## Insights from the Meshech Chochma רב מאיר שמחה הכהן מדווינסק זצ"ל פרשיות נצבים-וילך תשפד

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(פרק לא' ב) פָּרָק לּשְׁמֹעַ בְּּקֹלוֹ וּלְּדָבְקָה בוֹ כִּי הוּא חַיֶיף... (פרק לא' ב) אָת ה' אֱלֹקֶיףּ לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּּקֹלוֹ וּלְדָבְקָה בוֹ כִּי הוּא חַיֶיף... (Moshe tells Klal Yisrael: ...you shall choose life, so that you will live, you and your offspring,) to love Hashem, your G-d, to listen to his Voice and to cleave to Him, for He is your life...

Rav Meir Simcha uses our pasuk as a platform to present his understanding of various difficult-to-understand *Aggadita* and especially where Moshe Rabbeinu plays a significant role.

He takes us to :חגיגה ד: where we are told that R' Elazar cried when he read the verse, "ויֹאמר" שָׁמוּאֵל אֶל שָׁאוּל לַמַה הָרְגַזְתַּנִי לְהַעֵּלוֹת אוֹתִי/ And Shmuel said to Shaul: 'Why did you disturb me, to bring me up?" The context of this exchange is as follows: King Shaul was at war with the P'lishtim but did not receive any direction as to how to proceed from his prophets, the Urim v'tumim nor did Hashem communicate with him via a dream. He resorted to utilizing the power of a necromancer to raise the departed Shmuel's soul and bring him back to our world to give him guidance. R' Elazar says that upon being "awakened," Shmuel was terrified that his day of judgment arrived and he was being summoned to the Heavenly Court. Continues the Gemara: "Shmuel went and brought Moshe along and said to him: 'Perhaps, Heaven forbid, I was summoned for judgment by G-d; stand with me and testify on my behalf that there is nothing that you wrote in the Torah that I did not fulfill." R' Elazar cried because if the great prophet Shmuel was afraid of judgment, how much more so should ordinary people be. (A very sobering thought to ponder as we approach our upcoming year's Yom HaDin.) Of note, this statement of R' Elazar is also brought in Vayikra Rabba where, to show us the greatness of Shmuel, the Midrash quotes a pasuk in וויַדע כַּל יִשְׂרָאֵל מַדָּן וַעַד בָּאַר, שמואל א ג' ב 'שַׁבַע כִּי נֵאֱמַן שָׁמוּאֱל לְנָבִיא ה'/All of Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, knew that Shmuel was faithful as a prophet to Hashem.

There are several difficulties with this אַחַיִ" which Rav Meir Simcha proceeds to address: 1. Had not Shmuel already had his *Yom HaDin*? Why did he think he would be subjected to another one? 2. Why did he *specifically* choose Moshe Rabbeinu as his defense counsel? 3. Can Heavenly Judgement be influenced by an outsider? In truth, it cannot. 4. There are other pasukim which extol Shmuel's greatness. What made the Midrash choose

Rav Meir Simcha provides us with answers to these questions but as usual, we require some background information. We know that a parent cannot be punished for the sins of his children. However, if the parent was *directly* responsible for the child's transgression e.g., by

providing poor חִינוּף or not admonishing the child when it would have been appropriate, the parent would likewise be punished. And this can apply even years after the parent's demise. We see this clearly with regards to Eli, the Kohen Gadol, when Hashem tells Shmuel to inform him that הַּי שֹׁפֵט אֲנִי אֶת בֵּיתוֹ עַד עוֹלֶם בַּעֲוֹן אֲשֶׁר יָדַע כִּי מְקַלְלִים לָהֶם בָּנָיו וְלֹא כִהָה בָּם /l am executing judgement against his house forever for the sin he committed that he was aware that his sons were blaspheming themselves and he did not censure them. Shmuel's two sons unfortunately, were also not righteous. In his later years, Shmuel appointed them as judges and the Torah testifies that ... אוֹלְא הָלְנוּ בְּנָיו בִּדְרָכוּ... Shmuel was concerned that although they "went off the derech," especially after he died, he would undergo another judgement for their sins.

Why did Shmuel choose Moshe to accompany him? Rav Meir Simcha refers us to Bamidbar Rabba on the pasuk in *Chukas, אַז* יַשִּׁיר יִשְׂרָאֵל/*Then Israel sang* and tells us that "this is one of three matters that Moshe said to HKBH and He told him: 'You have taught Me.'... The second, when HKBH said to him: (פֹּקָד עֵוֹן אֲבוֹת עֵל בַּנִים will reckon the iniquity of the fathers upon children' and Moshe said to Him: '...how many wicked men begot righteous men?... Terach worshipped idols, and Avraham his son was righteous... Is it appropriate for the righteous to be stricken for the iniquity of their fathers?' HKBH said to him: 'You have taught Me. ...I am voiding My words and fulfilling yours,' as it is stated: לא יוּמְתוּ עַל בַּנִים וּבַנִים לא יוּמְתוּ עַל אבות/Parents shall not be put to death for children nor children be put to death for parents. And as you live, I will write this in your name,' as it is stated(in מלכים ב יד' ו מלכים ב יד'): בַּבַּתוּב בַּסְפֵר תּוֹרֶת משֶׁה אֲשֶׁר צָוָה ה' לֵאמר לֹא יוּמְתוּ אֲבוֹת עַל בַּנִים וּבַנִים לֹא יוּמְתוּ עַל אֲבוֹת/As it is written in the book of the Torah of Moshe that Hashem commanded, 'Fathers will not be put to death for children, and children will not be put to death for fathers." So that it was Moshe Rabbeinu who rescinded punishment to parents for the sin of their child and Rav Meir Simcha adds that this applies only if the child's sin is in no way related to the parent. Shmuel traveled across the Land rebuking people to stay away from sinning. He surely did this with his own children! But still, וַלֹא הַלְבוּ בַבַנִיו בִּדְרֵבוּ. they went their own way. And that is why the Midrash utilizes the pasuk 'וַיַדע כַּל יִשַּׂרָאַל מַדָן וַעַד בָּאַר שָׁבַע כִּי נֵאַמַן שָׁמוּאָל לְנָבִיא ה i.e., it is a testimony that in his lifetime, Shmuel was the perfect role model for a 'נַבִיא ה'-someone who was able to lead the Nation in the ways of Hashem. And that is why he brought Moshe Rabbeinu along, to "remind" the Beis Din of Moshe's psak and that it applies to him: לא יומתוּ אַבוֹת עַל בַּנִים-because Shmuel had no part in his sons aveiros.

Another wonderful example of our author's ability "to gather Torah from all-over" and provide us with a refreshingly novel approach to esoteric דָבְרֵי חַזַ"!

לזכר נשמת אבי מורי ר' ישראל מנחם בן ר' שלום ז"ל לזכר נשמת אמי מורתי רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדור ע"ה לזכר נשמת חמי מורי ר' יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל ולזכר נשמת הרב יהודה בן ר' אברהם שמחה (קופרמן) זצ"ל מחבר הגהות על ספר משך חכמה