



Torah Online - Rabbi Tuvia Bolton



In this week's section we learn the commandment of circumcision (Brit Mila). "On the eighth day remove the flesh of the foreskin."

This commandment is very strange.

Why did G-d give Abraham the circumcision and then give it again hundreds of years later?

Why is it the ONLY commandment that's called 'Covenant' (Brit)?

Why isn't it in a more visible place for everyone can see? We should be proud of our covenant with G-d.

Why do we have to pain ourselves (or our children) to do it?

To answer this, here is a story.

When Mr. Malka (fictitious name) entered the room of the Rebbe of Lubavitch he almost forgot that his daughter was dying.

He was born and brought up in a 'traditional' Jewish home in French Morocco and although he had stopped being observant long ago when he moved to Israel and succeeded in business he had not forgotten the holy 'Tzadikim' he had seen when he was young.

But it was nothing like this.

The Rebbe's eyes were filled with joy, indescribable depth, and they left him speechless for a moment.

He approached the desk, handed the Rebbe the short letter he had prepared and burst out crying. The letter read as follows:

"Dear Rebbe. I'm sure the Rebbe remembers that twelve years ago he blessed us for children and the next year my wife gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, thank G-d. We had been married for ten years with no children and all the doctors had given up hope.

"But a few months ago our daughter complained of headaches and we took her for tests. The doctors in Israel found that she has a large malignant tumor in her brain and her only chance is in the hospital in Boston.

"Here in Boston the doctors say that they are willing to operate but admit that only a miracle can save her. Will the Rebbe please pray for our only child, I am willing to anything the Rebbe says. Should we make the operation or not?"

Mr. Malka was weeping almost uncontrollably. The Rebbe finished the letter, looked up at him and said.

"Now is the Jewish month of Adar. Soon will be the holiday of Purim. The Talmud tells us that in this month we MUST be happy and you come into my room, and do the opposite? Did you ask permission to bring sadness into my room?!"

Mr. Malka was astounded. Was the Rebbe joking with him? "Rebbe! He cried out! It's my DAUGHTER'S LIFE!!" And he wept even louder.

"You want to cure your daughter by sadness? By being sad in Adar!?" the Rebbe replied.

Suddenly Mr. Malka understood that the Rebbe was serious. "Rebbe" he said, trying to stop weeping, "Tell me how to be happy! I'll do anything! Just tell me!!"

The Rebbe answered, "Adar is happy because in it everything 'Turned over!' (The Jews were almost destroyed and instead it became a holiday). Then the Rebbe repeated it in French, "Turned over! Everything Turned Over!!" as he held out his hands and turned them as though turning over the world.

If Mr. Malka was confused when he entered, he was more so now. The Rebbe was disagreeing with all the doctors! There was hope! He realized the conversation was over, shook his head and backed out of the room saying thank you.

But, one minute! The Rebbe didn't tell him what to do! He left the room without even getting a blessing! What about the operation?

He wanted to go back in the room but someone else had already entered, ten people were waiting and the Rebbe's secretary standing at the door told him that in any case he couldn't enter again. He should write his question down and the Rebbe would answer.

Mr. Malka did what the secretary said. He wrote the letter, gave it to the secretary and returned to his daughter and wife in the hospital as though in some sort of strange dream. The Rebbe said to be happy, everything would change. But every corner screamed disaster! The world around him was dark and crumbling!!

When he returned to the hospital there was news! The Rebbe's secretary called; the Rebbe answered! The Rebbe wrote that he had already told him what to do and if he still had doubts he should consult another doctor.

Mr. Malka called a Professor that he knew in France who told him that there was obviously no alternative; he should make the operation and pray.

The next day his daughter entered the operating room. The operation was to take eight hours. He and his wife sat at the edge of their seats in the waiting room, pale as ghosts, reading T'hillim (psalms) and smoking cigarettes. He remembered the Rebbe's advice "Everything will turn over" and even tried to force a smile once in a while but stark reality stopped him.

Suddenly, after an hour, the door burst open and two doctors came out with distress written on their faces.

"Are you the parents of the young girl?" one of them asked nervously.

Mrs' Malka fell on her husband's shoulder and began to weep hysterically. Mr. Malka held his wife's hand and stood stoically to accept the dreadful news. "Yes.... We are."

"There is NO TUMOR in your daughter's brain!!! We don't understand it. Never seen anything like it! The x-rays we took yesterday show clearly a large tumor! There has been some sort of miracle"

The Malkas were beside themselves with joy. But it was short-lived. His daughter simply did not awake from the anesthetic. A week passed then another and the doctors were pessimistic. The operation had done damage and nothing they did aroused her from her sleep.

Again, beside himself with grief, Mr. Malka traveled to Brooklyn to the Rebbe and personally gave a letter to one of the Rebbe's secretaries. Five minutes later the secretary returned with the Rebbe's

reply.

"I will pray for a complete healing and you will have good news. It will be fulfilled the sentence in the Book of Ester 'The month that was transformed from sadness to joy and the Jews received what Mordechi wrote for them'"

He ran outside to a pay phone to tell his wife the good news but when she answered she had even better news. Their daughter had just regained consciousness!!!

But the problems still weren't over; the girl's speech and memory were severely impaired. The doctors tried all sorts of therapies but to no avail and finally just before Passover her parents checked her out of the hospital.

They spent the holiday with friends in Flatbush and on the last day of Passover Mr. Malka remembered that in Morocco the Chabad representative there, Rabbi Michael Lipsker, used to make a Moshiaich Meal on Achron shel Pesach. He wanted to see the Rebbe again.

He traveled to Crown Heights (Chabad headquarters and main synagogue) and sure enough the Rebbe was speaking to a huge crowd of thousands that filled the immense room thirstily drinking in the Rebbe's every word.

The Rebbe spoke for hours, but he paused between speeches and suddenly his eyes turned to Mr. Malka and he motioned for him to approach! Malka walked on the tables, was boosted up to the Rebbe's place and when they were again standing face to face the Rebbe gave him a two pieces of Matza and said:

"The Zohar calls Matza the food of faith and the food of healing. Usually faith brings healing but in your case it will be the opposite. Why should your daughter suffer because of you? Give your daughter this piece and it will bring her healing and this piece will help your faith."

Then the Rebbe smiled and concluded, "Tomorrow is the holiday of Memuna for the Moroccan Jews and in a few weeks will be the month of Iyar. Memuna means faith and Iyar is the initials for 'I am G-d your healer'. But in your case the healing will be before the faith."

Mr. Malka returned home after the Rebbe's 'Farbringen' gave his family the news and ate the Matza together with his daughter. The next day she began speaking normally and her memory returned. And a week later he bought a pair of Tefillin and returned to the G-d of his fathers.

This answers our question. The only way to reveal our connection to the Creator is by removing our nature.

That is the entire secret of the Jewish people leaving Egypt and receiving the Torah. Egypt represents nature. The Torah tells us that the Egyptian sorcerers were spiritual people. They had the power to turn water into blood and inanimate sticks into living snakes.

But the spiritual is also part of creation. As are all the religions of the world today. The Jews left all this when they left Egypt. And when they received the Torah they entered into a new, eternal covenant with the Creator Himself.

But the power to do so came from Abraham; the first man in history to truly change his nature and UNSELFISHLY serve G-d. And this is the covenant; the inner secret connection between G-d and His people.

That is why the Bris is in a hidden and personal place and why it involved with pain; because it is not at all easy to change ourselves, it means going AGAINST nature and that is very difficult, in fact it SEEMS impossible (just like Mr. Malka was unable to see things the Rebbe's way).

But all this is the preparation for the Moshiaich. Then G-d will circumcise our hearts' (Deut. 30:6) as the Rebbe said so many times: All we have to do is open our eyes and see that Moshiaich is

ALREADY HERE!! It all depends on us to see

Moshiach NOW!!

Copyright © 1999-2019 Rabbi Tuvia Bolton. All rights reserved. No unauthorized reproduction or copying of this material shall occur without prior permission. To subscribe go to www.ohrtmimim.org/torah