

## **You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan...for if he shall cry out to Me, I shall surely hear his outcry. (22:21,22)**

Hashem promises to listen to cries of the widow and orphan. They have no one to whom to turn, other than their Father in Heaven, Who listens very closely to those that are vulnerable to abuse. A classic story occurred, involving the *Bais HaLevi*, that demonstrates how sensitive we must be to the plight of the unfortunate - especially those who have nowhere to turn. When the *Bais HaLevi* was a young boy studying in *cheder*, he witnessed the *rebbe* striking a young orphan boy who had fought with another boy, who just happened to be wealthy. The *Bais HaLevi* could not tolerate the apparent abuse to which this *rebbe* was subjecting the poor orphan. He left the *cheder*, declaring that he could not study *Torah* from such a *rebbe* who ignored the *Torah's* admonishment against causing pain to an orphan.

Sometime later, the *Bais HaLevi* became ill. The situation worsened and it looked as if he was about to leave this world. Suddenly, he woke up and started feeling better, improving until he had completely recuperated. Afterwards, the *Bais HaLevi* related that he was at death's door, literally one foot into the *Olam Ha'emes*, when he envisioned a man pushing away the *Malach Ha'maves*, Angel of Death, from him. He began searching for this man's identity, looking at photographs from years back. Finally, he came across the elusive man's picture. It was the father of the young orphan whom he had championed. Hashem rewarded him with life as a result of his concern for the plight of the orphan. Furthermore, he took a stand for the Almighty by championing His cause. He fought Hashem's fight by taking a stand against this abusive teacher.

*Horav Elyakim Schlessinger, Shlita*, derives from here that one who fights Hashem's fight, who stands up for those things that Hashem Himself takes issue with - will be blessed with life. Pinchas was not afraid. He acted zealously on behalf of the Almighty. He was rewarded with incredible longevity. May this be the lot of all those who take a stand for the truth, to uphold and sanctify Hashem's Name.