

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד

'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

וימהר אברהם – And Avraham hurried

Yehuda ben Tema said: 'Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion, to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven' (Avos 5:23). What is so special about all these traits mentioned in this Mishna? We can find the answer to this in the actions of Avraham Avinu. The Torah enlightens at length how he did all that he did with zeal and without any laziness or sadness. When one does something with zeal, he demonstrates that he is fulfilling the mitzvah out of love and being forced to do it as one being forced by a demon. When Avraham Avinu received the guests, the Torah mentions three expressions of zeal: 'וימהר אברהם' – 'and Avraham hurried' (18:6), 'ואל הבקר רץ אברהם' – 'then Avraham ran to the cattle' (18:7), and 'וימהר לעשות אותו' – 'and he hurried to prepare it' (18:7). When we hear these things, we know for certain that Avraham Avinu fulfilled the mitzvah out of love.

It is similarly written in Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (1:4): 'A man should have in mind: If someone, would call him to a profitable business transaction, or to collect his debt, or calls him to save his possessions from being lost for example, by a fire which started in the city, or something else similar to this, then he would certainly be quick, and get up immediately because he cares for his possessions and would not dawdle. Similarly if he needed to go to perform the king's service, he would get up speedily, then he would certainly not be negligent, because of fear of punishment or in order to find favor in the king's sight. How much more so on the service of the King of kings, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, one must be careful to get up speedily and swiftly.'

The time of Tefillah has arrived, when and how do you come to shul? Erev Shabbos has arrived, when and how do you receive the Shabbos? How do you look when Shabbos begins? Moreinu HaRav shlit"א always says that with these things we can measure the love a Jew has for HaKadosh Baruch Hu. One who is ready in time to accept Shabbos with joy and calm, by doing this he shows that he loves Shabbos and the Creator Yisbarach Who gave him the Shabbos. But if he rushes into Shabbos and comes to shul panting and out of breath, can a man like this testify about himself that he loves the Creator? We received a good example from Avraham Avinu. We walk in his footsteps and we learn from his ways how to fulfill the mitzvos with zeal and with love.

- Tiv HaTorah - Vayeira

טיב ההשגחה

'The fruit of faith' – פירות האמונה'

After years of working in an office, my wife and I asked our Rav for advice. He suggested that I find a job where I can work from home since *parnasah* comes from Above and is only based on the effort one exerts, so what difference is there if the effort is exerted at home or outside?

Following the decision, my wife took a course in fruit platter arrangement since this was close to her heart, especially since we are a family that hosts a lot and she always arranges fruit platters for the guests. The day came and she finished the course, and she began making fruit platters and she had a special talent for it but there was a touch of sadness, Shavuot was approaching and she did not have even one order. I put in the effort, and I asked friends and family members to spread the word for possible orders and we hoped for salvation. I explained to my wife that the Bais HaLevi wrote in chapters on *bitachon* that a *tzaddik* tries in one place and he knows that it might come from another place, we just have to do our part. Just when we accepted the will of Hashem, my wife got a call from someone who wanted 20 expensive fruit platters in a hurry. We made the platters and rejoiced with the salvation that came unexpectedly at the last minute. We did not get one order from all the flyers we put out, and the one who ordered the platters never saw the flyer, but suddenly decided to order them for people he wanted to please.

נ.ד.כ.

'He recalls the kindnesses of the fathers' – 'זוכר יסדי אבות'

My friend came to visit me at my business. We talked about this and that, and in our conversation, he told me about his good friend who had a heart attack and with difficulty, they saved his life. He was his *chavrusa* for six years and now he wanted to help the family as much as possible. Before he left, I suggested that he take two pizza pies and drinks so the kids would have lunch ready for them. He was pleased with the suggestion and he brought the food from my store. That evening he called me and said, "You like to hear *hashgacha* stories, right?" "Very much!" I replied. "Then listen well. I took the pies and left them in the house, and I left. That evening I got a call from the eighth grader who told me that every time there is a major test, 'Abba takes me out for pizza. Today I had a test like that, and I was sad all day. I knew that today there would be no pizza since Abba was not home to take me out. When I got home and saw the pizza, I sensed that Hashem was specifically concerned for me. It was not about the pizza, but that Hashem worried about me!!! Thank you for being the special messenger of Hashem!!!"

ב.ש.

ויאמר שוב אשוב אליך כעת חיה והנה בן לשרה אשתך (יח:י)

And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year, there will be life, and behold! a son to Sarah your wife (18:10)

We see that after Avraham and Sarah were promised a child twice in the previous parsha (15:4-5 and 17:16-19), the angel had to come and inform them again. It is fitting to understand what is hidden in this news since we do not see anything new except that the angel gave them a specific date when it will happen. Avraham did not need this since he believed with all his heart that Hashem would keep His word, and it made no difference to him when Hashem Yisbarach would choose to make it happen. Avraham did not need children except for the purpose that was acceptable to Heaven, and it was for that purpose that he was promised. If so, then certainly Hashem Yisbarach would act for him and He would choose the right time for this purpose. What would he gain by knowing when this would happen? Obviously, it was not for this that the angel intended, then we must figure out the true purpose of the news.

The holy *seforim* explain at length the natural way the world runs, for with a cursory glance it is possible to be mistaken *chas v'shalom*, and say that nature will determine the future, therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu sometimes changes the order in Bereishis and works wonders that are not needed for nature and by doing this He demonstrates that He is in control of nature, and nature is dependent on the word of Hashem.

In order to demonstrate that nature is not in control, there are times when people need a salvation, but nature prevents it. When these people merit salvation in an unnatural way, it proves to everyone that nature is not fixed, but rather, is controlled. But since HaKadosh Baruch Hu treats the person measure for measure, therefore, those that need help must prepare themselves with some hard work that is categorized as 'supernatural' which will then arouse that Above treat him the same way and salvation will come in a supernatural way.

This is what Avraham and Sarah needed. They did not have children due to natural causes, as the previous parsha stated (15:5) 'ויוצא אותו – and He took him outside' and Rashi explains, 'Go out from your astrology' since, based on their natural *mazel* they were not fit for it. Hashem Yisbarach's promise took them out of the natural way so they would be able to give birth. True, the matter was dependent on how things run down here, that is, we find that at first the promise was dependent on this condition. HaKadosh Baruch Hu only let them know the way they would attain salvation, but in order for the matter to take place, it was incumbent on them to do the mitzvah with devotion which was also supernatural.

We see in the previous parsha (Chapter 16) that Sarah did something like this and acted out of the ordinary devotedly benefited her maidservant. She elevated her and honored her as an equal. Her intent was to have mercy on her and her salvation should come in a supernatural way as Rashi explains her words (16:2) 'אולי אבנה ממנה' – 'perhaps I will build up through her', 'Through the merit of my bringing my co-wife into my house'.

From then, HaKadosh Baruch Hu anxiously waited for when Avraham would also come to that trait and also be fit for this. Then came the third day after his *bris* when he too devotedly fulfilled a mitzvah. This was the day when he was in much pain from the *milah*, additionally, HaKadosh Baruch Hu took the sun out of its sheath so that guests would not bother him (Rashi to 18:1). Even so, he did not think to change from his norm, and he sat looking for guests. Even after he merited guests, he did not think about his weakened state, and he tended to them. This was all through devotion, supernatural inner strength, and by doing this he merited this trait, to benefit from things that were supernatural.

In light of what we have said, we can now understand the intent of the angel with his news, since they still did not know if they yet merited for the promise to be fulfilled, since it was dependent on their actions. It was only after they both extended themselves devotedly, that the angel informed them that the promise would be kept in a certain time. This is the point he was making when he said 'כעת חיה' – 'at this time next year' and Rashi explains, 'next year'. Until now they could not set a time since they did not know when they would prepare themselves for this. But now, after doing this, they were fit for it and the date could be set. This is why the date was set for the following year on the same day they did the act to reveal that the action caused the date to be set.

This must be a teaching for the generations. If a person sees that he needs a specific salvation, but there is nothing in his life that warrants it, the advice for him is to search for a difficult mitzvah which would be out of the norm for him, and it should be done with extra devotion on his part, then he will also be treated with the same trait, and through it he will merit redemption.

This does not only apply to things that are 'קום ועשה' – 'get up and do', but also to things that are 'שב ואל תעשה' – 'sit and do not do'. Sometimes, a person is confronted with a challenge that is too difficult to bear, for example, someone embarrasses him while he is in a difficult position, and he is too shamed to respond. This is also categorized as devotion, for the most difficult for a person to do is make himself as nothing. By not defending himself it is as if he agrees with the one who is shaming him and he agrees to belittle himself in the eyes of others, as long as he does not embarrass the other person. There is no greater devotion than this, and so this is propitious for salvation. There are many famous stories about people who were shamed and yet they strengthened themselves with silence and this brought salvation for themselves and others.

There are also other challenges that are very difficult and if one withstands them, it helps for supernatural salvation. As it is brought down in the Zohar HaKadosh regarding Yosef HaTzaddik. After Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, he told them (45:4) 'אני יוסף' – 'I am Yosef', they wondered, how did he merit all this greatness? He told them that it was only in the merit of seeing himself as nothing.

We can see what is hidden in Yosef's words. Yosef was a servant to Potiphar and he needed an unnatural salvation. Once he was sold as a slave, he could not throw off the yoke of servitude from upon himself. Normally, he would have remained a slave forever. Hashem Yisbarach placed before him a very difficult challenge, too difficult to bear. His master's wife enticed him in all sorts of ways to benefit from a world not in the realm of his Creator *Rachmana litzlan*, and Chazal mention that his *yetzer* aggravated him greatly, and he endured many afflictions due to her wickedness, and she employed many tricks so that he would succumb to her. Nevertheless, he stood his ground and even after she grabbed hold of him, he left her holding his garment and he ran outside. Without a doubt, this challenge required superhuman strength, and it took much devotion.

And so, this action worked wonders. Immediately, things set into motion and he went from a dank pit to a lofty status. He was placed in the pit so he could introduce himself to Pharaoh's officers and he interpreted their dreams. From there he was summoned to Pharaoh's palace to sit on the royal throne.

As we have said, every mitzvah done with devotion and the person acts out of the norm and under difficult circumstances, salvations will extend to him in the same way – 'out of the ordinary'.