

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה

תורה תבלין

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שבת קודש פרשת וירא – ט"ו מרחשון תשע"ה

Shabbos Parshas Vayera - November 8, 2014

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד משרים בק"ק בית שמש

זיטע אשל בבאר שבע ויקרא שם בשם ה' א-ל-עולם (כא-לג)

- הוראת אמונת ה' ותורתו מתקנת 'חטא עין הדעת'

אֵלֶּיָא בַּמִּדְבָּר (תנחומא, פרשת לך לך אות י"ב), "אור הדברים האלה היה רבה ה' אל אברהם במחזה לאמר וגו' שכרך הרבה מאוד-זה שאמר הכתוב 'דשע עושה פעולת שקר, וזורע צדקה שכר אמת', 'דשע עושה פעולת שקר' זה נמרוד הרשע שהיה עושה צלמים ומטעה הבריות, שנמשלה עבודת כוכבים ומלות לשקר שנאמר 'נבער כל אדם מדעת, הוהיב כל צורף מפסל, כי שקר נסכו ולא רוח בם' (ויפיש ב'מצודת דוד', 'כל אדם העובר הפסל הוא נבער מהיות בו דעת, וכל צורף העושה צורת כוכבים יקבל בושה מן צורת הכוכבים, בראותו כי שקר המסכה שנשק ואין במי מהם רוח החינות').

'וזורע צדקה שכר אמת' זה אברהם שורע צדקה והיה מאכיל עוברים ושבים, שנאמר 'זיטע אשל בבאר שבע ויקרא שם בשם ה' א-ל-עולם, שלאחר שהיה מאכיל ומשקו היו מברכים אותו, ואמר להם: לי אתם מברכים, ברכו לבעל הבית שנותן לכל הבריות אוכל ומשקה ונותן בהם רוח, והיו אומרים לו היכן הוא, אמר להם, שליט בשמים ובארץ וממית ומחיה מוחץ ורופא צד את העובר במעי אמו ומוציאו לאוויר עולם מגדל צחמים ואלולות מוריד שאלו ויעל, כיון שהיו שומעים כך היו שואלים, כיצד נברך אותו ונחזיק לו טובה, היה אומר להם, אמרו ברוך ה' המבורך לעולם ועד, ברוך נתן לחם ומוזל לכל בשר, והיה מלמדם ברכות וצדקות, הוא שאמר הכתוב 'זאת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן, א"ר אלכסנדר, אלמלא נתכנסו כל הבריות לעשות יתוש אחד אין יכולים לעשותו ומהו 'הנפש אשר עשו', שהיה מלמדן דאית שמים ומורה להן את התורה, א"ל הקב"ה, אתה זרעת את הצדקה והזרעתיני בעולם, שכר אתה נוטל שנא' 'שכרך הרבה מאד'."

ובכך "בא אברהם לקיים העולם ולתקן את אשר עוותו אדם וחוה בעוברם על מאמד השם שאמר להם 'זמעץ הדעת טוב ודע לא תאכל ממנו', והם חטאו באכילה, ואברהם תקנו באכילה שהאכיל לכל באי עולם והחזירם למוטב, וכמו שחטאו בעין הדעת טוב ודע, כך אברהם נטע אשל בבאר שבע 'ויקרא שם בשם ה' א-ל-עולם, ולכן כתב אברהם 'והשענו תחת העץ', כי מה הוצרך לזה, וכן מה שאמר 'זהו עומד עליהם תחת העץ ויאכלו', אלא להורות שבעץ כשלו ובעץ נתקנו" (צדור המור [בראשית כ"ג י"ט, ד"ה ובמדרש הנעלם]).

והוסיף (כ"א ל"ב), 'זיטע אשל בבאר שבע - הוא עין החיים של התורה שלימד לכל העולם והכניסם תחת כנפי השכינה באכילה שתייה לחויה, ובסיבת זה (האכילה שתייה ולחיה) 'ויקרא שם בשם ה' א-ל-עולם'". וכן כתב (י"ח ד'), 'והשענו תחת העץ - היינו התורה שנקראת עין החיים, ואברהם היה מלמדם דרכי התורה וכו'". ולפי זה ביאר ה'שפתי כהן' (לך לך, גימטריאות, ד"ה אלקן מורה) את הכתוב 'ויעבור אברהם בארץ עד מקום שכם עד אלקן מורה' (שם י"ב ו'), "אלקן מורה - זה אברהם שגמל כל האילן, שעל ידי האילן שאמר 'והשענו תחת העץ' היה מורה אמונת ה' יתברך ותורתו לבריות'."

Hashem protects the righteous, and, in the case of Lot, he was saved in the merit of Avraham. As the townspeople of Sodom gathered around Lot's house and wished to do him and his guests harm, Hashem struck them with "סנורים"

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY למעשה

Keeping the Jewish Camp Holy (26) - **"והיה מחניק קדוש"** **Thinking About Hashem in a Bathroom.** The *Poskim* grapple with the question, if one can think about Hashem in a bathroom. To think about *posukim* or *Medrashim* that describe Hashem, would seem to be prohibited. The question is just thinking about Hashem Himself. Is it permitted or not? One logic to permit it is because thinking about Hashem is thinking about an undeniable reality of life, something that is truly everywhere (hence the song!), and if Hashem is indeed everywhere, how can a person be prohibited from contemplating this true fact?

Concurring Opinion. R' Shlomo Kluger ZP"L (1) writes that it is permitted. He brings a complicated proof from a *Gemara* (2), and offers a unique logic. The reason that one is forbidden to think *Torah* thoughts in such a place, is because those thoughts will somehow be degraded by the uncleanness of the location. However, certain thoughts are so lofty and elevated that nothing can blemish or degrade them in any way. **Sefer Minchas Asher** (3) brings a source for this type of logic from **R' Moshe Kordevero ZP"L** (4). He cites a *halacha* (5) that even though one may not give a halachic ruling in a bathroom, if one sees another mistakenly doing a sin there, he may quote the correct ruling to stop the person from sinning (if he will listen). Simply, it is because we push aside this prohibition to stop another from doing something worse. However, RM"K there explains it differently. When one says *Torah* in such a place, the "כח הטומאה"

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

We are *misparallel* in *Selichos* as follows: המוציא הוא ע"ג כשנעקד ע"ה המוציא הוא עיננו. מי שענה ליצחק בנו כשנעקד ע"ה המוציא הוא עיננו. We are *misparallel* in *Selichos* as follows: המוציא הוא עיננו. We ask that the prayers of Avraham and Yitzchok Avinu on *Har Hamoriyah*, should answer our prayers as well. Where do we find that Avraham and Yitzchok davened on the mountain? Did they pray to be released from the *nisayon* of the *Akeida*? On the contrary, the moment Hashem commanded Avraham, "Take your son," the *Torah* tells us that he ran to fulfill the will of Hashem. Additionally, it is called "עקידת יצחק" because it was Yitzchok who asked his father to tie him down so that he should not move or run away in fear. They never prayed to have the command annulled! I had a *Where is the lamb to sacrifice?* Indeed, THIS was his *tefillah*: "Please, Hashem, if You send a lamb instead of me, I will serve You with my life. If there is no lamb, I will serve You by giving up my life." Avraham Avinu then spoke as well, and said, "He, too, prayed to Hashem and asked: "Please, Hashem, show my son the lamb so he can go on living, but if there is no lamb to sacrifice, I am ready and willing to sacrifice my only son - to fulfill Your command." In the end, "Avraham lifted his eyes and behold! There was a ram." Hashem did answer their *tefillos* and sent the ram they had prayed for. Thus, just as He answered them at that momentous occasion, we pray that He should answer us as well.

A Wise Man would say:

"Never look down on someone unless you are in the process of helping them up!"

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נתגבר ונתקדש לעילוי נשמת
ר' אברהם משה ב"ר אליעזר
שלאסער ו"ל * תנצב"ה

- literally blindness, and they could not see, let alone attack, Lot and the angels. Symbolically, the wicked of Sodom refused to be kind, not seeing the G-dliness in others. Hashem punished them by taking away their ability to see anything.

הלכה מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

(unclean powers) become empowered from the words of *Torah*. If they are said to break a sin, the impurities are weakened. **Dissenting Opinion.** The *Levushei Mordechai* (6) disagrees and says that it is prohibited. He brings proof from the Talmudic story (7) about *Dovid HaMelech* who once found himself in a bathroom and thought, "Woe is to me that I am here, now, empty of any *mitzvos*." Until he remembered that the *mitzvah* of *Bris Milah* is with him constantly. Why didn't he just think about Hashem and fulfill the *mitzvos* of *Emunah*, *Dveikus*, etc.? From here is proof that, in fact, Dovid was not allowed to think such thoughts in a bathhouse! However, many disagree with this proof because that *Gemara* is a continuation of a previous *Gemara* that states: "*Beloved are Yisroel that Hashem surrounded them with (physical reminders of) mitzvos - Tefillin on the head and arm, Tzitzis on the 4 corners of their garments, and Mezuzah on the doorways.*" About those physical reminders, the *Gemara* then continues that *Dovid HaMelech* was once in a bathhouse without any of them, until he remembered *Bris Milah* which is also a physical reminder. *Mitzvos* of the heart and mind, like thinking about Hashem, however, are not the topic of this *Gemara*.

Other Opinions. *Sefer Nachal Eshkol* (8), in the name of one of his generation's sages, rules leniently for the same reason as mentioned above. *Sefer Lehoros Noson* (9), though, is strict based on numerous sources and uses the logic that it is almost certain that one will think of *posukim* and sayings of *Chazal* as well.

(1) בפירושו על אור"ח פה"ב (2) יומא א' (3) דברים מג"ב (4) בפרד"ש ממונים ט"א (5) אור"ח פה"ב (6) מ"ת י"ד קע"ז (7) מנחות מג. (8) הל' קריאת שמע יב"ב (9) לחומות גנו א"א

"מי שענה לאברהם אבינו בהר המוריה הוא יעננו. מי שענה ליצחק בנו כשנעקד ע"ה המוציא הוא עיננו. We are *misparallel* in *Selichos* as follows: המוציא הוא עיננו. We ask that the prayers of Avraham and Yitzchok Avinu on *Har Hamoriyah*, should answer our prayers as well. Where do we find that Avraham and Yitzchok davened on the mountain? Did they pray to be released from the *nisayon* of the *Akeida*? On the contrary, the moment Hashem commanded Avraham, "Take your son," the *Torah* tells us that he ran to fulfill the will of Hashem. Additionally, it is called "עקידת יצחק" because it was Yitzchok who asked his father to tie him down so that he should not move or run away in fear. They never prayed to have the command annulled!

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Mazel Tov to Chaim Zvi Vorchheimer & Gitty Goldman upon their recent Engagement. Mazel Tov to Moshe Dovid Weissmandel on his Bar Mitzvah. May Klal Yisroel see much nachas from them

Merockdim

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מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

וישמע אלהים את קול הנער ... ויאמר לה מה לך הגר אל תיראי כי שמע אלקים אל קול הנער כאשר הוא שם וגו' (כא-יז)
The **Ramban** writes that Sarah was at fault for sending away Hagar in the previous *parsha*: “*Our matriarch sinned in this affliction, as did Avraham in permitting it. Hashem heard (Hagar’s) affliction and gave her a son who would be a wild man* (פרא אדם), *afflicting the offspring of Avraham and Sarah with all manner of afflictions.*” If we ever wonder why Jews have so much trouble from the Arabs, it may be traced back - as the Ramban points out - to this lack of compassion by Sarah as the cause of the persecution manifested by the descendants of Yishmael on the Jewish people. (**Rabbi Y. Frand Shlit’a**)

A well-respected man, a leader and overseer of a large and thriving Jewish community, once came to visit the holy **Chofetz Chaim, R’ Yisroel Meir Hakohen Kagan ZT”L**. Expecting to be welcomed with honor and respect befitting an important man such as himself, he was shocked when the *tzaddik* took one look at him, turned his head away and had him unceremoniously escorted from his presence. Such a thing was rare, if not unheard of, especially for a community leader who was widely recognized throughout Poland and its environs. Even more than being insulted, though, the man was frightened at the reaction of the *Gadol Hador* to his presence. What had he done to bring on such a reaction? To incur the wrath and ire of the great man? He racked his memory for any sort of incident but he came up empty. Trembling, he decided that he could not leave Radin without finding out the source of the *tzaddik’s* displeasure with him.

With a faltering step, he tepidly knocked on the Chofetz Chaim’s door and begged to be given one more chance to talk with the *tzaddik*. He finally managed to persuade his way inside and once again came face to face with the *tzaddik*. “*Rebbi!*” he cried, “What have I done? What was my sin, that I was pushed away and removed from your home?”

The Chofetz Chaim’s gaze turned steely. Then, he spoke in an icy tone: “You should just know - that it is all your fault, all your responsibility! The fact that more than three million of our Jewish brethren are suffocating under the harsh yoke of the Communists! All the affliction, all the oppression, all the pain and suffering - its all your fault!”

All your fault! All your fault! The Chofetz Chaim’s words rang out with the force of an locomotive train! The fate of millions of suffering Jews was on his shoulders! How can this be? What had he done?

“But *Rebbi*,” he began, a stifled sob of protest erupted from his lips, but the Chofetz Chaim cut him off. “Now? Now you cry? Of course, now you lead a large *kehillah*, you oversee the workings of your community and surely you wouldn’t want any harm to come to them. But what about then? What about all those years ago?”

The man was unable to open his mouth. He truly had no idea what the *tzaddik* was referring to.
“Surely you remember,” continued the Chofetz Chaim, “all those years ago, when you worked as the administrator of the local *Talmud Torah*! There was a young boy in your *yeshivah*, a small child who had lost his father and lived with his struggling mother. Under his unfortunate circumstances, it was no wonder that the boy tended to act out and make trouble. He was wild, sharp-tongued and difficult to control. In the end, you lost patience with him and had him thrown out!”

The man thought long and hard. Then he asked cautiously, “What was the boy’s name?”
“Laibel,” said the *tzaddik*. “His name was Laibel. Since the *yeshivah* wouldn’t keep him, his mother had no choice but to put him in a non-Jewish school. But the boy was smart, brilliant perhaps; he may have even become a *Rosh Yeshivah* given the proper guidance. Instead, his sharp mind absorbed secular knowledge and he grew to become a leader among the gentiles. This young Jewish boy, Laibel - Leon Trotzky - became the supreme commander of the Red Army during the Bolshevik Revolution, and one of the founders of Communism, an ideology he spawned after being spurned from your *Talmud Torah*. How many countless *neshamos* have suffered due to this insidious ideology?”

“Now I ask you,” concluded the Chofetz Chaim. “who is to blame? At whose feet is the enormous weight of history’s unforgiving irony placed - if not yours? Leave me! I cannot bear to even look at your face!”

משל למח הדבר דומה

ואת האנשים אשר פתח הבית הכזו בסנורים מקמן ועד גדול וילאו למצא הפתח וגו' (יז-יא)
משל In the *hakdama* to his *sefer*, “*Tzel Kesef*,” **Chacham Avraham Gatinyo ZT”L** writes about a occurrence that happened to him while he was traveling with a caravan of Jews on his way home to Salonika, Greece. As fate would have it, a group of prisoners escaped from a nearby prison and armed with knives, sticks and ferocious zeal, they attacked the helpless caravan. Chacham Avraham writes that a massacre was underway, and innocent people were stabbed and beaten, bleeding profusely from many wounds. Meanwhile, the *chacham* himself was standing in the

midst of the melee, casualties piling up all about him, but incredibly, he was not touched. In fact, it appeared as if he wasn’t even noticed by the raiders! As people were falling on both sides of him, he just stood there erect, invisible to both the attacked and the attackers. Immediately, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and prayed for divine intervention.

Suddenly, the attackers sensed a wagon coming and they quickly fled. In the wagon, was a doctor who was adept at treating wounded patients. He got right down to work and managed to save many of the victims.

ואתה פת לחם ומעדן לככם אחד תעבור
כי על בן עברתם על עבדכם וכו' (יז-ה)

With the sun blazing down; in the midst of a conversation with the Almighty Himself; three days removed from a painful procedure; *Avraham Avinu*, the paragon of kindness in the world, runs outside to invite three wayward travelers into his tent. Once situated, he hovers over them, providing them with water to wash themselves, preparing food for them to feast upon. Truly, Avraham exemplifies the highest level of *chessed* there is, living up to his billing as the pillar of good deeds in the world. Why, then, would he not invite his guests to stay over and sleep the night? Why does he tell them: “אמר תעבורו” - “*afterwards, move on,*” seemingly not even giving them the option to stay if they wanted?

The **Vizhnitzer Rebbe, R’ Chaim Meir Hager ZT”L**, would often repeat in the name of his father, **R’ Yisroel Hager ZT”L (Ahavas Yisroel)**, the following quote in *Yiddish*: “זיין גוט צו יעדען, אבער נישט זיין גוט מיט יעדען” - “*You have to be good to others, but not good with others.*” In other words, a Jew must always act kindly to other Jews, assisting them wherever necessary, being gracious and forthcoming in all dealings, and promoting the inherent values of *chessed* and *maasim tovim* (good deeds) to the greatest extent. However, this does not mean that one must integrate and associate with every person. One may be kind to a *rasha* but he still must keep his distance from him. As the *posuk* says: “*If your enemy is hungry, feed him bread.*” (משלי כה-כג)

In much the same manner, *Avraham Avinu* took the three Arab merchants to be idol-worshippers who were just passing through. Thus, he went above and beyond - just as he always did - to invite them in, clean them up, serve them and feed them because he wished to do *chessed* and assist every single person who needed it. But at the same time, he had no intention of allowing these idolatrous pagans to make themselves comfortable in his home, possibly effecting a negative influence on his family and friends.

**EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...**

*** נסיון ***

In this weeks *parsha*, the power and inner strength to overcome personal desires in order to do the will of *Hashem*, is born and genetically passed down to all Jews by *Avraham Avinu*. This ability is even more profound due to the fact that *Hashem* tested Avraham in an attribute that completely went against his nature. In fact, we see this with many of the tests that *Hashem* used for Avraham; he was to do the exact opposite of all that he stood for, believed in, preached about, and lived by. To sacrifice a child that he loved and waited 100 years for was hard enough, but the fact that *Hashem* told him that from Yitzchok a nation will be born, was a complete contradiction! Avraham never flinched. How *Hashem* would reconcile this obvious paradox he did not know - He has the solution! - but the fact that he would do exactly what *Hashem* told him was not a question!

R’ Gamliel Rabinowitz Shlit’a notes that often *Hashem* tests those whom he loves by expecting them to do something that goes completely against their nature. Avraham had to suppress his *middah* of *Chessed* and do something that appeared antithetical to him. Yitzchok, the paragon of *Gevura*, was given the formidable task of loving a child like Esav! Yaakov was tested in the area of *Emes* when he was forced to say that he was Esav in order to receive the *berachos*! Moshe had to write about himself that he was humble! So, if you find yourself constantly being tested in a certain area that makes it necessary for you to do the exact opposite of everything you believe in, don’t get frustrated or upset. Realize that this is *Hashem’s* way of helping you transcend and uplift yourself - to become the greatest human being that you can be!

* TORAH GEMS *

ויגדל הילד ויגמל ויעש אברדם משתה
גדול ביום הגמל את יצחק וגו' (כא-ה)

The *Medrash* says an amazing thing: “*And the child grew and he was weaned; a crib was rocked for the first time in the home of Avraham Avinu.*” Apparently, cribs that were used for infants in ancient times did not rock - they were stationary containers where babies slept in peace. *Avraham Avinu* understood that a baby sometimes needs movement to settle him down and he was the first person to institute a rocking crib, to lull his baby son Yitzchok to sleep.

The **Gaon, R’ Meir ben Yitzchok of Copenhagen ZT”L (קרן אור פני משה)** learns a deeper understanding of this *Medrash*. When a Jew learns *Torah* or davens, he tends to “*shuckle*” - to sway back and forth in deep contemplation. This is quite unlike the manner in which the other nations of the world pray. The reason is because this tendency was initiated back in the times of *Avraham Avinu*, who was the first person to rock his son Yitzchok in his crib. On the one hand, the gentle soothing motion calms an infant and puts him to sleep. On the flip side, the rocking movements encourage the attribute of “אריזות” (alacrity), ingraining a willingness to take action, to do things, to be agile and brisk, into the subconsciousness of a baby. In fact, the **Mesilas Yescharim** teaches that when one performs a *mitzvah*, he should do it with constant movement, for this lends to the *middah* of *zerizus*. If one acts with lethargy, slow and deliberate in his every move and action, this will cause him to be lazy and unenthusiastic in the service of *Hashem*.

For this reason, writes R’ Meir, the Jewish people serve *Hashem* differently than the gentiles of the world. They stand erect, or genuflect with precise movement, whereas *Yidden* need to *shuckle*, or sway, or pace back and forth, when they are davening or learning *Torah*. This was instilled into our collective psyche thousands of years ago by *Avraham Avinu*, who rocked his baby to sleep, thereby conditioning his descendants to be active and full of energy.

דרגת יתירה

**FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO**

ויהי אחד הדברים האלה והאלהים נסה את אברדם (כב-א)