



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חידושי דעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim
given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Shoftim 5762

At the end of this week's Parsha, we find the following *pasuk*:

כִּי יִמָּצָא חָלָל בְּאֶדְמָה אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּהּ נָפֶל בַּשָּׂדֶה לֹא נוֹדַע מִי הִכָּהוּ.

If a murder victim will be found in the land that Hashem your G-d gives you to inherit, lying in the field and it isn't known who struck him.

While the Torah speaks about a Jew who was physically murdered by an unknown killer, we must realize that there are also spiritual casualties, whose body may live, but whose soul is dead. Just as in the case described in the Torah, the identity of the spiritual murderer often remains unknown.

For example, a *bachur* applies to a certain Yeshiva and receives no response to his application. His parents, relatives, and acquaintances all try to intervene on his behalf, without success. The Rosh Yeshiva tells them to speak with the *magid shiur*. The *magid shiur* tells them to speak to the registrar, who tells them to speak with the Rav who administered the admissions test. They end up going around in circles without being able to identify or speak with the person who decided to ignore the application.

Meanwhile, the *bachur* who wasn't accepted or the girl who didn't get into a seminary end up as casualties wandering the streets of our communities. How can we expect them not to sin? In the Torah's case, the elders of the closest town wash their hands and declare, "Our hands



[1]

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did not spill this blood, and our eyes didn't see this crime." The *Roshei Yeshiva*, cannot wash their hands of this crime and claim that they aren't responsible, or were unaware.

A man once told me his story. His family lived in *chutz la'aretz*, but he came to learn in a *yeshiva* in Eretz Yisrael. For whatever reason, one evening the Mashgiach expelled him from the yeshiva. He walked out of the *yeshiva* with no idea of what he should do, or where he should go. He wandered the streets for hours. Just before midnight, my grandfather zy" a met him, and asked him why he was wandering aimlessly.

The *bachur* told him what had happened, and my grandfather was so shocked by the story, that he began to tremble. He asked for the name of the Mashgiach who had expelled him, and immediately walked to the Mashgiach's house.

Disregarding the late hour, my grandfather knocked on the Mashgiach's door. Eventually, the Mashgiach, who apparently had already gone to sleep, opened the door and was shocked to see the Tolna Rebbe on his doorstep.

My grandfather said that he certainly understands that sometimes a *talmid* must be expelled from a *yeshiva*. However, he said that he cannot comprehend how the Mashgiach was capable of going to bed while knowing that a *talmid* from his *yeshiva* was wandering the streets without even a place to sleep.

The Mashgiach recognized the truth of my grandfather's words and admitted that he acted improperly. My grandfather then told him that since he had mistreated the boy, he must now repair the damage by re-accepting the boy to the *yeshiva*. To the Mashgiach's credit, he followed my grandfather's recommendation and brought the *bachur* back to the *yeshiva*.



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This was the story that the man told me. It exemplifies the approach of my grandfather zy”a. Even though he was totally unacquainted with the young man whom he found wandering the streets of Yerushalayim, he did everything in his power to help.

The man concluded his story by saying that only due to my grandfather’s efforts did he continue to learn in Yeshiva and go on to build a home of Torah and *mitzvos*.

We must follow in my grandfather’s footsteps, seeking out and caring for the casualties of our educational system. Even if we don’t have the ability to influence the heads of *yeshivos* and seminaries, we must feel the pain of those young people and daven for them. At the very least, when we encounter these wounded souls, we should try to greet them with genuine warmth and joy.

If we do so, we will *b’ezras Hashem* achieve the atonement described in the Parsha:

כִּפֹּר לְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ יְהוָה וְאֵל תִּתֵּן דָּם נָקִי בְּקֶרֶב עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִכְפַּר לָהֶם דָּם

Atone for your nation Yisrael, whom you have redeemed, Hashem, and do not place the innocent blood among your nation, Yisrael, and the blood will be atoned for them.

אמן כן יהי רצון



[3]

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