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by then heard of the use to which the previous letter had been put and adamantly refused to write another. The man begged and cried but to no avail.

"Let me explain to you why I will not issue you another letter," said the Rov, after the man begged for an explanation. We know that a Jewish drunkard is referred to as being "שיקער ווי לוט" - "Drunk as Lot". Now if we look in the *Torah*, we see that the first person mentioned that actually became drunk was not Lot, but rather Noach. Why then, do we always link drunkenness to Lot? The answer is that Noach had only sons - no daughters that needed to be married off, so he could afford to become drunk. Lot, however, had two daughters, and he could not get away with drinking away all of his money for he would need that money to arrange marriages for his daughters. Still, he became a drunk and therefore, he has become the symbol of the foolish drunkard!"

TORAH GEMS

וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא והוא ישב פתח האהל כחם היום וגו' (יח-א)

The *medrash* says that *Hashem* appeared to Avrohom "באלוני ממרא" - in the land belonging to Mamre, and that this was actually a reward to Mamre for advising Avrohom to circumcise himself. On this, many of the commentaries ask the obvious question: Why did Avrohom even ask Mamre's opinion? After all, *Hashem* had commanded him to do the circumcision and Mamre's opinion would not have made a difference!

R' Yoel Teitlebaum, ZT"L, the Satmar Rebbe, notes that when *Hashem* was prepared to create man, He asked the angels' opinion. Rashi in *Parshas Bereishis* explains that this teaches humility, for if *Hashem* had seen fit to ask the angels' opinion, then certainly a great man should ask the opinion of lesser men. According to the *medrash*, though, the angels advised *Hashem* not to create man. This teaches yet another lesson, that although a great person should seek the advice of lesser people, he should nevertheless do what he knows is right and not feel like he is obligated to listen to their advice.

It was with this kind of humility, that Avrohom asked the opinions of three men before circumcising himself: Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre. It turns out that Mamre was doubly fortunate - not only did Avrohom ask his opinion, but he also gave the correct answer. As a reward for this, *Hashem* appeared to Avrohom in Mamre's territory.

עולה, שיתכן שישתמשו בהם להכין מאכלים על הדרך אשר הם הולכים עליה, ועיקר ההוכחה הוא מהמאכלת שממנו רואים שבדעתו לשחוט. וא"כ למה שאל יצחק רק על האש והעצים ולא תמה על המאכלת?

ונראה להגמור שמעון שוואב זצ"ל בס' מעין בית השואבה שבדאי ידע יצחק שהוא צריך למסור את נפשו להריגה ע"פ ציווי ה', והיה מוכן ומזומן לקדש שם שמים ע"י קיום מצותו ית', ולכן לא היה קשה בעיניו על המאכלת. אמנם כשראה את האש והעצים וצירפם במחשבתו עם המאכלת, הבין שמה שישחוט אביו עם המאכלת יהיה עולה תמימה שנקרב לגבוה, וזה היה קשה בעיניו, שברוב ענותנותו לא האמין שהוא ראוי להיות קרבן עולה על המזבח, שלזה צריך להיות נקי לגמרי מכל סיג ודופי, ואפי' חסרון כל שהוא למום יחשב ומעכבו מלהיות כליל להקב"ה. ולכן פנה יצחק אל אביו בתמהון, "הנה האש והעצים", מהאש והעצים הנני רואה שמה שישחוט המאכלת יהיה קרב לעולה, "וואיה השה לעולה", שבדאי אינני ראוי ליקרב עולה, ורק השה אפשר להקריב עולה ונחשב כאילו הקריב האדם א"ע לפניו. וע"ז השיבו אברהם "אלקים יראה לו השה לעולה בני" - הלא השי"ת אמר שאתה ראוי להיות עולה.

מעשה אבות....סימן לבנים

ותשקין את אביהן יין בלילה הוא וכו' (יט-לג)

A man with an unsavory reputation of being a drunkard lived in the city of Frankfort. He would spend a good deal of his time and most of his money in the local taverns, while his family suffered the indignity of it all. Finally, his wife prevailed upon him to go to the Rov, R' Avrohom Abish ZT"L, and ask for some assistance. The man came to the Rov and explained, "Rebbe, I have a daughter to marry off and no money to do it with. Please help me. If you were to give me a letter of endorsement, I will probably be able to raise the necessary funds by collecting door to door. R' Abish felt bad for the man and complied, writing a strong letter of endorsement.

On the strength of the Rov's letter, the man was very successful in his fund-raising, and received one very large contribution. The man was deliriously happy, and decided it was time to celebrate. With the money in hand, he ran to his favorite pub where he became so drunk that he passed out. After some time, he regained consciousness and when he felt ready to continue on with his mission, he felt through his pockets and realized that his precious letter of recommendation from the Rov had disappeared. Crying bitterly, he saw no other way but to run back to R' Abish and beg him for another letter of endorsement. Sheepishly, he came before the Rov, the smell of liquor still emanating from his breath. However, R' Abish had