

The Butcher's Son

The *Chafetz Chaim's son, Horav Leib, zl*, recounts a frightening incident that occurred in Radin, where his father was *Rav*. It once happened that a butcher, whose son was drafted into the army, kidnapped a yeshivah student whom he placed in his son's stead. The *Chafetz Chaim*, was greatly disturbed by this dastardly act and remarked, "such a dreadful act cannot go unpunished by Hashem."

Thirty years later, when many people had long forgotten the butcher's cruelty, the butchers' son became ill with cholera. He suffered intensely and, before long, he died. The *chevrah kaddishah* refused to prepare his body for burial, due to the contagious nature of his disease. The elderly father was consequently compelled to bury his son with his own two hands.

These two incidents demonstrate the meaning of, "*I will verily hear his cry.*" Hashem listens and He punishes. We have to open our eyes and analyze the course of events that take place, at times even years later, to see the punishment incurred by those who prey on the weak and downtrodden. We find individuals who externally display well-meaning intentions while they destroy the lives of those who interfere with their agenda. They justify their actions, sometimes even receiving legitimacy and recognition by those who seek their favor. They should be aware that they will not escape the punishment they incur for the wrong they have committed. Regardless of their unfounded support, they will ultimately pay for the hurt they have caused.