

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

הדלקת נרות לשבת - 6:03
זמן קריאת שמע/המ"א - 9:17
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התבלין

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לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד מישרים בק"ק בית שמש

מאצרותיו של המגיד

ויאמר ה' אל אברהם לך לך (כ-א) - בענין תורת אברהם אל האמת

איתא במדרש (ל"ט א), "משל לאחד שהיה עובד ממקום למקום, וראה בידה א' דולקת, אמר תאמר שבידה זו בלי מנהג, הצין עליו בעל הבירה, ואמר לו, אני הוא בעל הבירה (ומנהגו), כך, לפי שהיה אבינו אברהם אומר, תאמר שהעולם בלא מנהג, הצין עליו הקב"ה, ואמר לו, אני הוא בעל העולם (ומנהגו)". והקשה בספר **מעשי ה' (לדבי אליעזר אשכנזי)**, חלק מעשי אבות, א', "מה ענין אומרו 'עובד ממקום למקום' וכו', הלא היה מספיק שאמר, משל למדח"ל למי שראה בידה דולקת, או שאמר, משל למדח"ל למי שהיה חולק בדך וראה בידה דולקת".

ויישב, "שאברהם ראה כל האמונות הבטלות שהתפשטו בזמנו, שברור המבול היתה אמונות שהעולם קדמון וכו', אמנם אח"כ ברור הפלגה נחלקו לכמה אמונות וכו', שהיה זה עובד לשר א', וזה לשר א' מהשבעים שרים, ומשם נמשכו לעשות פסלים ומסכות לשרים ההם, עד שההמוניים חשבו אותם המסכות ופסלי עץ ואבן, שיש בהם ענין אלהות להיטיב ולהרע, והפיקחים שבהם היו יודעים, שאותם המסכות אינם אלא דמיון לידאתם, והיו עוברים לצבא השמים, קצתם לשרים, וקצתם לשמש, וקצתם לירד, וקצתם לכוכבים, והם היו הנחשבים למעולים בשבח יתר על המאמינים בחומרים השפלים.

והשיג אברהם בחקירתו, והוכיז וסילק אותם האמונות שהיו מאמינים בדורו לנבראים מן היסודות השפלים או ליסודות עצמם, והגיע בחקירה עד אמונת והוה שאמר רבי יצחק במשל הוה הנמרץ, שהיה חולק ממקום למקום ושראה בידה דולקת, שהכוונה לומר, שמקודם ראה והבין, שאין אלהות בחומרים השפלים, עד שהגיע לראות ולהבין גם לגבי העליונים, וראה והבין שהמאורות הושמו כדי להאיר על הארץ, (ולפ"ז כוונת 'דולקת' היא 'מאורת'), ואז הבין שיש מנהג ליעולם שהקין אותם לצורך הבריות, ואז הבין עליו הקב"ה לרבר עמו". ומבואר, שכיוונת 'ממקום למקום' היא 'מאמונה לאמונה'.

ומגיד וכותב, "ונגד זה הענין של אברהם אבינו, גם שלמה המלך אמר משל נאה ונמרץ, והוא אומרו בספרו 'שיר השירים' (ג, א-ד), 'על משכבי בלילות בקשתי את שאהבה נפשי, בקשתי ולא מצאתי. אקומה נא ואסובבה בעד בשווקים וברחובות, אבקשה את שאהבה נפשי, בקשתי ולא מצאתי. מצאוני השומרים הסובבים בעיר, את שאהבה נפשי ראיתם כמעט שעברתי מרם, עד שמצאתי את שאהבה נפשי, אחוזתי ולא ארפנו וגו', ואמר כן על אברהם אבינו, שתחלה הוכיז האמונות שהיו מאמינים בנבראים השפלים, והוה אומרו 'אסובבה בעד בשווקים וברחובות, בקשתי ולא מצאתי', ואמר עוד, שאח"כ מצאוני השומרים הסובבים בעיר, שהם צבא השמים (השומרים על המצב והוא על העולם, ו) הסובבים בעולם, והם המאורות, וכמעט שעבר מרם רצה לומר, שתיכף שעבר מרם ורכיזם ויותם שומרים סובבים, הבין שיש מי שהכינם ובראם לכך, ועל זה אמר 'אחוזתי ולא ארפנו'".

As soon as he heard that, Chacham Ezra said, "Forgive me. If this is what happened, then I take back everything I said!"

צמשל: R' Boruch Sorotzkin ZT"l asks, why does Hashem inform Avraham Avinu that He will ultimately judge the nation of Egypt that was chosen to oppress his descendants?

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Forgotten and Little Known Halachos and Customs (52) Using Another's Mitzvah Item (cont.). Although from the *gemara* ⁽¹⁾ it seems that one is not permitted to borrow another person's *seforim* without permission even for a short time, in today's day and age, due to the greater availablity and better quality of printed material, plus the ability to bind and repair tears more easily, we may assume that people would not mind if others use their *siddur* or *sefer*. However, even when using another's *seforim*, one must be extremely careful not to damage them in any way. Especially in *Yeshivos* and *Batei Medrashim*, where *seforim* are being used and learned from continuously, one must be cautious, and many relevant *halachos* apply. Let us review some of these *halachos* which not only apply to a borrowed *sefer*, but to all holy books and *Tashmishei Kedusha*.

Kavod Haseforim: Honoring Holy Books. It is prohibited to lean or rest one's elbows on top of *seforim* ⁽²⁾, borrowed or otherwise. Many *poskim* permit this if it allows one to engage in his studies more efficiently ⁽³⁾. Similarly, one is not permitted to lay his head down on top of a *sefer* to sleep. It is more likely that one would hesitate to lend his *seforim* in such a case. If a person sees that someone else has fallen asleep with his head on a *sefer*, he should very carefully attempt to slide the *sefer* out from under the sleeping person, taking great care not to wake him ⁽⁴⁾. If it

Why does Egypt deserve punishment if they executed a Divine command? The answer is that Egypt owed a debt of gratitude to Yosef, who saved them from the famine, and to Yaakov, upon whose arrival in Egypt the famine ended. And for a lack of appreciation, harsh punishment is indeed warranted.

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

will be impossible to do so without waking him up, some *poskim* rule that an observer may just leave it alone. However, others disagree with this lenient view and hold that even if he will likely wake up the other person, one should nevertheless slide the *sefer* out from under him, out of respect for the holy text ⁽⁵⁾.

Handling Seforim with Respect. When a person is passing a *sefer* to another individual, or putting it down, piling it with other *seforim*, or stacking them away, he should do so with utmost care. One should never throw a *sefer* even a short distance ⁽⁶⁾. However, if a number of *seforim* are in a box or container, one is permitted to throw the container ⁽⁷⁾. For this reason, one is permitted to send a boxed or wrapped *sefer* in the mail, even if it will get thrown about during its journey.

When passing a *sefer*, one should do so with his right hand as a sign of respect, and the person receiving it should likewise accept it with his right hand ⁽⁸⁾. A left-handed individual should pass and receive *seforim* with his left hand. It is forbidden to hold a *sefer* between one's knees ⁽⁹⁾; if a person enters a coat-room in order to hang up his coat using both his hands, he may not place the *sefer* between his knees, even for a moment, to free up his hands. This is a lack of respect for the *sefer*. Also, a student should not use an open *sefer* to reserve a spot in a classroom or a seat in a *Beis Medrash*, unless he will actually learn from that *sefer* in that spot ⁽¹⁰⁾.

הוא היה צמר ...

(1) בבא מציעא כט: (2) פלא יועץ (3) ספר גנוי קודש דף נ' (4) שם נא (5) שם (6) יו"ד רפבה (7) שו"ת אמרי יוסף בקיעא (8) ספר החסידים קט [משנה בורה רוי"ח] (9) אלחיו רבה מה (10) שו"ת או נדברו הלטה

Chacham Rabbeinu Chayim ben Attar ZT"l (Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh) would say:

“*Chazal teach (י: ברכות): ‘Whoever calls Avraham, ‘Avram,’ transgresses a positive precept, since it says, ‘Your name shall be Avraham,’ ... and transgresses a negative command, since it says, ‘You shall no longer be called Avram.’* When Avram’s status was elevated and he was given the name Avraham, he severed his relationship with Yishmael who was no longer considered Avraham’s son. Hashem told Avraham to heed the directive of Sarah to drive Hagar and Yishmael from their home, *‘for through Yitzchok (only) will children be considered as yours.’* This is not merely a promise; it is tantamount to a positive commandment. Thus, he who persists in referring to Avraham as ‘Avram’ implies that he still retains his former status as Yishmael’s father, and thereby transgresses the precept that Avraham is the father of Yitzchok only.”

R' Yeshaya Halevi Hurvitz ZT"l (Shla'h Hakadosh) would say:

“יהי **ריב** בין רעי מקנה אברם ובין רעי מקנה לוט אל נא תהי **מריבה** ביני ובינך”.

The word 'ריב' in male form indicates a small fight. The argument between the shepherds was limited and did not sprout. Avram then tells Lot that it should not develop any further, into a larger full-blown disagreement - 'מריבה' - in female form, for a female gives birth and increases growth.”

A Wise Man would say:

“If you don’t stick to your values when they’re being tested, they’re not values; they’re just hobbies.”

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נפטר ט' חשוון - תשנ"א
נשמתה צרורה בעיר החיים

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן וגו' (יב-ה)

Not long ago, a teacher who works with wayward and immigrant youths, by the name of Elishai, found himself on a bus in Jerusalem. He was sitting next to an older man who wore clothing that clearly identified him as a religious Jew, a rabbi in fact, with a long coat and black hat. The rabbi was friendly and engaged Elishai in *Torah* learning during the ride. As the bus approached their destination, the older man turned to Elishai and asked him about his work. Elishai told him about his young students, and noted how difficult they were; many of them feel far from *Torah* and religion.

The man was silent. After a few moments, he began to tell Elishai a story. “Next month, I’m going to take early retirement from the *Beit Din* where I have worked as a *dayan* (judge) for the past twenty-five years. But you should know that I didn’t always look like this. These clothes, this beard ... it’s not something I learned at home. My parents were older Holocaust survivors, and they didn’t have the emotional stability to give me the attention I needed. I spent much of my youth in the streets, and before my *bar mitzvah*, I was already known in the streets as a malfeasant.” By age 15, the older man explained, his antics had earned him the inglorious title of “the criminal” of his local community.

He and his friends often spent *Shabbat* playing soccer near a local Sephardic synagogue, and the ball would often fly into the synagogue courtyard. One week, he recalled, “I kicked the ball very hard. It flew out of the field and toward the synagogue just as the rabbi came out. The ball hit his black hat and knocked it to the ground. My friends and I fell down laughing and we didn’t even care when the rabbi walked over to us. ‘*Shabbat Shalom*,’ I said to the bearded man, mockingly. ‘Would his honor like to make *Kiddush*, or join our game?’ Incredibly, he was not upset. He looked at me and asked, ‘Where are your parents?’ and I answered, still mocking, ‘My parents are dead.’ The rabbi said, ‘Well, why don’t you come with me then?’ and since it amused me, I decided to play along and go with him. We reached his house. He went in and I followed. He made *Kiddush* and gave me some wine to drink. Then he asked, ‘Are you hungry?’

“‘Starving,’ I replied, and I really was. The rabbi gestured to his wife, and they set the table and gave me food. I ate like someone who hadn’t eaten in a week. The rabbi ate just a little, and mostly looked at me and talked. I later realized that I had eaten his share, too. When I finished eating, he asked, ‘Are you tired?’ I answered that I was exhausted and he offered me a bed. I went to sleep, and slept there the entire day. When I woke up it was Saturday night, *Shabbat* was over. The rabbi asked me, ‘What would you like to do?’ I told him I wanted to go to the cinema and see a movie.

“‘How much does it cost?’ he asked and he gave me the money and sent me on my way. Before I left though, he told me, ‘Please come again tomorrow.’ And I did!

“I came again and again. I ate, and slept, and got money to do what I wanted. Day after day. Over time I discovered that there were 12 kids like me, from off the street, who came to this rabbi’s house. I couldn’t be ungrateful - I really loved him.

“With time, he slowly started to teach me about *mitzvot* and *Torah*. He bought me *Tefillin*. He would sit patiently and teach me. Thanks to him, I eventually went to a *yeshivah*, and became a rabbi. I excelled in my studies and ultimately became a judge on a *Beit Din*. He married me off, came to my children’s weddings, and was *sandek* at my grandsons’ *brit milahs*.”

The old man looked at Elishai and said, “Do not despair of your students. You see me as I am today, a judge in a *Beit Din*, but once I was just like them. Just love them. Love them like they were your own children and they will respond.”

As the two began to descend from the bus, Elishai asked the man, “What was the rabbi’s name?” The man responded, “What do you mean, was? He’s very old, 92, but thank G-d, he is still alive. His name is Rav Ovadia Yosef!”

This week we mourn the passing of the great *Gaon* and *Tzaddik*, **Chacham Ovadia Yosef ZT”L**. His brilliance in learning, his phenomenal memory and his many scholarly works were equaled only by his great kindness and righteousness. May his merits serve as an everlasting protection on behalf of all of the Jewish people at this difficult time.

משל למת הדבר דומה

וגם את הגוי אשר יעבדו דן אנכי ואחרי כן יצאו ברכוש גדול וגו' (כו-יד)

משל: There was once an argument that broke out between two young men. **Chacham Ezra Attia ZT”L** heard the heated exchange and followed the example of *Aharon Hakohen* by getting involved in order to make peace between the two friends. It was quite difficult. One angry young man said to the rabbi, “But rabbi, he insulted me very badly!”

The *chacham* softly replied, “Specifically for this reason, because it is so hard to forgive, that is why it is so important. I know of a rabbi whose community treated him with disrespect and he asked *Hashem* to give him the respect he felt he

deserved. His prayer was answered, and his community began showing him respect, which made him proud. Not too long after, he suddenly died. You must understand, insults are good for us; who knows how much they diminish from the effects of our sins! *Chazal* say that those who are insulted and do not insult back, who hear humiliation and do not respond - regarding them the *posuk* says, ‘*And those who love Him - should be like the sun when it comes out in all its might.*’”

The young man continued to insist. “But the rabbi should know that I did him a big favor and then he insulted me.”

וזה כי ידאו אתך המצרים ואמרו אשתו זאת ודגנו אתי ואתך ידעו. אמרי נא אחתי את וכו' (יב-יבג)

Avraham said of Sarah his wife, “*she is my sister.*” It is very surprising that Avraham, and later Yitzchok, asked their wives to be deceptive by calling themselves sisters, when they were not. However, *Shlomo HaMelech*, the wisest of all men, said in *Mishlei* (ד-י): “*Say to wisdom you are my sister.*” Wisdom here refers to the wisdom of the *Torah* in its many forms. Prophecy is a form of wisdom and prophets are known as “wise men.” Thus, when Avraham asked Sarah to call herself his “sister,” he was thinking of her status as a prophetess, as *Chazal* tell us that Sarah surpassed Avraham in prophetic ability. In this manner, Avraham was able to save himself through employing a term with a dual understanding, as mentioned in *halacha* (ג-קנא-ג).

It is told, that in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Russian Czar ordered Jewish schools in Russia to incorporate secular studies into their curriculum, an emergency conference of rabbinic leaders was convened in St. Petersburg to discuss ways to avert the evil decree. **R’ Yisroel Meir Kagan ZT”L** was not yet world-famous as the author of *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* and had not been invited to attend the conference. However, he came anyway, to the surprise of some of the attendees, including the renowned *Gaon*, **R’ Meir Simcha Hakohen of Dvinsk ZT”L**. When R’ Meir Simcha asked what had brought him to St. Petersburg and to the meeting, the Chofetz Chaim responded he was in town because his sister was undergoing surgery.

R’ Meir Simcha took his words literally and began inquiring about the sister’s illness, the name of the surgeon, and if he could be of any assistance in the matter. R’ Yisroel Meir shook his head and responded, “I do not mean an actual sister. I mean the holy *Torah*, which is called a sister. I was terribly upset to hear that the government is planning to perform ‘surgery’ on the *Torah* so I came to be nearby and see what I could do on her behalf!”

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

There are two instances in the *Torah* where we find the words "לך לך" used, here and by the *Akeidah*. Two very difficult and very different *nisyonos* (tests, tribulations) were given to Avraham with these words. The **Nesivos Sholom** explains that "לך לך" in other words, go out of your comfort zone. Often in life, we are tested with seemingly small and inconsequential notions that cause us to change in some way. Whether it means replacing the way we view another person and/or judging him or her favorably, or exchanging how we normally handle a situation and becoming more patient, calm and understanding. It is in these “small” trials that we choose to grow and change, or remain in the same place or mind-set we were in before.

The second kind of test is "לך לך אל ארץ המוריה" (כב-ב) - which refers to the extremely difficult test of *Akeidas Yitzchok*, when *Avraham Avinu* is told to sacrifice his beloved son. This is the kind of *nisayon* that comes once in a lifetime and is unusually overpowering. To overcome such a trial, one needs much *siyata dishmaya* and strength of character to hold firm and get through the pain and hardship he finds himself in. These two “*Lech Lechas*” contain within them the two types of trials that all people go through in life. But the most important thing we must remember to get us through the difficult times, is that all *nisyonos* are "להנאתך ולטובתך" as Rashi tells us, “*For your ultimate pleasure and good.*” All tests in life are hard but they are sent by *Hashem* with love - for us to grow. With this in mind, may we all be strengthened to pass all the tests in our lives.

TORAH GEMS

ותאמר שרי אל אברהם הנה נא נעצרי ה' מלדת בן נא אל שפתי אולי אכנה ממנה וכו' (כו-ב)

In a most emotional episode, childless and at an old age, *Sarah Imeinu* selflessly suggests that her husband take her maidservant Hagar as a wife. She tells *Avraham Avinu*: “*Hashem has prevented me from bearing a child.*” However, it is her fervent hope that through this selfless act of allowing her husband to bear progeny from a different wife, she herself will be rewarded with a child in the near future.

How difficult this situation must have been for Sarah! Can we possibly put ourselves in her place and feel her deep pain? Can we understand the depth of emotion that an elderly woman, who lived her entire life until the age of seventy-five without a child, was feeling? How heartbreaking!

The **Chid’a, Rabbeinu Chayim Yosef Dovid Azulai ZT”L** sheds light on our Matriarch Sarah’s outlook and how she forged on with great faith even in her distressing situation. When Sarah tells Avraham that *Hashem* has prevented her from bearing a child, she explicitly uses the Name of *Hashem* which denotes the *Middas HaRachamim* - Attribute of Mercy. By consciously using this name, she is sending a clear and powerful message of: "כל מה דעביד רחמנא - *Everything that the Merciful One does is for the good.*” Sarah clearly recognized that *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* was preventing her from bearing children - and yet, she knew that even this was for the good, her good! Why? Because although *Hashem* had prevented her from bearing children right now, she understood that this was only a temporary situation which can change. “I have full faith,” Sarah said, “that in the future, when the time is right, I will give birth.”

Unfortunately, there are many amongst the Jewish people who suffer from similar situations on a regular basis. What an inspiring lesson *Sarah Imeinu* implores each and every one of us to carry within ourselves. In the most hopeless and desperate situations, in the darkest moments, never forget: Everything *Hashem* does, He does for our own good.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHILOMO

ויאמר ה' אל אברהם לך לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך ... (יב-א)