* is not in *Perek Shira*; the *segula* is in the heightened awareness of *hakaras hatov*, gratitude and appreciation to *Hashem* for what we have - not focusing on the things that we don’t! The greatest way to truly be “in this world” is by working on appreciating everything *Hashem* has given us.