



DIVREI TORAH ON THE PARSHA • BY RABBI DOV KEILSON

זכרון אבינעם

ZICHRON AVINOAM

בראשית/983

IN MEMORY OF AVINOAM GROSSMAN • ל"ע"נ הבחור החשוב אבינעם ע"ה בן שמואל אהרן נ"י

ב"ט תשרי תשפ"ז

THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF TEFILLAH

The Kotzker Rebbe famously expressed, "Where is Hashem found? Wherever you let Him in...."

It is a powerful statement with so much depth and meaning to it, yet, for our subject today, on this very first *parashah* of the year, there is another question that we must address: *the neshamah's entrance....*

The Torah teaches us in *Parashas Bereishis* of the tragic murder of Hevel by his very own brother, Kayin. And HaKadosh Baruch Hu told Kayin, "The sound of your brother's blood is calling out to Me from the ground" (*Bereishis* 4:10). Rashi seemingly is bothered by the particular language that Hashem uses to describe that blood that is crying out from the earth, asking why the Torah uses the word דָּמִי, *bloods*, in the plural, as opposed to just simply דָּם, blood in the singular form. Rashi then answers this question with two separate Gemaros on the subject, one from *Bava Basra*, and one from *Sanhedrin*.

The first answer is that Hashem Yisbarach was referring to the blood of all the generations that were meant to originate from Hevel, which could no longer come into being because he had been killed. And the second explanation is that it refers to all the bloods that were spilled in this tragic episode, since Kayin did not know what to do to cause his brother's *neshamah* to leave him — thus, he hit him many times, trying desperately to take his life, and thereby caused much blood to be spilled onto the earth.

My *chavrusa*, Rav Label Lam, *shlita*, shared something amazing on this topic from Rav Mendel Weinbach *zt'l*. Perhaps these two answers can go hand in hand, and the lesson that emerges is quite amazing:

It was the great quantity of blood that Kayin spilled while trying to remove a *neshamah* that affected generations to come, *R'l*.

Said Rav Weinbach, if this is the result caused by one who causes a *neshamah* to leave a person, can we imagine the flip side: a person who tries so hard to help a Jewish soul *enter* a Yid? Can we imagine the effects this will have on the generations to come? For whatever damage negative deeds cause, the impact of positive acts is always five hundred times greater...

and the proportions of such are exponentially greater....

Yet, Rav Lam added, just as Kayin was not sure how to cause the *neshamah* to exit, neither is it always clear as to what will allow us to cause the *neshamah* to enter into a Yid.

What is it that will cause the spark of Torah inside to ignite? Will it be a Shabbos *seudah*? One *chavrusa* in Gemara? Or will it be just one kind word?

The stories abound. As those great Jews like Rabbi Meir Schuster *zt'l* have caused thousands of *neshamos* to enter the lifeless bodies that stood before them at the Western Wall... with but one word... one gesture... one small invitation... changing the trajectory of their lives — and the lives of every single one of their descendants, adding up by now to probably thousands upon thousands... a number that will only increase as time goes on.... And the voice of gratitude that calls out from the earth may be even stronger than the voice of those who were lost due to Hevel's demise... as the *neshamos* of each of *their* descendants today say "thank you" for allowing their *neshamos* to be ignited... one Jew at a time....

Staggering... absolutely staggering....

This past Rosh Hashanah we were hosted by a wonderful family in New Jersey, and we were amazed by the *hachnosas orchim* and the specialness of their *mishpachah*... the pictures that adorned the wall both of *tzadikim* and of the beautiful *Yiddishe nachas* they have were truly incredible, especially knowing from where they came....

And after looking into the matter and asking their children for the story behind it all — all those pictures, all those *sefarim*, and all the *shiurim* that their home hosted over the years as well — they said just two words:

Meir Schuster.

One who lights the spark within a Jewish neshamah and allows it to shine. It was all his doing. He was a messenger from Hashem who changed the *doros* whose growth we witnessed with our own eyes.

B'Siyata DiShmaya.