

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

## Restless and disconnected



Rabbi Shimshon Silkin

**T**HERE is a lot of talk nowadays about anger. Despite every conceivable convenience item available at our fingertips, people are no more settled or at peace. If anything, anxiety and stress levels are reportedly sky-rocketing. Which is very curious; what is there to be so stressed about? People in today's society can live with more security and confidence than ever before in history yet still find it hard to sleep at night.

One understanding could be the general lack of connectedness; individuals live as individuals – they say very few people have many true friends – and feel detached from one another, from their communities and possibly even from Klal Yisroel. This loneliness and disengagement is directly linked to a sense of unrest as evidenced in this week's Parsha with Yaakov's condemnation of Reuven. "Reuven, you are my firstborn, my might, and the first-fruits of my strength; the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Restless like water, you cannot be foremost..." (Bereishis 49:3-4). It was a result of Reuven's restlessness that lost him not one but three leadership roles: the bechorah (firstborn), kehunah (priesthood) and malchus (kingship). The

Sochatzover Rebbe explains that each of these responsibilities contain one common feature: that of connectedness, as will be explained. The Maharal describes the bechor as the link between the parent and the rest of the children. Kehunah reflects attachment on multiple levels; indeed the Kohen is the one who receives the sacrifice from the Yisroel and offers it up to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Moreover, we learn "Ki sifsei Kohen yishmeru daas, the lips of the Kohen protect wisdom" (Malachi 2), where "daas" is the Torah's description of connection and relationship. And Malchus is what unites the nation together into one kingdom, under one flag (see Rashi to I Shmuel chapter 9). *But anger and recklessness disband unity.* One possible way of seeing this is that an outward display of fury can merely be the expression of inner turmoil. Furthermore, it is possible that detachment and anger actually fuel each other, where not only does inner fragmentation produce recklessness, but recklessness causes further fragmentation. However, both can be remedied with a deeper sense of attachment, a connectedness to a greater reality, first to one's community and ultimately to the Ribono shel Olom Himself.

**Has the "convenience" minyan concept of today created a state of restlessness amongst segments of our kehillah?**

It is no coincidence that the giants of Klal Yisroel who did later assume these three mantles of leadership were renowned for their peace of mind. Aharon "never became angry in his life" (Ramban to Bamidbar 20:1), Yosef is famously referred to as "Tzaddik yesod olom" who attached Heaven and Earth and Dovid Hamelech was the humblest

and thus most pleasant personality of all (Shem MiShmuel 5673, Vayechi, s.v. Reuven).

It is therefore perhaps unfortunate that today a new phenomenon seems to have arisen where people, despite perhaps taking out membership in one particular shul, nonetheless "float" amongst various shuls from Shabbos to Shabbos and cannot really call any of them "home", nor their Rabbonim their "Rov". There was a time when a mispallel would frequent one shul – including during the week – and raise his family in that one environment under the guidance of its Rov who would in turn build a relationship with each family and walk with them during their journey through life. That connection would often be passed on to future generations. Has the "convenience" minyan concept of today created a state of restlessness amongst segments of our kehillah?

Shabbos in particular possesses special unifying energy. It also brings peace – *bo'os Shabbos, bo'os menuchoh* (Rashi to Bereishis 1:2). Perhaps we ought to aspire to greater levels of attachment – one kehillah, one Rov, one shul – at least on Shabbos!

*The author is Director of Chazon UK, a cutting-edge Chinuch training programme*

# Help your businesses grow

Zev Allen

## So, What's the Bottom Line?-Yitzchak Saftlas

**M**ARKETING expert Yitzchok Saftlas offers key business fundamentals and proven experience-based tactics for the success-driven individual in his new book.

*So, What's the Bottom Line?* covers a wide array of topics relating to the business world, from marketing initiatives to communication, customer retention to strategic planning, and everything in between. With short motivational chapters and clear and concise action plans relating to each topic, business professionals will find this new book to be easy to implement and a guarantee for success.

With over 25 years of experience in the corporate world, Yitzchok Saftlas is a marketing expert that has worked with all types of people, events and organizations. His insights and advice compounded with his down-to-earth writing tone and personal anecdotes make for an enjoyable instructional read for the fast-paced, career-oriented

individuals of today.

Perfect for salespeople, marketing men, seasoned executives, or entrepreneurs just starting out, *So, What's the Bottom Line?* offers clear direction guaranteed to garner results and lead to success in the field. Experience-based tactics and common-sense ideas point out the obvious yet often overlooked human aspect of business and marketing, and demonstrate how to use human relations to further your business goals.

The insights contained in these 76 short chapters are invaluable and highly motivating. For any businessperson looking to grow their bottom line and develop an informed, proven, successful approach, Yitzchok Saftlas' new release is a business library essential.

Yitzchok Saftlas, founder and president of Bottom Line Marketing Group, has been helping hundreds of corporate, political and non-profit clients build their brands since 1989.

