

# פרשת חיי שרה

חלקה' – גליון 8

כ"ז מר חשון תשפ"ד

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

## אכזריות Terrible

The פרשה of חיי שרה is the פרשה where we see the חסד of אמנו. When אברהם יצחק looked for a שידוך for his son he wanted a שידוך where there will be the ultimate החסד, so that the שרשים of מידת כלל ישראל should be built on the מידת החסד. We see in the פרשה how she excelled in her חסד in an amazing way.<sup>1</sup>

In last weeks סדרה we have a פרשה of סדום ועמורה – people who were the opposite of כלל ישראל, people who had the terrible מידות of אכזריות.

The פסוק writes, "זעקת סדום ועמורה כי רבה" – *the cries of סדום ועמורה had risen to שמים*. For many years I had a big קשיא on this פסוק, why does it say "זעקת סדום ועמורה, כי רבה" – should it not have said, "זעקת האורחים של סדום ועמורה" – the cries of those guests that they were causing to suffer?

<sup>1</sup> See פרשת חיי שרה תש"פ where we explained this in length.

Writes the אמרי אמת: There is a מידה of אכזריות, but then there is an even bigger bad מידה than the מידה of אכזריות, and that is when a person carries out the מידת אכזריות and doesn't even realise he is an אכזרי. And more than that: when people try to defend themselves or take retaliatory action, the person considers himself a victim, he doesn't even realise he is a perpetrator!

Explains the אמרי אמת: "זעקת סדום ועמורה: אמרי אמת" – when הקב"ה saw that סדום was complaining because of the defensive actions of their victims, they didn't even see the אכזריות they were doing!

When הקב"ה saw they had come to such a low level where they couldn't even see their own אכזריות that they were doing, they only complained about what others were doing things to them, הקב"ה said, "I

cannot allow such a nation to continue...

I must overturn the country of סדום...

The truth is, we see this today in Hamas y'm and the world around us today, the perpetrators of the cruellest acts of אכזריות call themselves victims, the world looks at them as victims, that is a מידת אכזריות נורא – a much higher level of אכזריות.

A ר' שלמה זלמן אויבעך once came to איד and exclaimed, "I don't know what to do about my בית! Look my wife came and she bit me!" he rolled up his sleeve and showed ר' שלמה זלמן the bite mark on his arm.

ר' שלמה זלמן said to him, "You רשע! You רשע!"

The איד said back, "No! My wife bit me! I'm not the רשע!"

Said ר' שלמה זלמן, "You must have done something so terrible to your wife to make her come and bite you, you are the אכזרי..."

That is the bad מידה we are speaking about, he didn't even realise he had done anything wrong to his wife, he was only thinking about himself – what his wife did to him.

The truth is, we all have to a certain extent this מידה inside us, it starts at a

young age when two children are playing and one child snatches the teddy from the other child, the other child then goes and pushes the other one down or perhaps even bites the other child. The little child runs to its mother or its teacher, "Look what he did to me!" completely oblivious to what he had done first, this מידה sometimes stays within us and we must work to eradicate it.

### **בין אדם למקום ח**

This is not just in לחבירו בין אדם, this is also in בין אדם למקום, when we start looking at what הקב"ה does to us, failing to realise why הקב"ה is doing it – what we are doing to הקב"ה.

In the תשעה באב on קינות we speak about the terrible things which have happened to ישראל over the years, "אם תאכלנה נשים פריה עוללי תפוחים אללי לי, אם תבשלנה" "Look at all of this! What happened to us!? It's not fair!" But in the middle of that קינה we then continue to say, "ורוח הקודש למולם, רוח הקודש – מערים הוי על כל שכני הרעים" "You're such terrible neighbours, מה שהקראם, מודיעים" – what's happening to you, you tell Me and you speak about it and

complain, "ואת אשר עשו לא מודיעים" – but what you did you are oblivious, "אם" – when all the terrible things happen to you I hear about it, you talk about it and scream, cry, complain and shout, "ואם יהרג במקדש ה'" – but if you kill a נביא and כהן in the המקדש you didn't speak about it at all!

The same מידה of סדום that is a little bit within us, when we do things to people, we only notice the response we don't realise what we have done, the same is with the *eibishter*, we complain and complain, and what about what we have done? We are completely oblivious to that!

ר' מיכאל בער וויסמאנדל זצ"ל said: There are 5845 פסוקים in the תורה, each פסוק corresponds to a different year, it's fascinating to see the פסוקים how they relate to what happens to us in each year "ויתשם ה' מעל אדמתם באף ובחמה ובקצף גדול וישליכם אל ארץ אחרת כיום הזה" corresponds to 1940, in the year of Covid-19 it says "ואין – פרק ל"ב פסוק כ"ט" that was the year nobody knew what to do, and as it says in the same פסוק, "כי גוי אבד", the word גוי is 19, take the word out and your left

with כאביד- כי אבד which can be read "19!"

In this years פסוק it's a פחד, it's exactly what we are speaking about, as רש"י explains the פסוק, "אשכלת מרררת למו", פסוק, "פרק ל"ב פסוק ל"ב), *bitter clusters onto them*, "משקה מר ראוי להם", *a bitter drink is fitting for them*, "הקב"ה is going to give us a bitter drink, "לפי מעשיהם פורענותם", *in accordance with their actions is their punishment*.

As we mentioned the הלכות רמב"ם in תענית three weeks ago, that this is what הקב"ה wants from us, not to only see what He is doing to us, but to see what we are doing to Him, we have to think about what we are doing.

### ***Think for second!***

This was the מידה of ועמורה וזעקת סדום, they were oblivious to what they did. When we were little children, we had that מידה but sometimes we don't grow out of it, we must recognise this behaviour.

But why don't we feel this? It can really happen the whole time, two חברות are learning together and one has טענות on the other, but he doesn't even see what he as well is actually doing to the other חברות! We are very oblivious to what

we are doing, we are only aware of what people are doing to us – the way they are treating us.

And one of the big problems which cause this is because we don't really understand the impact of our words and actions, the suffering or stress we are causing them, like this איך who came to ר' שלמה זלמן, he didn't even think he did anything wrong to his wife.

One of the first things we must do is to be מתבונן in this: maybe we are not realising what we are doing? Perhaps I have thicker skin than my friend or חברותא? When somebody overreacts to me, think for a second, "Maybe I am doing something to him?" This is the first thing we must do, a friend, a roommate, a חברותא reacts, he seems to be annoyed, "Stop and think! What have I done to him? Maybe I am mistreating him!?"

This is so common throughout every stage of life, in marriage or any other relationship, if we see someone being nasty, think, "What am I doing to him?" Or perhaps ask the fellow, "What am I doing to you?" maybe there has been a misunderstanding, create a dialogue, open a discussion.

This is how we defend ourselves, "I can't be wrong! I can't have bad מידות! It can't be I am the one who is wrong here!"

We often suppress our own emotions for whatever reason to the extent that we become oblivious to the feelings of others. If we don't have strong emotions, we must remember, others out there do have emotions! When somebody overreacts, ask them, "How are you feeling? Did I do something wrong to you?" Discuss it, it's a basic principle in developing a healthy relationship.

This is the יסוד of the אמרי אמת, it was זעקת סדום ועמורה, they felt they had done nothing wrong, "What's going on here?!" they screamed, "What's happening to us?!" oblivious completely to what they did. And as we explained, this מידה can often play a big role in our lives, and the way to be aware of this is when people misbehave to us, and this is נוגע to us on a daily basis, "What did I do to him? There must be something which I did to him which is making him angry!"

### ***The good we do***

I would like to finish off on a different note, aside from being aware of the bad

things we are doing to others, we must also be aware of the good things we do throughout our day.

I recently heard a *moiridicker* מעשה: In טבת תשמ"ה, thirty-eight years ago, a בחור of nineteen came into the Steipler זצ"ל, as we know the Steipler in his late years was hard of hearing. When people would come in, they would write on a paper what they wanted.

This בחור wrote down what he wanted: אני בחור בן י"ט שנה – I am nineteen years old, and since אלול this year I have been very careful with שמירת עינים. אבל היום – but this morning I had to go to a medical appointment in Tel Aviv, I was forty-five minutes on the bus and I had a *gevaldiga* ירידה in שמירת עינים, and he finished off the letter, "ואני אנה אני בא" – what should I do?

The Steipler read the letter and said to him, "Tell me, in those forty-five minutes, were there any moments when you were able to control yourself?"

The בחור responded, "It was terrible... it was terrible..."

The Steipler banged on the table and said, "I asked you a question! Answer me! Were there any moments where you controlled yourself?"

The בחור nodded his head.

The Steipler said as follows, "תאמין לי" – Believe me, if I would be younger or have more כח, I would stand up מלא קומתי to my full height to show you respect for those moments you were מתגבר!

That is what the Steipler told him, "תאמין לי", because of those few minutes that you were מתגבר I should stand up in your honour.

But the Steipler added, "Of course for the times you looked there will be an עונש, "ודע" – but you should know that when you don't look you have a *gevaldiga* עלייה רווחני which is also מכפר on the times you do look..."

אנה אני מעשה חיזוק, often we also feel אנה אני whether in שמירת עינים or other related ענינים and fail to realise our achievements we achieved in the same time.

We spoke today about two things we are oblivious in; we are oblivious to how we treat others, often a boy comes and says, "Yena and yena is being nasty to me..." but he is completely oblivious to what he is doing to them, think about it, "Why is he doing this? Maybe I have done something over here!" And secondly, just like we must be aware of our

shortcomings we must be aware of our מעלות which is vital for our growth, to look at the successes we have done, as the famous the line of Churchill goes, "Success is going from failure to failure without losing the enthusiasm..." don't

lose the enthusiasm, and we can add, because often in the failure lies a measure of success as well, and this can be a real חיזוק which can boost us to be successful.



[Written by Avrohom Dov Kohn - אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)

# פרשת חיי שרה

חלק ד' – גליון 7

כ"ה מר חשון תשפ"ג

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

## *Three stages of life*

"ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע  
(כ"ג, א) Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, and  
twenty years, and seven years. רש"י  
מדרש (מדרש רבה נ"ה) brings from the  
"לכך נכתב "שנה" בכל כלל וכלל"  
the word "שנה" was written at each  
category,

instead of the  
writing, תורה  
"ויהיו חיי שרה

*"The ראש ישיבה said! The משגיח said! There is nothing  
to talk about, there is nothing to think about, there is  
nothing to kler, don't come with any לומדות"*

gevaldiga  
תמימות, they do  
everything  
they are told,

the תורה places a  
separate "שנה" by the hundreds, the tens  
and the number seven. "לומר לך", *This is  
to teach you, "שכל אחד נדרש לעצמו", each  
one is expounded on its own, "בת מאה  
כבת עשרים לחטא, מה בת עשרים לא חטאה  
שהרי אינה בת עונשין, אף בת מאה בלא חטא, ובת  
when she was a  
hundred years old, she was like twenty  
years old and when she was twenty years  
old she was like seven years old.*

would explain  
with the following פשט in this חז"ל מאמר:

There are three stages in a person's life.  
A child at seven years old is so innocent,  
it hasn't yet seen the world, a child  
doesn't think about things too deeply,  
trusts everybody especially everyone  
older than them. A seven year old has no  
problem socially, a seven year old has a

you can tell them whatever you like and  
they will believe you, they don't ask  
many questions, they believe  
everything, very gullible they are. I  
remember we had a בחור in ישיבה who  
came from Russia a few years ago at the  
age of nineteen, he was a beginner so he  
came straight to א' שיעור.

I was once speaking to him and I asked  
him, "When did you know about the  
רבש"ע for the first time?"

He told me, "When I was about  
fifteen..."

I asked him, "What were you thinking before you were aware about the ערבש"ע?"

He told me, "I believed in the big bang, evolution, the monkeys, etc..."

I then asked him, "But did you really believe that there was no God running the world?!"

He answered me very cleverly, "When I went to school at the age of seven, eight years old, we are told that the world is round. Did you ever put up your hand asking, "How do you know? Maybe it's flat? Perhaps its half a ball?"

Why not? Because when your teacher at seven years old tells you that the world is round, you believe the teacher, no questions, no second thoughts."

Said the בחור, "When the teachers told me at seven years old that that there was a big bang, so there was a big bang! That was the מצאיארת!"

A child at a young age of seven has a *gevaldiga* תמימות, that is the first stage in life.

Then comes the second stage of life, the teenage age when one reaches twenty, then there isn't much תמימות left, as the Noverminsker rebbe זצ"ל once remarked, "Nowadays a boy of fifteen

knows more than I know..." the תמימות slowly evaporates as one grows older and at the age of twenty a person can come to a דרגה where there is no תמימות at all, they think they know everything, they don't listen to what others have to say.

On the other hand, at this stage of life there is a tremendous drive, there are goals – big goals, and there is a drive to reach those goals and a lot of energy is put in to reach those goals they want to reach. Whatever the goals are, but the goals are always massive, far beyond reality, as the Berdichiver זצ"ל said, "When I was young my שאיפה was to change the entire world..." להבדיל להבדיל Trump when he was speaking to R' Klieneman and he gave him a big donation in his twenties, and R' Klieneman asked him about if he minds putting his name on a plaque, trump told him, "Of course! I want it! I want people to know about me! One day the whole world is going to know about me – I'm going to be president of America!"

A person's שאיפות as a teenager or often wild.



There is no תמימות, yet there is a tremendous drive with big שאיפות and goals.

The final stage, when one reaches one hundred, or today already when one reaches close to a hundred, the תמימות is long gone completely, the drive also goes, there's no drive, one is laid back, it's time for retiring, as the גוים call it the twilight of life, however, on the other hand, at that stage there is tremendous חכמה, a person who has lived through a life experience, he can learn from his mistakes, he can live his life with *gevaldiga* חכמה.

"בת מאה כבת: ר' ישער בער זצ"ל Explained – There were no stages in her life, when she was seven there was תמימות and when she was twenty there was still תמימות – the תמימות continued, she retained the תמימות together with having great שאיפות.

At all three stages, she was never lacking, all the מעלות of the three stages were present at all time, there was always תמימות, there was always tremendous drives and goals and there was always חכמה.

שרה אמנו – כולם שוים טובה, however by us that isn't the case. We

begin with our תמימות, then we enter the age without תמימות where there is a drive for big goals and then we get to an age where there is great חכמה.

### ***חכמה at the wrong age***

The problem is that we often feel that that the age of חכמה is in the middle stage. ר' שמעון היירשעלער שליט"א once said, "I have a ראייה מוכרחת that an older person has more חכמה than a younger person, because we never hear an old person say, "When I was younger I was much cleverer..."

How many times do we hear people say, "If only I would have listened..."

What is *taka* the פשט why we don't listen?

The truth is, in this weeks פרשה we find in a few places this ענין of being מבטל ourselves and listening to others, realising that we are not as clever as we think we are. About אביעזר עבד אברהם, דולה ומשקה בתורתו tell us how he was של רבו, *he would draw water and give drink from the תורה of his רבו*, and therefore the תורה in this weeks פרשה doesn't even refer to him doesn't refer to אביעזר with his name, the מפרשים explain: it was as if he wasn't there at all – he was completely dependent on אבינו his

רבו, he had no say for himself, everything was his רבו אברהם אבינו.

Today we're living in a world where how we are convinced that we know the best and we know it all, it's a different world today.

Even though we are doing well and we are learning very well, however this is an area which I think needs to be stressed on again and again, we must be מבטל ourselves for our רביהם, those older than us, ראשי הישיבות, משגיחים, this lack of ביטול gives rise to a feeling of, "I know better!" which is the problem one suffers with at the middle stage of life, if we want to be guided, we must take this mindset away from us.

### ענוה and שכינה

Let me share with a *moridicker* גמרא in "אין הקב"ה משרה שכינתו אלא <sup>1</sup>, נדרים (ל"ה) על גבור עשיר חכם ועניו" only resides on one who is a עשיר, עניו, גבור, עשיר, חכם and חכם.

The question is: All of these מעלות are predestined before one is born, as the גמרא in נדה tells us, "טיפה זו מה תהא, גבור, חכם או חלש, עשיר או עני?" What is the שכינה is שורה on these God given

gifts which are predestined before one is born?

Explains ר' חיים מוואלאזין זצ"ל at the beginning of ספר רוח חיים פרק ד' in his The ענוה teaches that the ענוה is what brings a person close to משה רבינו, הקב"ה, the two things go together, if you're the מכל אדם then you can become the greatest מכל אדם.

Closeness to הקב"ה depends on ענוה.

In the world there are three things which people look up to, גבורה, *might*, people also look up to עשירות, *wealth*, and people look up to חכמה.

Explains ר' חיים מוואלאזין שבעולם נכללים באלו השלשה, אין השכינה, שורה לא על גבור חכם ועשיר ואעפ"כ הוא עניו. The גמרא is teaching us, if a person is a חכם or an עשיר or a גיבור **and he is still** an עניו, then the שכינה will be שורה on him!

With this he continues to explain the משנה in אבות which teaches, בן זומא – אומר, איזהו חכם הלומד מכל אדם" חכמה is a מתנה from the *eibishter*, and that there is

<sup>1</sup> See פרשת וישלח תשפ"ב גליון 13 where we explained this גמרא with a פשט על פי הר"ן.

no reason to be מתגאה with the חכמה he has because he understands that true חכמה is to learn from every person – הלומד מכל אדם.

"איזהו גבור" – the גבור understands that his strength has no חשיבות, the true חשיבות is יצרו את הכובש את יצרו.

The עשיר understands that there is no חשיבות in having a lot of money, a true and real עשיר is being בחלקו.

The משנה is teaching us, אין השכינה שורה, לא על גבור חכם ועשיר ואעפ"כ הוא עניו, this is the way to look at עשירות, this is the way to look at חכמה, this is the way to look at גבורה, and then if one looks at these מעלות in such a way he will remain עניו – he won't have any גאווה and like that the שכינה will be שורה on him.

This is something we must be עומד on constantly: we must be מבטל ourselves to our רביהם and those who are older than us and who we are supposed to be מבטל ourselves to. שרה אמנו was on a different מדריגה, she taka was at a stage of חכמה at the age of twenty, she had all three מעלות at all three stages of life.

But ר' ישעיהו בער זצ"ל is teaching us that by normal people they begin with תמימות and we must work on retaining this תמימות as long as we possibly can, תמימות

is a good thing, "תמים יהיה עם ה' אלוךך", when it comes to the years when one starts to have *gevaldiga* drives, he must work to focus those drives on the right things and not to use the כח and גבורה to start thinking, "Now I understand everything!" The ביטול enables a person to properly grow, this is vital for us throughout the years, the ענין of ביטול, not to have a דיעה in everything, we suffer so much from this.

I once told a father, "I see your son has had tremendous הצלחה I think it's because he has a *moridicker* ביטול to his רביה..."

He told me, "I don't take any credit for any הצלחה... but on that נקודה I take the credit, at home I am always so careful to always be מבטל myself to those who we are supposed to be מבטל to... we never speak against any רבנים, any ישיבה or any משגיח..."

If we are strong on this מידה, this will go down to our children בעז"ה, we must be so careful in this area, because this is one of the big חורבנות in today's world, in the *goisha* world out there, there is no respect for others, every single person can have their own דיעה and everyone holds that their דיעה is right, this is the

breakdown of society in many areas, we must counter all of this which has obviously seeped into our communities as well.

We constantly must be מבטל ourselves, we don't understand often what we are told, we may understand differently, but who am I בכלל to have a דיעה? How much experience in life have I had already? What gives me the feeling that my דיעה is right? The person who has the many more years than myself with a much longer life experience, this person has a much better look at life, and we must be able to be מבטל ourselves to these people

which then enables to grow much more than we think we can, those people who walk around thinking they have a דיעה in everything, it stunts the growth in their השם, עבודת השם, and as חז"ל teach us, "מורא רבך כמורא שמים" that is how it's supposed to be, we have to go with a tremendous התבטלות, the Rov said something and that's it! The ראש ישיבה said! The משגיח said! There is nothing to talk about, there is nothing to think about, there is nothing to *kler*, don't come with any לומדות.

[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)



# פרשת חיי שרה

חלק ג' - גליון 9

כ"ד מר חשוון תשפ"ב

## מאת ר' ש. קאפלין שליט"א

### ***Matzev!***

Often, when we are in the middle of learning during סדר we hear a commotion or something else happening outside. Most of us would immediately have a tendency to find out what is going on. Some people would *taka* go out to find out what's happening, and even those who are מתגבר and remain in the בית המדרש, might feel they are missing out on something,

which often then creates and causes a lack of

concentration, even though they have continued learning, but they still feel they want to be where it seems to be what they call a "*matzev!*"

What do we say to ourselves at such times? How can we control ourselves not to be attracted to what is going on?

### ***A train ride not in vain***

ר' יעקב גלינסקי זצ"ל would say a story about when he was learning in ישיבת Bialistock under the leadership of the ראש ישיבה ר' אברהם יפה'ן זצ"ל. He was learning there just before the outbreak of World War two, times were already dangerous, anti-Semitism was raging, and the ראש ישיבה needed an important messenger to travel from Bialistock to Warsaw.

He decided to choose his תלמיד – ר' יעקב גלינסקי

a small boy who looked younger than his age, he felt that he was safer than an older בחור who would possibly attract more anti-Semitism.

He called for ר' יעקב גלינסקי and told him, "I would like you travel to Warsaw for me..."

***"We're in the middle of listening to the best orchestra in the world!"***

בסדר – no problem! The ראש ישיבה asked him to go somewhere so he's going –  
הנני מוכן ומזומן!

He came to the station without any money.

He was standing there on the platform until finally he meets another איד who's also going to Warsaw and was prepared to give יעקב גלינסקי some kopecks to pay for his train ticket!

Immediately, he went to buy himself a ticket. The man selling the tickets at the desk told him, "All the trains are full of soldiers... we're holding מלחמה... the third-class and second-class tickets are already taken... you'll have to pay for a first-class ticket..."

יעקב גלינסקי rolls out the few kopecks he has onto the table.

"I'm sorry young man," exclaimed the ticket seller, "but that's nowhere near enough!..."

"Is it enough to get me to the next stop?!" asked יעקב.

"Yes!... it's just enough to get you to the next stop," he replied.

בסדר – he'll go one stop, a real *Novardecker*, living his life with complete ביטחון even in dangerous times where you don't want to be stuck in an

unfamiliar place – he'll get to Warsaw eventually, there's nothing to be worried about.

He gets onto the train. He's never seen such comfort in his life! Such luxury! Cushions! Tablecloths! He never dreamt that a train can be so comfortable.

He is sitting there, in a packed carriage since no one could travel on second or third class.

A few minutes into the journey, a fellow comes into the carriage and exclaims, "There's a person – a musician playing music in the next carriage..."

The עולם there were feeling very down – holding just before the second world war – everyone was tense and nervous. They all went to the next carriage to hear the musician, to relax and calm themselves down, taking their minds of the present fears and uncertainties.

There was one גוי who stayed on his seat who was holding a radio to his ear whilst holding his hand on the other ear to block out any other noise. He seemed to be listening to the news or something very interesting, concentrating with tremendous concentration, listening, and taking in everything. He heard the announcement, but he had no interest of

leaving the carriage, he couldn't part with his radio.

יעקב גלינסקי was sitting on one side of the carriage, with גוי sitting on the other side listening to his radio.

A few minutes later the conductor walks in, and he sees two people who have remained in the carriage. "What are you doing here?!" he asks them, "why don't you go listen to some music?! Go have some entertainment!"

יעקב גלינסקי didn't know what to tell the conductor, he didn't know how to explain a that he not interested to listen to such music.

But the גוי listening to his radio spoke up, "Excuse me sir, I'm listening to the orchestra in Paris, the most famous and the best orchestra in the world... and you want me to stop and go listen to some unknown person playing his violin?! I'm listening to much better music! I'm very happy where I am!"

The conductor listens what the fellow has to say for himself, takes the man's tickets and moves on to the next carriage. A minute later, the train screeches to a halt. What happened?

The train was about to go over a bridge, but the bridge had collapsed! There was

no way the train could continue to Warsaw; left with no other choice, the train had to return to the station in Bialistock.

יעקב גלינסקי comes back to אברהם his ראש ישיבה, "Wow! You're back from Warsaw already?! How did you manage that?"

"No," explained יעקב ר', "the bridge collapsed, this is what הקב"ה wants... I can't go to Warsaw... But, you should know, I didn't travel in vain, I heard a good *schmooze*-מוסר along the way!"

"A *schmooze*-מוסר!? Where did you hear a *schmooze*-מוסר?" the ראש ישיבה asked.

"I heard a *schmooze*-מוסר from a גוי!"

"A גוי?! How did you do that?"

יעקב ר' told over the whole story where they announced about a musician in the next carriage, yet one גוי stayed on his seat and did not go. What was פשט?! This גוי was listening to an orchestra in Paris and you want him to go listen to music in the other carriage!?

"I had such a מוסר!" exclaimed יעקב ר', גלינסקי, "so many times we get so distracted when excited things are going on *outside in the next carriage*, either we go, or we feel bad we didn't go, or we can no longer concentrate anymore!

We're in the middle of listening to the best orchestra in the world!" ועתה כתבו לכם את השירה הזאת.

This is what we must tell ourselves straight away. We're not just speaking about the שכר of לימוד התורה which is greater than anything else, we're speaking about the real הנאה a person can have in this world, תורה overrides any other pleasure, כל שכן וקל וחומר בן בנו של, when the distractions are *narrish-kittens* outside.<sup>1</sup>

We have to tell ourselves, "No! I'm in middle of listening to the best orchestra in the world!"

### ***Don't stop learning***

I remember when the ראש ישיבה – Rav Koppelman – a man of 104 came to speak in ישיבה, it was a *gantza matzev* hear in Manchester. But I will never forget what happened. As he was going out, the עולם were crowding around him, to say שלום and receive a ברכה, but I remember the moment he finished speaking there were two בחורים who straight away sat down and learnt!

I had such an inspiration! They weren't disturbed or distracted from the *gantza*

balagan and noise, straight away they sat down to learn oblivious to what was going on around them.

I once went into the Manchester ראש ישיבה, ערב יום כיפור on ישיבה זצ"ל, and this is what he said to me בזה הלשון, "שמעו, if you don't mind, I'm in the middle of a one-million-pound deal..." He was in the middle of learning with his חברותא, he didn't have time then for anything else.

א said over this story a few years later on the יארצהייט of the ראש ישיבה and he added, "...the ראש ישיבה was speaking to a *yungerman* who didn't have much השגות with money... but the truth is, the ראש ישיבה meant to say a billion pounds!..."

This is the inspiration we must tell ourselves constantly. We are dealing with billions of pounds – the best music you can possibly listen to, the הנאה and reward one's going to receive from learning a *shtarka* סדר without interruption is millions and millions of times greater than anything else going on around us, which can possibly disturb our learning.

<sup>1</sup> See פרשת יתרו תשפ"א גליון 18 where we spoke about the greatness of לימוד התורה.



### ***After a matzev***

After a *matzev*! There's so much to discuss, so much to dissect, there's so much to talk about.

Let me share with you a *moridicker* (מדרש רבה נ"ו): The פסוק in last weeks פרשה after the עקידה tells us, אברהם, "וישב אברהם אל נעריו" (כ"ב, י"ט) returned to his young men, asks the מדרש, "ויצחק היכן הוא?", *And where was נעריו? Did he also not return to the יצחק?* Answers the מדרש: "שלחו אצל שם ללמוד" *sent him to learn* ממנו תורה, ישׁיבה, He sent him immediately to תורה, straight to learning תורה.

A פלא! After such a moment! About to *shecht* יצחק! Can you imagine the relief? A time to reunite again! They almost lost each other! They had thousands of things to discuss!

No! When it was all over יצחק went straight away to learn תורה!

A clear מדרש, a lesson for all of us. We often get so carried away after a *matzev*, we must remember the ways of our אבות הקדושים, no need to discuss everything, go straight away back to your learning. As the רמב"ם writes in הלכות תלמוד תורה "היה לפניו עשיית מצוה ותלמוד תורה, (ג, ד) אם אפשר להעשות על ידי אחרים לא יפסיק

תלמודו, ואם לאו יעשה ויחזור לתלמוד." *after we've finished what he have to do, straight away return to the תורה again!*

### ***A true friend***

We often think that we gain popularity and friends when we are involved in a *matzev*, that's the way a lot of people think. A human being is a social creature, most certainly we all need a social life, everyone according to their level and their needs.

People think, to be popular and to have a good friend you need to always make a *matzev* and schmooze all day long.

ר' מתתיהו שליט"א "I personally once asked "How do you work on having a proper friend?!"

And he told me the following – it took me a few years until I really appreciated and understood his answer and realised how true it is, "If you want a true friend!? That comes through לימוד התורה!"

When you learn with a *בחור* and speak in learning with another *בחור*, that creates a true and genuine friendship, the true connection with somebody comes through תורה.

When you discuss politics and all the other topics out there – it's all very nice,

but that doesn't create a true and real connection.

The *עקידה* by the *פסוק* "וּיָקַח אֶת שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ" (כ"ב, ג') *he took his young men with him and יצחק*. What's going on over here? The *תורה* is telling us that *אברהם took יצחק with him*? It's like when someone comes back from a *התונה* and you ask him, "Nu... who was there?!" He tells you, "This Rov, that Rov, the *ראש ישיבה*, the *חתן*..." Of course, the *חתן* was there! If the *חתן* wasn't there, then there was no *התונה*! *יצחק* was the *חתן* there! Of course, *אברהם* took him with!

Explains the Brisker Rov זצ"ל with a *moridicker* *פשוט*: *אברהם* *אבינו* had a tremendous *קשר* with his son *יצחק*. What type of connection did he have with his son? A *קשר* through the *תורה*! That is why they were so close! Even when they travelled together, they would speak in *leaning*, that is how they became so close, this was the *קשר חזק* between *אברהם* and *יצחק*.

They could have travelled separately! The *תורה* is stressing on the fact that they travelled together and continued to speak in learning together! "We're going to strengthen the connection even more,"

said *אברהם*, "and then we will go do the *עקידה*!"

He went to the *נסיון* with *יצחק* – being *קשר* even more making the *נסיון* much greater, that is what the *Torah* is stressing and telling us when it writes that he took *יצחק* with him, and then as we mentioned earlier, after the *עקידה* he went straight back to learn *תורה*, the *matzev* is over, no time to waste back to *לימוד התורה*.

We must make sure not to get distracted by what's going on around us, we must stay focused, and we do that by understanding what we are involved in. Secondly, we must remember that *afterwards*, it shouldn't take any time to get back into the learning after the *matzev*.

### ***נפק"מ* What's the**

Approximately 32 years ago, *הרה"ג ר' דגל התורה* – *שך זצ"ל* made a new party – *יד אליהו* in *אסיפה*, it was a *matzev* there *כמהו*, the television crews from around the world were there to listen to what *שך זצ"ל* was going to say as it would affect Israeli politics because as usual there would have to be a coalition. He launched the party then, just two weeks before the elections.

The morning after the elections everyone was busy with how many seats *הגל* had got. When they heard the final results, there was a *איד* who came into *ר'* *שך זצ"ל* to tell him the news.

*ר' שך זצ"ל* was in the middle of learning at the time, "What's the *נפק"מ*?" he exclaimed. He did his *השתדלות*, what's the *נפק"מ* now afterwards to know, whatever happened happened.

We must understand what we are being *עוסק* in, nothing should be able to disturb our learning.

### יצר הרע

The truth is, many of the disturbances – all these *matzovim*, it's all coming from the *שטן*. It once happened when a big bird flew into the *בית המדרש* of Gateshead *גדולה* *ישיבה*! It was a *matzev* *נורא*! Flying backwards and forwards! They couldn't get it out, a high ceiling, no one could reach up there.

*ר' לייב גורביץ זצ"ל* mentioned to him, "it's most probably a *תורה*...*שואף* trying to be *גלגול*" *ר' לייב זצ"ל* it is the *שטן*!"

It's the *שטן*! All these *matzovim* are the *שטן*. A loud noise outside! What's

doing? Where's the noise coming from!?! So often we get distracted! We must train ourselves, it's *taka* *עבודה*, when you hear a big bang coming from the back of the *בית המדרש*, train yourself not to turn around!

You're *קונה* so much by staying focused, you show what it means *השיבות התורה*. You don't have to get involved in every little thing, and when every little thing happens, we don't have to discuss it.

### Unlimited license

I will tell you a *moridicker* *מעשה* which I heard from my father *זצ"ל*: There was a boy in the town of Slutsk by the name of Yossele. This Yossele was such a terror, the entire town feared him. Once they heard strange noises from the *ארון הקרודש* and when they opened the *ארון הקודש* they found a goat inside, that was Yossele!

It was a terrible situation, his father would beg him *ברחמים* to go sit and learn, but to no avail, he continued to be Yossele the troublemaker. He was involved in every prank in town!

*ויהי היום* he was climbing on a roof of someone's house to do some mischief when he heard a father shouting at his son. What was he shouting? "If you

carry on like this you will become like Yossele...!!”

“*Oy gevalt!*” Yossele thought to himself.

He was already the towns *משל*!

The words stabbed his heart, he went home and told his father he wants to go learn in *ישיבה*.

Yossele was adamant, so his father sent him to *ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין*. *ישיבת וואלאז'ין* interviewed Yossele, he couldn't have known much, he hadn't been in school for five years. Nevertheless, *ר' חיים* was happy to take him in.

After learning there for three years, *ר' חיים* received a telegram that Yossele's father had become extremely ill.

*ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין* called in Yossele and told him, “The truth is, *על פי שורת* you should go home, yet I have a *הרגשה* that you should stay here...”

He listened to the advice of his Rebbe and continued to learn in *ישיבה*.

A few days later he received another telegram that his father was *נפטר*.

*ר' חיים* called him in again and exclaimed, “The truth is you should go home and sit *שבעה* with the rest of the family, but nevertheless I have a *הרגשה* that you should remain here.” He didn't question and remained.

A few months later he gets another telegram that there was a fire which burnt half the town down to the ground, a terrible *שריפה*, the entire business was burnt to the ground, they needed Yossele's help to pick things up and get things going again.

Again, *ר' חיים* called him in and said, “*על פי שורת* you should be going home, but I have an *הרגשה* that you should stay here...”

A few years later, the town of Slutsk were looking for a new Rov, they sent a delegation to *ר' חיים זצ"ל*, asking him if he had anyone in mind who would be fitting for the job.

*ר' חיים מוואלאז'ין* called in Yossele and presented him before the *חשובי הקהילה* of Slutsk! At first they were all shocked, they only knew Yossele as *Yossele the meshugane!*

“He will be a good Rov for you...” said *ר' חיים*.

They accepted the decision of *ר' חיים*.

Yossele became the Rov of Slutsk, eventually becoming the famous *R' Yossel Slutsk זצ"ל*, a *מחבר ספרים* and great Rov. After a humble childhood (There's always hope for everybody never give up!).

Before he left וואלאז'ין, ר' היים called him in and said to him the following, "I had an הרגשה you shouldn't go home. What was פשט in that הרגשה?

The שטן has a כח to make somebody ill in order to disturb somebody else's learning! The שטן has a כח to kill somebody in order to disturb somebody else's learning! The שטן has the כח to make terrible שריפות in order to disturb somebody's learning! The שטן has a licence to do anything in order to stop התורה! לימוד התורה! He has the כח to do anything!

I felt that this was the שטן and that is why I made sure you remained here," He wanted to stop you becoming one of the גדולי עולם, R' Yossel Slutsk זצ"ל.

These are three נקודות which we must be מחזק ourselves with: As we are becoming older, we must train ourselves that not everything that happens out of the בית המדרש do we have to become part of, leave go of it all, we want to listen to Mozart, we are עולם הבא in עוסק, we have no שייכות to all of this.

After the *matzev*, it's all over, it's happened already, there's nothing to discuss. And we must understand that most times these disturbances are coming from the שטן, as the הפך היים once screamed when there was no breakfast to eat, "שטן! שטן! שטן! I'm not going to give in! You won't stop me from learning תורה today!" And remember, if you want a true friend, go learn and speak in learning with another בחור, that makes a קשר חזק.



**"Thought on the פרשה..."**

The famous "אמר רבי אחא, יפה שיחתן של עבדי אבות לפני המקום", פרשה in this weeks "רש"י The conversation of the אבות is more pleasing before the הקב"ה, than the תורה of their descendants. "שהרי פרשה של אליעזר כפולה בתורה", for the episode of אליעזר's quest for a wife for יצחק is doubled in the תורה, לא, "והרבה גופי תורה were given only by allusion. The תורה is מאריך when it comes to the מעשה האבות. What's the פשט? The תורה wants to show us how the אבות הקדושים lived and even how the עבדים of the אבות הקדושים lived! The תורה! The תפילות! The השגחה פרטית! They lived with the רבש"ע! The more the תורה is מאריך the more we see the דרך החיים, these are all ללימודים for us, to give us a מהלך בחיים.

But why should the rest of the תורה be written ברמיזה? We understand why the תורה is מאריך when it comes to the אבות, by why is everything else written with such an extreme רמיזה?

The תירוץ which the סופר gives is: The more the תורה is ברמיזה the more we have to work in order to work out the תורה! The more עמל and the more יגיעה the more connected to תורה one becomes! The more עמל ויגיעה the more שמחת התורה one then has!

It's not just that the מעשה האבות are specially written in length, whereas the rest of the תורה is ברמיזה! No! to see how the אבות lived their lives is דוקא and the rest of the תורה is דוקא written ברמיזה!

(ר' ישראל ראקאוו שליט"א)

[Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)

# פרשת חיי שרה

גליון 7

כ' מר חשוון תשפ"א

**מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א**

## ***The act of violence***

Around twenty-five years ago, a איד who lived in חברון by the name of Dr Boruch Goldstein, woke up one morning, took a machine gun, entered an Arab mosque and began shooting at the Arabs who were at the time worshipping on the floor. Before they managed to overpower him and kill him, he managed to murder thirty-five Arabs.

We could imagine how at the time, the גוים

around the world reacted, "Look at the Jews! Look what terrorists are found within the Jewish nation – killing innocent and defenceless worshipers!"

Every single prime minister, president and dictator condemned this act of violence.

Even in ארץ ישראל itself, the prime minister and president condemned this terrible and appalling act of violence.

In fact, this Dr Goldstein was actually a *frum* איד who had learnt in ישיבה and been brought up in a Jewish home. The non-secular Jews began announcing,

"Look at what the Jewish ישיבות produced! Look at what they teach in the Jewish ישיבות! They teach them to go kill as many Arabs and Muslims as possible! And the proof that they teach such things in the Jewish world is the fact that not one of the גדולים condemned this act!"

As a result of this, things weren't going good for the *frum* אידן in ארץ ישראל.

**"Don't reject – let them do a favour in return!"**

Several גדולים accordingly went to הרה"ג ר' שך זצ"ל proclaiming, "The

*matzev* is not going good for ארץ ישראל because of the recent event, they claim we agree with the doctors act of violence from the fact we did not condemn anything about it, which is ultimately creating a terrible השם חילול. Therefore, we ask ר' שך to sign a letter which will be sent around ארץ ישראל, condemning this act of violence."

ר' שך זצ"ל replied, "No there's no need for such a thing..."

ר' שך זצ"ל didn't waste any time and told the גדולים who came to go.

### *The true perspective*

One of the גדולים – a close תלמיד of ר' שך returned later that night asking ר' שך, “Rebbe! Why didn't ר' שך want to write this letter – ללמוד אני צריך?”

ר' שך replied with the following, “I have no idea who this Dr Boruch Goldstein is. I've never heard of him before. But one thing is certain, it is very possible he has a wife and he has children. If he was a doctor, it's very possible that he had many patients for the past 30 years, who he treated with tremendous care. Perhaps the night before the disaster, he was treating people in hospital who were injured in a terrorist attack.

That night he went to sleep, he flew a screw – something crashed in his brain, and he woke up the next morning with this brainwave to kill innocent worshipers.

Let's think about the wife and children for a moment. Her husband and their father has been killed – he's no longer here. They know him as a good man for many years, suddenly the entire world is against him! Not only that, the prime minister and other ministers in ארץ ישראל are condemning the event. Can you

imagine how they feel? They're not hearing one good word about him!

And now you want me to sign a letter condemning the attack so that we should feel more comfortable when walking in the street or going onto an אגד bus??! For that you want me to sign, which will only add to the anguish and pain of the poor אלמנה and יתומים???”

The תלמיד walked out baffled, truly mindboggling! At first, there was no other option, it was clear to the delegation who went to ר' שך זצ"ל to write such a letter. However, when we hear the perspective of דעת תורה it all changes! It's completely different, a way we would have never had thought of.

### *The lamppost*

ר' יעקב גלינסקי זצ"ל once went to visit the חזון איש. As he came in, the חזון איש asked ר' יעקב, “Did you see the new lamppost they put up outside my house?”

ר' יעקב צ"ל waited quietly to hear for an explanation from the חזון איש.

“As I came home tonight,” said the חזון איש, “I noticed that the closer I come toward the lamppost the smaller my shadow becomes.”

The חזון איש concluded, “The closer a person to הקב"ה the smaller he



becomes.” מרע"ה was an עניו מכל אדם because he was tremendously close to הקב"ה!

Likewise, we can take a powerful message in the similar light: The closer you get to גדולים and their דעת תורה with their unique insight, the more we realize how our דעה and our opinion is so small – it's nothing, we see how wrong our דעות actually are.

***דעת תורה it's רוח הקודש it's not***

Soldiers came to the shul of ר' ישראל asking for the סלנטר זצ"ל on כיפור יום asking for the Rabbi. A איד who was about to be killed for committing a terrible crime had the right to fulfil his last wish by having the Rabbi come and recite וידוי.

However, when they arrived, ר' ישראל was davening (שחרית) שמו"ע זצ"ל, so the people asked the soldiers if they could wait until he finishes.

ר' ישראל זצ"ל was taking very long, so the soldiers left.

They returned a few hours later, however, this time ר' ישראל זצ"ל was davening מוסף!

They came back a third time when ר' ישראל זצ"ל was still davening.

One of the מתפללים got up and said, “Look what a חילול השם we are

causing... I'm also a “Rov,” I'll go to say וידוי.”

איד with this וכך הוה – he went to say וידוי and he received his death penalty.

A few minuets later a messenger came in a big hurry screaming, “Stop! Stop! Don't send the Rabbi... we have found the man to be innocent...”

Unfortunately, it was too late, they had already killed him.

They afterwards asked ר' ישראל זצ"ל, “How did you know to be מאריך in your שמו"ע's? Was it רוח הקודש?”

“No it wasn't רוח הקודש!” replied ר' ישראל, “How could I have gone?! I would have been hastening another איד's death!”

That is what it means to listen to דעת תורה. They see it different. To what looks like to us as a חילול ה', looks completely different with the perspective of דעת תורה.

***The mix up***

As the עולם הזה דומה writes: מסילת ישרים “עולם הזה דומה – לחושך” – In the dark a person makes two mistakes: A person will bump into a tree or the like because of his lack of sight, and furthermore a person will mistake one object as being another object. A person will try stuff a letter down a

person and say good morning to a post-box!

In life, we often are convinced that what we think and what we are doing is right, however, the reality is: what we think is wrong is completely right, and what we think is right is completely wrong. We mix it all up.

Rather, only with true and pure דעת תורה can we look at everything in life with the correct vision and the right perspective. The אדם גדול with his דעת תורה is leading us through the maze, however, we are blind, we know and see nothing.

### ***Why's he wondering?***

I want to bring a *gevaldiga* illustration to this from this weeks סדרה which is applicable to our daily life: After traveling to הרן to find a wife for יצחק, אליעזר עבד אברהם comes to the well and finds a little girl called רבקה who quickly heeds to his request, gives אליעזר and his camels to drink; completely fulfilling what אליעזר had expected, thought and hoped would happen to choose to be a wife for יצחק.

Nevertheless, the תורה still tells us, "והאיש משתאה לה, מחריש לדעת ההצליח ה' " *The man was astonished at her, reflecting silently to know whether*

*Hashem had made his journey successful or not.* After all what occurred, he is still uncertain if she is the right girl or not?! He is wondering!?! What's his wondering all about? What he wanted and expected happened and he still wonders if this is the right girl for יצחק? (פרשת חיי שרה – גליון 9 תש"פ פ).

### ***The billionaire***

The ספורנו explains: רבקה saw the ten camels covered in gold and silver! The billionaire has come to town. רבקה maybe thinks to herself, '*I can make a pretty penny like this... I'll give him a hand or two and then cash it in...*'

– "משתאה לה, מחריש לדעת" is אליעזר wondering whether she will ask for payment or not!

"ויהי כאשר כלו הגמלים – לשתות" – The camels finished drinking and רבקה is now on her way! She's not asking for any money, she's going! Now אליעזר can see this girl being the befitting wife for יצחק.

The question therefore arises, if רבקה did not do this for payment, why when אליעזר then gave her the jewellery did she accept it (she did not yet know she was going to marry יצחק)? She must have

understood this jewellery as being payment?

### ***Rejecting favours in return***

ר' ירוחם זצ"ל explains in פרשת ויגש the true opposite to what we would have thought is considered as good behaviour: The nature of the world is that when one does a favour for another, and then afterwards the receiver will offer a חסד in return, the giver will reply, "No... no... no... no... it's fine... it's fine... Just because I did you a favour that does not mean you must give me one back in return?! I'm happy to give you a favour – you don't have to give me back anything in return!"

"But I really want to give you back a favour," continues the receiver.

"No please it's fine... I can do it myself!" says the giver.

This is the nature of a person, teaches ר' ירוחם, he goes around doing חסד to everyone, however, at the same time, not allowing anyone to give back any favours in return. He's not interested in taking anything in return, we think he is amazing.

### ***Lighting light***

The מדרש in פרשת תצוה asks: How can we light the מנורה for הקב"ה, if הקב"ה is the

giver and creator of light? הקב"ה is the יוצר אור ובורא חושך – why are we making light for הקב"ה?

The מדרש answers: הקב"ה is commanding us, "Make light for Me, like I make light for you." How exactly is the question answered?

The מדרש tells a parable about a blind man who was walking on the side of a riverbank being led by a person who could see.

On the way, they entered into a dark house where nobody could see.

The person who could see told the blind man, "Grope around in the corner... somewhere there are some matches, strike them and create light for me like I made light for you."

### ***The שעבוד***

ר' ירוחם זצ"ל teaches: The מדרש is teaching us from הקב"ה a *gevaldiga* מידה: When a person does a favour to another, the reason why a person rejects the receivers favours in return is because the giver wants the receiver to be משועבד to him לעולם ועד!

People enjoy the feeling of having people משועבד to them. However, if *yena* will pay back by doing a favour in

return, the person feels he has lost his control – he has lost his שעבוד.

Often, we do a חסד to have that טובת הנאה of *yena* being משועבד. That's how crooked the טבע האדם is, doing favours without letting anyone do a favour in return.

In fact, it's a terrible מידה – עולם הזה דומה – לחושך teach us: The real way to finish and complete a חסד is that when *yena* wants to do a חסד in return – let him, let him unburden himself and take off that שעבוד you have put onto him! Let him feel good!

ר' ירוחם זצ"ל adds: Not only let him do a favour in return, often go and give him an opportunity to do something in return!

True חסד is making *yena* feel good!

### ***The cheapest way is to pay***

The Brisker Rov made a התונה in the Wagshal hall. When Mr Wagshal met the Rov, he exclaimed, "Ah!! For the Brisker Rov I will make the price very cheap...."

The Brisker Rov replied, "The cheapest way is to pay the full price!"

Otherwise, forever, the Brisker Rov will be משועבד to Mr Wagshal, and twenty years later he'll be receiving a phone,

"It's Mr Wagshal over here... I have a cousin's nephew who wants to get into Brisk... perhaps the Rov can get him in for me..."

### ***The true חסד***

When the person wants to do a favour in return, accept it.

This is true and complete חסד.

Even though רבקה didn't do anything for any payment, but when the receiver came to give a present, she accepted, she let אליעזר unburden himself!

מודים אנהנו לך – We thank הקב"ה for letting us thank Him, because by thanking הקב"ה we unburden ourself – by thanking הקב"ה we feel better!

עפרון paid every last penny to אברהם אבינו – he didn't want to be משועבד in any way to עפרון, a גוי.

### ***Have this מידה to a גוי***

עשו. עשו sent many presents to יעקב אבינו made many attempts to do a טובה back to יעקב! He didn't want to feel משועבד, he offered to help him and his family, he offered to travel with them, etc.

רש"י the מדויק ר' מתתיהו שליט"א "ולא תשלם, עשו, יעקב said to עשו, עשו (ל"ג, ט"ו) – do not pay me up with any favours!

Regarding a dangerous גוי it's good that they feel משועבד to us! Keep them משועבד – give them many presents, you're much safer like that.

However, regarding a איד – the greatest טובה is to let the מקבל do a favour in return.

Even when people say "Thank you..." we often reply, "No, it's fine... don't mention about it..."

It's the same idea – a person wants *yena* to feel indebted for the rest of his life!

### ***The lift to a חתונה***

During the days before Corona when בחורים would go to חתונות, it would often happen when a בחור would ask a yungerman who learns in ישיבה, "If you're going to the חתונה... please after סדר at 11:00, drive past ישיבה to pick me up."

He replies, "For sure! Of course!"

You go outside a few minutes before 11:00, and you're there waiting for him to arrive.

You're waiting and waiting – it's already 11:10 and he's not arrived.

Then it begins to rain, and he still does not arrive.

At 11:15 you still hope he is going to come... but by the time the clock hits 11:25 you give up.

You start thinking to yourself, "I'm so good with him and he just forgot about me just like that..." you start thinking for various names to call the guy in your brain... you go back inside thinking to yourself, "Ohch! I really want to go to this חתונה! How could he just let me down like this??"

You try phone him to see if he could still manage... however, the phone just rings and rings without any answer!

You go to bed with a heavy heart – feeling annoyed and upset about the situation.

The next morning during סדר the yungerman comes over to you saying, "I'm really sorry but..."

Before he can even pull the words out his mouth, you straight away reply, "No... no... no... it's really fine, no problem at all... it was very good how it worked out... I really needed an early night... you don't have to even apologise... don't worry about it...!!!"

"But let me tell you what happened..." says the yungerman.

“No! It’s fine, all is okay... there’s nothing to worry about... it really was nothing at all...”

We all know of such times when *yena* tries to apologise, we don’t let him speak, because by not hearing the apology and excuse he will remain feeling guilty. You know yourself how *koched* up you were the night before!

***Let him speak!***

Says ר' ירוחם זצ"ל: A person thinks that by replying in such a way he is great *צדיק*, however, the true reason a person is not listening to the persons excuse is because you want *yena* to feel bad!! You don’t let him say his apology!

Listen to his story! Listen to his excuses! Listen to his apologies! Listen to his thank you! Let him say what he wants, let him unburden himself, he might tell you, “I came home... my daughter fell down the stairs... *הצלה* told me to take her to hospital... I left my phone at home... at 12:30 I suddenly remembered about the *חתונה*... I am really sorry...”

When you hear the excuse – you understand him, and he walks away happy without you having this bad *מידה* of feeling in control of *yena's* *שעבוד* he has toward you!

We need *הז"ל* to clarify what is considered *מידות טובות*.

*הקב"ה* teaches us the *מידה*, “Create light for Me because I create light for, because like this I will be *lightening* you – making you feel more comfortable and making you feel happier!”



Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.

# פרשת חיי שרה

גליון 9

כ"ה מר חשוון תש"פ

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

הפרשה חיי שרה teaches many perceptions of how to preform חסד, *kindness*. This is the essential part of the תורה where the תורה is teaching us how to truly accomplish חסד. We want to discuss a few נקודות to which we can actually take out למעשה.

When אליעזר arrived at the well, he remarked with the following statement, "וזהיה הנערה, אשר אמר אליה הטי נא כדך... ואמרה שתה וגם לגמליך אשקה..." (כ"ד, י"ד) *Let it be that the maiden to whom I shall say, 'Please tip your jug so I may drink,' and who replies, 'Drink, and*

*I will even water your  
have chosen for Your*

**"Everything in חסד must go  
together with all the מדות טובות."**

*camels,' her will You  
servant, for יצחק.*

Later, this was not

exactly what took place.

He asked for a little bit of water – "הגמיאני נא מעט מים מכדך". She then replied, "שתה אדני", *drink my master*. Only once אליעזר drank did she offer the camels to drink. However, the original plan was for the girl to offer אליעזר and the camels immediately? Why didn't she do as אליעזר expected and what was *taka* the reason she delayed the offering to the camels?

I once saw a *moridiker vort* based on a גמרא in 'א עמוד כ"א תענית זו: תענית איש גם זו נהום איש גם זו was lying in a sorry state. He was blind, left with no hands or feet and his entire body was covered in שחין. He was lying in a building which was about to collapse. Each leg of his bed was in a bucket of water to prevent insects from coming onto him.

One day as the building was on the verge of collapsing, his תלמידים came to remove him from the building. "Do not take me out," said נהום איש גם זו, "the house will not fall until I am out the house. First remove the כלים and furniture from the house and then remove me."

Once they removed the כלים they took out נהום איש גם זו. The moment he left; the building collapsed. Immediately, his תלמידים asked, "If you are such a צדיק why are you in such a sorry state?"

explained with the following: "It once happened when I travelled to my father-in-law. I had three donkeys, one laden with food, one laden with drink and the other was laden with me and my luggage (today it's usually the father-in-law who visits the son-in-law with three laden donkeys!). As I was traveling, a עני approached me exclaiming, "רבי פרנסני" – "give me some food! Of course, I stopped to prepare the poor man's food.

"Wait until I prepare you the food," I told him. The time I was ready to give the עני his food, he had passed out. My eyes didn't notice his starvation; consequently, I asked Hashem to become blind so that I will be punished in this world. I asked Hashem to remove my arms and feet since I did not work quick enough. I still felt this was not enough of a כפרה, accordingly I asked for my entire body to be covered in שחין."

wanted to be punished in this world since he felt he had done a terrible הטא by not serving the עני quick enough. In truth, he should have fed the עני immediately without preparing it to be a fancy delicacy.

Here, רבקה excelled in every way – even more than אליעזר expected. As far as she knew, אליעזר had been traveling for already a long time. She had no idea about the קפיצת הדרך. She saw him asking for water. It's not the time for דרשות now! Here drink – "שתה אדני" – "ותמהר" – she gives him the jug quickly! Once he finished drinking, i.e. now he was safe, I can now offer the camels to drink.

It's not always the time to make חשבונות. When there is a thirsty person standing before you, serve him immediately before worrying about the camels.

In fact, we find this idea in last weeks סדרה regarding the חסד of אברהם אבינו. ר' ישראל סלנטר. "וימהר אברהם... ויאמר מהרי, תורה teaches, "מלאכים" arrived, the תורה teaches: "וזצ"ל teaches: When the three מלאכים arrived, the תורה teaches, "וימהר אברהם... ויאמר מהרי, ויאמר מהרי...". However, later regarding the meat, חמאה and חלב we don't find אברהם אבינו hurried. The first thing you bring to a guest must be quick. Bring it quickly because the "עני" may be starving hungry. The main course can wait till later, that does not require a "hurry".

Often, we get so carried and make so many חשבונות. We must understand however: When something is urgent it must get done straight away!



ל saved hundreds and thousands of אידן during the second world war. He managed to get through to the deputy of Eichmann y"m to negotiate exchanging אידן for money. He needed the money. He approached the Zionists. They wrote back letters with such a רשעות saying they couldn't spare their money for such a cause.

ר' אליעזר סילבער זצ"ל in America, too, tried raising money. He went around collecting on שבת because every two dollars can save another Jew! One organization he contacted in America sent back a telegram, "We set up a committee."

He sent back to them a telegram, "THERE IS NO TIME FOR COMMITTEES! NO DISCUSSIONS! WE NEED MONEY!"

This is what the פסוק is teaching us: There is no time to tell me what I am going to do, rather, now and quickly "שתה אדני".

Only once he finished drinking did she offer the camels to drink as well. However, why did אליעזר expect her to give the camels as well?

Explains the הלוי: When people do חסד, they must make sure it's being done with taking into consideration שכל and דרך ארץ. [Often, people preform lots of חסד, but neglect their own family. Charity and חסד starts at home.]

If רבקה has שכל when she gives אליעזר to drink, she wouldn't simply take the remaining water from the jug home. This stranger perhaps is carrying a disease. You can't take water from a jug which a stranger drank from, back to your home.

She can't take it home and thereby endanger her family. What other option does she have? Her other option can be to pour the water onto the floor. However, this would be rather embarrassing for אליעזר to watch this in front of his face. To take it home is not שכל and to pour it on the floor is not דרך ארץ.

אליעזר is therefore testing her: she has חסד. True. But has she got שכל? Will she take the remaining water home? Has she got דרך ארץ? Will she embarrass me? She is left with one option: To give the remaining water to the camels! Accordingly, she won't be endangering her family, and neither will she be embarrassing אליעזר.

By the time she fills the bucket many-a-time for the camels, the bucket will be cleaned from all diseases, leaving it safe to return home. Again, she excelled beyond his expectation.

Continues the הלוי: Often, when using a bottle of a friend, a person will rub his thumbs around the lip of the bottle. This, is too, often embarrassing since the friend notices! She thought to herself, "This stranger might think I am offering to feed the camels just to cover up the embarrassment." Accordingly, she exclaimed, "אשאב עד אם – כלו לשתות" "I will draw until they finish drinking!"

"I'm not going to finish off my bucket by feeding one of them. On the contrary, I will give to drink every single one of the camels until they all finish drinking completely!" We are talking about filling up 100 gallons of water! As far as she was concerned the camels had been traveling for three days. Their tanks were empty! She was unknowledgeable how much water was required until – עד אם כלו לשתות. As far as she was concerned, she was saying עד אם כלו לשתות, in order so that he shouldn't feel that she is doing something not to embarrass him!

The greatest פלא of the פרשה is, "והאיש משתאה לה, מחריש לדעת ההצליח ה' דרכו אם לא", *The man was astonished at her, reflecting silently to know whether Hashem had made his journey successful or not.* After all what occurred, he is still uncertain if she is the right girl or not?! He is wondering!?! What's his wondering all about? The impossible just took place. Beyond his imagination happened and he still wonders if this is the right girl for יצחק?

was flying for a חתונה's תלמיד ר' מרדכי גיפטער זצ"ל from one place in America to another place in America. Halfway during the flight, the pilot announced, "Due to a sudden storm we must land immediately." They land in a small airport in middle of nowhere. Once they came off the plane and realizing it was beginning to hit nightfall, they *davened* מנחה. During מנחה there was a person who watched them *daven*. He probably had never seen a Jew in his life.

After מנחה he came over asking if he can say קדיש. Of course they allowed him. However, the person had no idea how to say קדיש. Slowly, word by word he managed to say קדיש. After he concluded, they all immediately sked for an explanation.

"Last night," he said, "My father came to me in a dream. He told me, '40 years ago I was נפטר and you haven't said once קדיש for me!?' I told him, 'Dad! What do you want from my life? You brought me up as a secular Jew. We never went to shul and suddenly you

want me to say קדיש for you? I don't even know what קדיש is! I'm not interested.' My father then told me, 'But I need it urgently...!!! Please just do me that טובה...'

'Listen here dad,' I said, 'if there would be a מנין in the town I will go, but I'm not traveling to New York just to say קדיש! I have a job, I've made arrangements. I'm sorry: nothing doing.'

My father then asked, 'If I send you a מנין tomorrow to your town, will you then say קדיש?!" Unlikely for such an event to happen, I agreed to say קדיש.

I woke up thinking I had just had the most strangest dream. I haven't seen a Jew in this town for a few decades already. I go to work in the airport and to my surprise I find a מנין of Jews!"

We see many ideas from this story, and we can learn many lessons from such a story. One idea we see is: This fellow who had absolutely no שייכות to *Yiddishkeit* saw the impossible happened. He saw the impossible take place and therefore understood it was a time to say קדיש for his father. אליעזר saw the impossible take place, why wasn't he then convinced for her to be the right girl?

I was once leaving ארץ ישראל as a בחור. As I was in the conveniences in the airport there was a person cleaning up. Very nicely, he opened the door for me. I came out, washed my hands, however, I did not find any paper towels. Suddenly, the person took out from his pocket some paper towels and gave them to me! Wow *gevaldig* – only in ארץ ישראל – "מי כעמך ישראל" – *Moridik!* I walked away with the wet paper towels in my hand, yet I did not find any dustbin to put them in. "Give it to me... give it to me..." said the person. I gave it him ממש feeling "מי כעמך ישראל!!" I walk a bit further away and suddenly I got a tap on my shoulder, "זזה חמש שקל... חמש שקל" – it costs five שקל! It was then when I thought to myself, "*Ye taka - only in ארץ ישראל!*"

In one moment the entire חסד disappears. That big balloon had popped.

רבקה saw the ten camels covered in gold and silver! The billionaire has come to town. רבקה maybe thinks to herself, *I can make a pretty penny like this... I'll give to drink to him and all his camels and then turn around for a \$500 bill! (in pounds, euros, franks – whatever you want!)*

The ספורנו opens our eyes with just telling us a few words: She was running up and down! *Shlepping* water - being the busiest person in the world!

אליעזר is "מחריש לדעת", משהוא לה, – he is wondering, reflecting whether she will ask for payment or not!

No! None of it. "וייה כאשר כלו הגמלים לשתות" – The camels finished drinking and רבקה is now on her way! She's not asking for any money, she's going! This is true חסד. Now אליעזר can see this girl being the befitting wife for יצחק.

This is a true חסד.

The question then arises: If she was not doing this חסד for payment, - but rather for complete and pure חסד; when he gave her the jewellery it seemed he was giving it to her as payment (רבקה did not yet know this was because she was going to marry יצחק). Accordingly, why did she accept the jewellery as payment?

ר' ירוחם זצ"ל teaches: When ראובן does to שמעון a big favour and then שמעון offers a favour back in return to ראובן, the טבע האדם is for ראובן to reply, "no no no... it's fine..." You think you are a very good person by saying that. "I do favours to *yena*, but I don't need *yena* to do me any favours."

When you do to somebody a favour, you want that טובה הנאה for him to be indebted to you your entire life לעולמי ועד. חסד is to make people feel comfortable. When I receive a favour, I don't want to feel indebted, rather I wish to pay up a favour in return immediately. Otherwise, my entire life I will be indebted to you.

By letting a person do a מעשה חסד in return makes the person feel much better: he is no longer indebted. Letting a person do a חסד in return is true חסד. ר' ירוחם זצ"ל writes: When you do to someone a big חסד, give him the opportunity to perform a חסד in return! You make the fellow feel good! That is the "השלמה" of a true חסד.

The guy wants to say thank you, pay you or do a small favour in return. Don't shut his mouth! Let him do that מעשה חסד in return. He wants to pay you back – unburden himself. Listen to him! Let him speak out his gratefulness as long as he wants.

This is why she accepted the money! Indeed, this is true מדות טובות. Certainly, she did not do this חסד for the money, but now you want to pay me so pay me: "if it makes you happy to do a favour in return then please do it! Fine, pay me." It's all an השלמה in the entire מצוה of completing true חסד.

When we do חסד we must do it all with a balance. Make sure everything is right. Let me share with you one short story I heard this week: בחורים were learning and ר' שלמה

came in, stood up at the בימה and stopped the learning to say over the following דבר מוסר:

This past שבת I was in בית-וגן for an אופראף שבת. morning I walk to shul and see the father of the חתן carrying eight chairs to shul, four in each arm. The חתן next to his father wasn't carrying anything.

ר' שלמה זלמן זצ"ל was very surprised.

On the way back from shul, again, the father was carrying eight chairs – in the boiling heat - and the חתן was holding nothing, "חתן דומה למלך". ר' שלמה זלמן was very upset. He walks over to the חתן and says, "כיבוד אב?!" The חתן responded, "I don't carry in the עירוב."

ר' שלמה זלמן זצ"ל was shocked! (I'm sure ר' שלמה זלמן himself the פוסק הדור didn't carry in the עירוב even in (!בית-וגן)) He told the בחורים, "WHERE HAVE WE GONE WRONG?! How can it be such a thing? ואם כיבוד אב is a מצוה מן התורה and you come with a חומרה not to carry in the עירוב which your own father doesn't even keep to!" You can see how his whole השקפה was.

We must get a balance in everything. What's right and what's wrong. We must take a global picture. We cannot allow ourselves to get carried away and allow ourselves to get distracted. This is this weeks פרשה: רבקה אמנו took everything into consideration! Everything went into חשבון. We cannot accomplish חסד and forget the שכל and דרך ארץ. Everything in חסד must go together with all the מדות טובות.

Transcribed by אברהם דוב הכהן כהן - Avrohom Dov Kohn.

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.