



Correct Kiruv

Rashi tells us that Avraham and Sarah brought people close to Hashem as Avraham converted the men and Sarah the women (Breishis 12:5, Rashi). Let us compare this to Noach. It took him 120 years to build the **תיבה** so that people should inquire. He would say to them that in the future Hashem will bring a Mabul. Through this maybe they will be influenced to do Teshuva (Breishis 6:14, Rashi). We don't find that anyone did Teshuva because of this. This leads to the question of why was Avraham successful whereas Noach was not?

1) When one truly believes in something, others follow along with him. We can hear two speakers give a Torah talk. One may say that Torah is the sweetest thing whereas the other speaker lives it. He truly believes it. It is the second speaker that has more influence.

Avraham was a firm believer in Hashem as it says **והאמן בה**, he trusted Hashem (Breishis 15:6). Chazal say **הכיר אברהם את בוראו** - Avraham recognized the existence of his creator (Nedarim 32a). In fact, the Stiepler (Birchas Peretz) comments that **אברם** is an abbreviation for **ראו מי ברא אלה**, see who created these (Yeshaya 40:26), as he connected everything to Hashem. As a result, he was able to bring people close to Hashem. Noach, on the other hand, was **מקטני**, one of little faith (Breishis 7:7, Rashi).

2) We know of various Kiruv techniques that work. One that is not recommended is to relate that which is fearful. An example is telling one he will go to Gehinom if he doesn't perform a Mitzva. On the contrary, being inviting, nice, and helpful can have a much more productive outcome.

What is the difference between **קיר** and **חומה** as they both mean a wall? **חומה** is rooted in **חום**, warmth. This refers to walls that build and bring unity, as when one brings in others for Hachnassas Orchim, makes his house a meeting place for sages (Avos 1:4) and the like. **קיר** on the other hand is related to **קר**, cold as this refers to one

who uses the walls of his house to make a separation from everyone and be isolated. This is why by Tzaraas it says **קירת הבית** (Vayikra 14:37), since he caused separation with his Lashon Hara. This is in contrast to rebuilding the walls of Yerushalayim where we say **תבנה חומות ירושלים** (Tehillim 51:20). This is because we need to build walls of unity since that is how Yerushalayim will be rebuilt as it is the opposite of **שנאת חנם**, the reason for its destruction.

In his younger years when he earned a living as a merchant, R' Simcha Bunim of Peshischa (1767-1827) would travel to Danzig for the fair. Many non-observant Jews would come and spend the evenings drinking and playing games. What did R' Simcha Bunim do? He would reach out to these Jews by inviting them to join in a game of chess. Through this he would gently draw them closer to Judaism. He pointed out that chess teaches us to be extremely mindful in all our ways, to carefully evaluate every step.

In light of this we can understand why Noach wasn't successful in bringing the people to do Teshuva since his tactic was based on fear- in the future Hashem will bring a Mabul.

Avraham, on the other hand, possessed the trait of **אהבה**. He was a man of **חסד**, kindness (**חסד** is from **אהבה**)

[Siduro Shel Shabbos 1:4:11. See Zohar, Vaeschanan 262b] and as it says **אהבת חסד** [Micha 6:8], as is demonstrated in the episode on the third day of his Bris that he was pained since he didn't have guests. Consequently, Hashem sent him three Malachim in the guise of men. How does he treat them? Lavishly- with three bulls, three tongues in mustard- a delicacy! (Breishis 18:7, Rashi) This is the kind of person and the type of method people are drawn to (Furthermore, Avraham gives the message that it is pleasant to be connected to Hashem [see Pardes Yosef on 13:3, s.v. **ובשו"ת מהרש"ם**]).

Valentina, who was a non-Jewish Central-American lawyer, became engaged to Matias, a

successful neurologist. Although her siblings got married in a church, she refused to do this as she said, "it's not my place." She constantly would cry, "Where is my place?" Several years after they married Matias decided to volunteer as a doctor in Israel as his father was Jewish and this is what he secretly considered himself- a Jew. Alone for the first couple of months, he would eat at the Machlis house in Maalot Dafna every Shabbos. Eventually, his wife and children joined him in Israel. On her first Friday night, on the way to the Machlis house, she voiced her opinion: "The only thing I know about Jews is that they are gross and dirty. Why are you taking me there?" Matias told her that he just wants her to see what Shabbos is like. When they entered the Machlis home, although Valentina was dressed very immodest, Rebbitzin Machlis gave her a big hug. Enwrapped in the Rebbetzin's hug, Valentina looked up and saw the Rebbetzin's glowing Shabbos candles. She then burst into tears saying, "This is my place!" Later she would say of that life-transforming hug- that's what I needed in my life, a hug! Since Valentina didn't speak Hebrew or English, the Rebbetzin couldn't verbally communicate with her. So after Shabbos, she took Valentina to her Spanish speaking neighbor, Rebbitzin Chana Simon, who taught the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach to non-jews. After one lesson Valentina told Rebbitzin Simon, "Leave me alone with this! I don't want to learn how to be a good non-jew. I want to learn how to be a Jew!" Despite the dissuasion of Rebbitzin Simon, Valentina insisted to become a Jew no matter what. Valentina and Matias with their three children remained in Israel and studied for conversion. Two years later, when Rabbi and Rebbitzin Machlis took them to Rav Nissim Karelitz's Beis Din for their conversion, R' Nissim Karelitz remarked that Valentina and Matias were the most sincere couple he had ever met. After this, the Machlises made them their Halachic wedding.

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