



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויתן אל משה ככלתו לדבר אתו בדרך סיני שני לוחות העדות לוחת אבן כתבנים באמצע אלקים ... (לא-ה)

The *posuk* tells us that after *Hashem* concluded teaching the entire *Torah* to *Moshe Rabbeinu*, He gave him the two *Luchos* (Tablets) to bring down to the people. **Rabbeinu Bechaye** explains (**Rashi** also quotes the *Medrash*) that the reason the word "ככלתו" is specifically written without the letter "vav" is to draw our attention to the word "כלה" - bride, which is part of the spelling, "like His bride." The lesson which we learn is that when *Hashem* handed over the *Torah* to the Jewish people through *Moshe Rabbeinu*, He did so in the nature of a groom (חתן) receiving his bride (כלה) - with tremendous joy and happiness, the way one receives a gift from another. Had this not been the case, *Moshe Rabbeinu* could not have learned the entire *Torah* in forty days. Only through great joy and appreciation of the "gift" was he able to do so.

Much has been made of the responsibility that a *chossan* has to his *kallah*, which includes the wedding gifts, the *Kesuba* and support. But a groom's "responsibility" starts even before that. A story is told about a *yeshivah bochur* who was searching for a *shidduch*. This boy was no ordinary *bochur* - the *Rosh Yeshivah* described him as a "Metzuyan" - an extraordinary student, whose Talmudic prowess was already evident at a young age. As the best *bochur* in the *yeshivah*, only a top prospect was good enough for him! What does a "top prospect" include? Well, naturally, the girl must come from a rich family, with a fine lineage, who appreciates *Torah* learning and wants nothing less in a son-in-law, than a boy who will spend all his days and nights immersed in his studies. For such a boy, the family of the girl is required to offer full support together with the purchase of an apartment in a city of the boy's choosing where he can "shteig" the best!

Well, our "Metzuyan" found just the right girl, and family to go along with her. After a few dates, it was announced that they were getting engaged. The *Tenaim* was a grand affair and the *shidduch* was the talk of town. It took only a few days before the fissures began. The new *chossan* spoke to his *kallah* and they planned to go "apartment hunting." However, the girl's father got on the phone and told the boy that plans have changed. He was not in any monetary position to purchase an apartment and the offer of many years of support was now withdrawn. The girl's father cheerfully explained that he was proud to have such a wonderful future son-in-law, but in all practical terms - he was broke!

The *chossan* hung up the phone and the image of the wonderful life he had built up in his mind came crashing down all around him! If his father-in-law will not be supporting him, how will he be able to reach the heights of scholarship that he was destined for? How would he one day fulfill the promise that so many of his *Rebbeim* and *Roshei Yeshivah* said was inevitable for him? And without an apartment, where would he and his future bride live? In a city far away from his *yeshivah*, friends and *Batei Medrashim*, just to pay a cheaper rent? Imagine the hours of traveling by bus to get home after a long and weary day in the *Beis Medrash*? The *chossan* sat in a daze, trying to figure out his next move.

And then, it came to him! He would break the *shidduch* and move on. He was still a "catch" and he would find a father-in-law who would keep his word and do what he promised to do. Yes, no doubt, this was his best course of action.

The "Metzuyan" decided to ask a *shaila* and he went to **R' Yitzchok Zilberstein shlit'a**. The *Rav* heard his complaints and of course attempted to talk him out of it. The *Poskim* tell us that one should not break a *shidduch* because of money!

"It's not about the money," exclaimed the boy. "This is about my whole life's plan going down the drain! If I go through with this *shidduch*, I will no doubt be saddled with debt for many years to come! Isn't that enough of a reason?"

R' Zilberstein could not convince the *bochur* and finally told him that he will bring the *shaila* to his father-in-law, the *Posek Hador* **R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l**. They agreed that whatever Rav Elyashiv ruled, he would abide by.

The *shaila* with all its details was presented and Rav Elyashiv responded instantly and with authority: "What is the connection between his valid *ta'anos* (arguments) against the father-in-law, and breaking the *shidduch* and embarrassing the *kallah*? If he feels he has a monetary case against this man for renegeing on his promises, let him take him to a *din Torah* - but why should the *kallah* have to suffer, why does he think it's alright to leave and embarrass her so deeply?"

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

וקדשתי את שמי הגדול המחלל בנים ... (תהיאל לז-בנ)

*Yechezkel HaNavi* berates the people for defiling the honor of *Hashem*. The *Navi* explains that *Hashem* was concerned with the reputation of His Name and demanded that His great Name be sanctified, "so that the nations shall know that I am the Lord." In addition, *Hashem* added, "I will take you from among the nations and gather you from all the countries, and I will bring you back to your own land."

Immediately thereafter, *Hashem* declared, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean." As the whole desecration of *Hashem's* Name stems from the Jewish people being dispersed among the nations, wouldn't it seem enough

for *Hashem* to just bring back the Jewish Nation and then His Name will be sanctified automatically?

**R' Yechiya Tuvul shlit'a** (Ma'aros Yesharim) explains that the Jewish people are called a "ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש" - a kingdom of priests and a holy nation - primarily due to their status as pure children of *Hashem*. The greatness of *Hashem's* name is safeguarded by G-d-fearing Jews who go to great lengths to protect it. Therefore, without purifying the Jewish nation first, *Hashem's* Name has no standing in the eyes of the nations and will be desecrated even more. The purification of *Klal Yisroel* is an intrinsic part of protecting the greatness of *Hashem's* Name and to simply redeem them without cleansing them first would be pointless.

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# מחשבת הלב

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

ואמר משה מלאו ידכם היום לה' כי איש בבנו ובאחיו ולחית עיניכם היום ברובה (לב-בט)

*Moshe Rabbeinu* commanded the *Levi'im* to slay their own relatives who partook in the *aveira* of creating the *eigel*. However, the choice of words is a bit perplexing - "מלאו ידכם" - fill your hands (see **Rashi** and **Ohr Hachayim**). To better understand this expression we must delve into the entire picture of how *Klal Yisroel* could possibly stoop so low as to worship a golden calf? The **Beis Halevi**, in one of his most classic pieces *al HaTorah*, explains that we mustn't think for a second that it was simple idol-worship that the people transgressed, *ch"v*. Rather, *Bnei Yisroel* really did had good intentions. *Moshe Rabbeinu*, their leader and guide, was MIA (missing in action), and they simply needed an emissary to serve as a conduit between them and *Hashem*. Their entire mistake was the mere fact that they didn't ask a *shaila* from *daas Torah*. From that deviation came about such a calamity! He goes on to explain numerous *Chazal* based on this approach.

*Shevet Levi* was the only *shevet* which stayed true and steadfast, not wavering from their leaders for even a second. *Klal Yisroel* though had left a void. When he returned from the mountain, Moshe said to them, "Slay your family members, your friends, those close to you who had served the *eigel*." This act defied all logic for how can one be expected to kill his family and friends? Yet, *Shevet Levi* who never veered from *daas Torah* the entire time, was up to the task and they faithfully filled (מלאו) the void which *Klal Yisroel* had created. This was perhaps an initial *kapara* for *Klal Yisroel*.

Throughout our many generations we've had our share of challenges. Those *Yidden* who carefully adhered to the words of the *Gedolei Yisroel* persevered and lived on while others have vanished and lost their connection to *Yiddishkeit*. Let us strive to listen to our *daas Torah* ensuring *b'ezras Hashem* future *doros* who follow in their *Zaida's and Bubba's* paths.

## משל למה הדבר דומה

וידבר ה' אל משה לך רד כי שחת עמך ... (לב-ז)

**משל**: The front door of **R' Asher Zev Werner zt"l**, Chief Rabbi of *Teveria* in the first half of the 20th century, was always open to the public. He barely had a minute to himself for people were constantly coming to speak with him about personal and communal issues. A number of *askanim* approached the *Rav* and suggested he set hours so that he might be able to have some time for himself.

R' Asher Zev replied, "When *Moshe Rabbeinu* was up in *shamayim* learning *Torah* from the Almighty Himself, *Hashem* told him, 'לך רד' - 'Go down,' you are needed on earth for the people have transgressed. Moshe could not have wanted anything less than leaving where he was to deal with the horrific situation and the sinful nation, and for that reason, *Hashem* commanded him, 'Moshe, Go down' - Moshe, you must lower yourself from this lofty place, in order to help your people, for they need you more than ever!"

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF ... ראת ה'

## דרגה יתירה

ובלב כל הכם לב נתתי חכמה ... (לא-ו)

This *posuk* seems to be unusual. *Hashem* says that He gives "wisdom to the wise." This, says **Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski shlit'a**, is similar to the *posuk* in *Tanach* (דניאל ב-כא) where *Dovid HaMelech* says: "He gives knowledge to the wise." The question is: What is the necessity of giving wisdom to the wise? The wise already have wisdom and knowledge! Wouldn't it be more beneficial to bestow wisdom upon the unwise, or at least on someone who has little or limited knowledge?

The holy **Belzer Rebbe, R' Aharon Rokeach zt"l** said that when he was a small child, this *posuk* always bothered him and he asked his father, **R' Yissachar Dov zt"l**, "If *Hashem* only gives wisdom to the wise, doesn't one have to be wise to receive this wisdom? If so, from where is one supposed to receive his initial wisdom?" His father answered him with the words that we all say each morning: "ראשית חכמה ריאת ה" - "The initial wisdom is fear of Hashem."

*Yiras Shamayim* is the one thing that man must strive to achieve on his own. The *Gemara* (ברכות לג:) tells us as much: "הכל בידו שמים חוץ מיראת שמים" - "Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for fear of Heaven." One way to acquire true *Yiras Shamayim* is by opening our eyes and looking around at the incredibly beautiful world that *Hashem* created for us. The more one pays attention to the brilliant details of nature, and recognizes the imprint of the Almighty on every aspect of his or her life, the more one will be awe-inspired and filled with true *Yiras Hashem*. On the other hand, a failure to do so is not due to lack of intelligence or perception, but rather one who does not see *Hashem* in every aspect of his or her life and the world, has a desire to be free from the responsibilities that come with a recognition and fear of *Hashem*.

It is our choice to fear ה'. By making that choice one has done his part to merit a special gift from above - the gift of wisdom.