״הַזּוֹרְעִים בְּדִמְעָה
בְּרִינָה יִקְצֹרוּ״
בָּא יָבֹא בְּרִינָה״
בנשיאות מו"ר הגאון ר' יעקב אדלשטיין זצ"ל

לֶךְ לְךָ

Newsletter Number 803 Year 17 This newsletter is dedicated for an Aliyah of the Neshamah of Maran Rav Ovadiah Yosef son of Gorjia Ztk"l 19 of Cheshvan 5787

A word from the editor:

It is written in the Parshah: "And Avraham responded and said, "Behold, now I desired to speak to my G-d, although I am but dust and ashes"(18, 27). On this Pasuk, it is brought down in the Midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 49,11): "Avra ham said, if Amarfel would have killed me, would I not have been dust?! A nd if Nimrod would have burned me, would I not have been ashes?!" In Avraham's prayer for the people of Sedom, Avraham emphasizes his nothingness before Hashem and he reminds Hashem that he is like dust because of the episode in Ur Kasdim and also because of the war with the kings. Avraham Avinu lived all his live with great humility. In the merit of living this way and seeing himself in this light, it is brought in the same Midrash what his reward was: "Hashem says to Avraham, "On your life, you said "I am but dust and ashes", on your life that I will give your children an atonement," as it says (Bammidbar 19, 17): "And they shall take for the contaminated person some of the ashes of the burning of the purification (animal)". (Bamidbar 19, 9): "A pureman shall gather the ash of the cow". In the Gemara (Talmud Yerushalmi, Sotah 81, Halachah 4), a story is brought down about Rebbe Meir Baal Haness who was accustomed to giving a lecture every Friday night and his lecture was very long. In his lecture, there was a lady who came to listen and she went home very late because of the length of the lecture. When she arrived home, she saw that the door of her house was locked and her husband does not want to open it. He told her, "If you want to come home, you have to go and spit in the face of Rebbe Meir Baal Haness, and if you do not spit in his face, I will not allow you to return home". The lady knew that her husband did not respect the righteous and if she does not listen to him, she will lose out on her Shalom Bayit (marital harmony). On the other hand, she cannot go spit in the face of Rebbe Meir Baal Haness. In the meantime, she went back to the women's section in the shul and she told all her friends what happened to her. Rebbe Meir Baal Haness saw all of this with his Ruach Hakodesh (Divine spirit) and so he said, "My eyes are hurting. Is there any lady who knows how to spit in my eyes and say the specific prayer that will get rid of the pain?" Immediately, the ladies turned to that lady and said, "Go spit in his eyes". She answered, "But I do not know the proper prayer to say". But Rebbe Meir called her and said, "Spit in my eye seven times". The lady did it with much fear and trepidation. Afterwards Rebbe Meir Baal Haness told her, "Go tell your husband, you told me to spit once, but I spit seven times". The students asked Rebbe Meir, "Our Rebbe, you humiliated yourself by telling her to spit in your eyes seven times just because her husband told her to do such a thing"? Rebbe Meir answered them, "Whose honor is greater, the honor of Hashem or my honor? For sure, the honor of Hashem is greater since Hashem wrote in the Torah that if a husband feels that his wife is not alright and he wants to give her a divorce and their marital harmony is in jeopardy, the Creator of the World says, Heaven Forbid, do not do this. Take her to the Beit HaMikdash, write the scroll (in which verses are written and among them, the name of Hashem) and then place the scroll in water where the verses will get erased even though My Name will be erased as well. Then take the water and give it to her to drink in order for her to be able to return home in peace".

If Hashem can give up on His Honor in order to make peace between Rebbe Meir the holy Tana, was eady to humiliate himself in order that there be peace between a couple.

Hashem repaid Avraham for every word of humility. See how much Hashem repays one for every action of humility and for every time he runs away from Honor. And this is what David HaMelech (David the king of Yisrael) said when he was annointed as king, "Hashem, my heart is not haughty, nor my eyes lofty", meaning,"Everything is from you, my Father in Heaven". The opposite of humility is haughtiness. How much does a person need to distance himself from this characteristic of haughtiness?! One needs to undersand that his success is dependent on the kindness of Hashem and not on "his ten fingers". If we take this to heart, then Hashem will for sure rest his Divine presence on us and we will find favor in His eyes, and in the eyes of all His creations.

Lech-Lecha – a summary of the points in the Parashah

1. Avraham is recovering from his Brit Milah and Hashem comes to visit him – Bikur Cholim – Mitzvah of visiting a sick person.
2. The Mitzvah of hospitality (the angels) that Avraham Avinu fullfilled.
3. Avraham and Sarah are told by one of the angels about the birth of Yitzchak, who will be born next year (18,1-15).
4. He angels are guests by Lot, the overturning of Sedom and Amorah and the saving of Lot and his family (17-19, 1-38).
5. Avraham and Sarah in Grar, the lesions on Avimelech's skin and his healing (chapter 20).
6. The birth of Yitzchak, the happiness of Sarah, and the big feast.
7. The chasing away of Hagar and her son from the house of Avraham (21, 1-21).
8. The covenant between Avraham and Avimelech, the king of Grar, in Beer Sheva (22-34).
9. The Akeidat Yitzchak - binding of Yitzchak – the tenth test (22, 1-19).
10. he news of Rivkah being born from the sons of Nehor (22, 20-24).

"And he said... Please pass not away from your servant" (18, 3)

he Gemara says (Shabbat 127): "From here were learn that the Mitzvah of hospitality is greater than receiving the Shechina (Divine presence)". The question is asked: From where did Avraham know this Halachah (law), that the Mitzvah of hopitality is greater than receiving the Shechinah and how was it permissible to leave the Shechinah and to run to greet the guests instead? But Avraham learned this Halachah from the fact "that Hashem took the sun out of its covering in order not to bother Avraham with guests". (Rashi verse1). So we see a proof from here that when the guests come to him, he should not give importance to the fact that the Shechinah is present, but he should be obligated to receive the guests... (The Rav from Shepetivka, Zt'l).

The body of Avraham Avinu was so holy that his limbs would run by themselves to do the will of Hashem. Therefore, Avraham felt as if his legs were carrying him of their own accord and running to the guests. From this, Avraham understool that this is the Halachah – "The Mitzvah of hospitality is greater than receiving the Shechinah" (The holy Rav Adler Zt'l and the Maharam from Permishlan Zt'l).

What can we get from this Halachah for us? From this we learn, that even though hospitality sometimes causes us to neglect Torah learning, we should not pay attention to this and we should do this Mitzvah as it is greater than receiving the Shechinah (in the name of the Baal Shem Tov Zt'l). If Avraham Avinu would have isolated himself and would have secluded himself in the service of Hashem, he would have surely reached great heights in his understanding of Hashem. Even so, he passed up on his personal attainment of great levels in order to bring people closer to the service of Ha shem and to be able to bring others under the wings of the Shechinah. This was the purpose of Avraham's hospitality; like our sages say, after he would give his guests to eat and drink, he would teach them how to thank Hashem who gives bread to all to eat. Avraham saw that spreading Em unah (faith) to other people is a greater service than personal as cendance in serving Hashem. This is the greatness of bringing merit to the masses. Therefore, this is the meaning of the phrase "Greater is the Mitzvah of hospitality th an reciving the Shechinah" – Greater is the Mitzvah of bringing stran gers under the wings of the Shechinah than personal growth in understanding Hashem. Therefore, Avrahahm sacrificed his own "receivin g of the Shechinah" for the "Mitzvah of hospitality". (Avnei Ezel)

"And Avraham responded and he said, "Behold, now, I desired to speak to my G-d altho ugh I am but dust and ashes." (18, 27)

"Whoever has in his hand these three things is considered to be of the disciples of Avraham Avinu. And three other things, is of the disciples of Bilam the wic ked. A generous eye, a humble spirit spirit, and a meek soul, he is of the disciples of Avraham Avinu. An evil eye, a proud spirit, and a haughty soul, is of the disciples of Bilam the wicked. (Avot 5, 19)

What is the difference between the student of Avraham Avinu and the students of Bilam

When we see a modest person who hides himself, we think what will this person accom plish with his extranuous humility as he is not interacting with other pe ople. There are even some people who do not give him the proper respect. In contrast, you have the haughty person who walks with a fully erect posture, he is the first one to speak up and he jumps up to be the head eve rywhere; we think that such a person certainly will see the fruits of his la bor in his lifetime, but it is not the case. There is a parable of a king who had two sons and he sent his two sons out into the world to learn the ways of the world. He sent one son with great honor and splendor that befits the son of a great king to one country. The second son he sent out to a different country as a simple person with disgrace to the point that you could not even tell that he was the son of a king.

The first son saw that the country he was sent to is good and that it is befitting to add it to his father's kingdom. He started to walk the country with haughtiness and he began to verbally ask for honor until he started a war with the country. When the people of the country saw the nature of the king's son, they rallied against him in unity, won the war, and expelled him from their country. He returned to his father (the king) in shame. The second son, however, came to the other country as a simple person, he deferred to to the people of the land and interacted with them peacefully. He showed his knowledge to the people as was proper for a king's son until everyone started to love him. They saw his good ways and he became so loved by the people that the people did not feel him taking over and con quering them with his humility. When he returned to the king, he brought as a gift for his father this country who wanted to join the kingdom and a few other countries who wanted to join as well because they l oved this son so much.

So too is the situation with the humble person who surrenders himself and the haughty one who boasts. The haughty person is recognizeed immediately and he can only rule for a tiny bit of time. However, the humble person, in the beginning people do not recognize him and they do not listen to him; but as time passes, people recognize his nature and his character and they accept his leadership willingly. (Baal Shem Tov)

Being sensitive to other people's feelings

The great Rabbi, Rav Shalom Yosef Elyashiv Zya'a (may his merit protect us, Amen) was famous not only for his great knowledge in all the aspects of the holy Torah, but also for his great characteristics regarding matters between man and his fellow.

One time, a person entered Rav Elyashiv's house with a question, "Rebbe! Right now, Hashem blessed me with a son and I want to call him Yehonatan, but my wife is opposed to naming him this, arguing that the neighbor's son who passed away at a young age was named Yehonatan and she is afraid for our son's life. What does the Rav think"? Rav Elyashiv Zt'l thought about this and then answered, "It is worthwhile to call him Betzalel". The man went on his way and did as the Rav said. After a while, the man met Rav Elyashiv and asked him, "Why? Why did the Rav decide at that time to call him Betzalel and not Yehonatan"? The Rav answered him, "Since you said that the neighbor's son is named Yehonatan, I was afraid that when your son would get older and you would call his name and say, "Yehonatan! Come upstairs" or Yehonatan! Come eat" or even if you were to yell at him and say, "Yehonatan! Stop acting up", I was sure that every time you would call his name, the neighbor would remember her son who passed away and she would grieve. Since I did not want to cause her more sorrow, I advised you to call him Betzalel since whoever prevents causing anguish to another Jew will merit to sit "BeTzel E-l" – in the shadow of Hashem"!

"And he saw and behold three men are standing besides him". (18,2)

In Rashi it says: One came to tell news to Sarah and one to overturn Sedom and to heal Avraham since one angel cannot fulfill two missions. Refael who healed Avraham went from there to save Lot.

And there is a question here: If an angel cannot fulfill two missions, why then was another angel not sent to save Lot? In truth, Lot was saved in the merit of David HaMelech, A'h who would be a descendant of Lot in the future. David HaMelech was a descendent of Rut the Moabite who married Boaz regardless of her ancestry.

This was according to the Halachah that was learned out in that generation for the first time which was: "A person from the nation of Amon and a person from the nation of Moav shall not come... – a man from Amon and not a woman, a man from Moav and not a woman." The reason for this Halachah is that it says in the Torah, "A person from Amon and a person from Moav shall not come... because they did not greet you with bread and water". This, however, is not relevant to ladies because it is the nature of man to come out and greet and not the nature of a woman to greet," because a woman is obligated to be modest "The beauty of the king's daughter is within" – and she does not have to go out and greet strange men with bread and water. (Yevamot 76)

It is known that in the Heavens they rule Halachah according to how it is established down on the earth. Therefore, at the time when the angels asked Avraham, "Where is Sarah your wife"? and he answered them, "Behold, she is in the tent" – "She is modest" (Rashi verse 9), that is when the laws of conducting onself modestly was established in the Jewish nation of "It is not the way of a woman to go out and greet".

And from here, an opening was created for the Halachah of "A man from Moav and not a woman". Therefore, when the angels were sent out, it was not possible to send out a specific angel to save Lot since the merit of David was still not for certain because the Halachah was still not clarified about whether he will be able to enter the Jewish nation if he is a descendat of Lot. Only when Avraham answered, "Behold, she is in the tent" and the Halachah was clarified of "A man from Amon and not a woman, a man from Moav and not a woman". Then it was clarified that Lot should be saved in the merit of David. Only then was the mission given to the angel to save Lot. (Chidushei Harim)

When Rav Shlomo Kluger Zt'l was appointment as the Rav of Brod, he was honored to be a Sandak on the first day. When he arrived at the Brit, he heard that the father of the baby was dying. It was a Minhag in Brod that in such a situation they would delay the Brit Milah until after the father passes away so that they could name the child after his father. But Rebbe Kluger ordered that they should quicky get a Minyan of 10 Jews in order to do the Brit. Right after finishing the Brit, the father completely recovered. It is understood that the whole city was taken aback by what occurred. Rebbe Shlomo Kluger Zt'l told them that he learned this from the Rashi mentioned above.

Were there angels lacking in heaven? Another angel could have been sent to save Lot instead of the angel that came to heal Avraham. From here we see that the merit of Lot was still not great enough to send a specific angel to save him. Therefore, it had to be that Lot should be saved through the same angel that Avraham was healed.

Rav Shlomo Kluger said, this is what I thought. "It is obvious that they are judging the father of the boy in heaven right now and it is possible that he does not have enough merits in order to send Eliyahu HaNavi to bring him a complete recovery. Therefore, I ordered for the boy to immediately have a Brit Milah so then Eliyahu HaNavi would for sure come to the Brit Milah and then he would at the same time bring a full recovery for the sick father.

In the Midrash it says (Tanchuma 4): "And behold, the people were standing besides, him". – the blood of Brit Milah began to drip. Hashem said to him: "On your life, I will have mercy on your children with two bloods and I will exact punishment from your enemies as it says, "And I passed by you and saw you downtrodden with your blood (Yechezkel 16, 6), two bloods as it says, "And I said to you with your blood live," this is the blood of Pesach. "And I said to you with your blod live", this is the blood of Brit Milah. "And he saw and he ran towards them" – Hashem said to him, in the merit of the runnings that you ran, I will run before your children three times by the giving of the Torah. These are the three times Avraham ran: He ran to greet the guests, he ran to get the cow and he hurried to prepare it for the guests. How did Hashem repay this to Avraham's children? At Har Sinai, as it says, "He said: Hashem came from Sinai and shone forth from Seir to them; He appeared from Mount Paran" (Devarim, 33, 2).

The binding of Yitzchak

This Shabbat is named for the binding of Yitzchak. Hashem said to Avraham "Take your son, your only one, whom you love, - Yitzchak – and bring him up there as an offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell you". Avraham gets up early in the morning and arrives at Har HaMoriah where he is going to bind Yitzchak. He takes the knife to slaughter his son and then at the critical moment, a moment before Avraham is going to slaughter Yitzchak, an angel of Hashem comes and says to Avraham, "Do not stretch out your hand agsainst the lad nor do anything to him for now I know that you are a G-d-fearing man".

"And Avraham raised his eyes and saw – behold, a ram! – afterwards, caught in the thicket by its horns; so, Avraham went and took the ram and offered it up as an offering instead of his son. The angel of Hashem called to Avraham a second time from heaven. And he said, "By myself I swear – the word of Hashem – that because you hve done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only one, that I shall surely bless you and greatly increase your offspring like the stars of the heavens...".

The question is asked, why did the angel of Hashem bless Avraham only after he appeared a second time after Avraham had slaughtered the ram? Why did the angel not bless Avraham when he appeared to him the first time when Avraham was about to slaughter Yitzchak – when the angel came to tell Avraham "Do not sretch out your hand against the lad". Would it not have been appropriate to bless Avraham then for the self-sacrifice he revealed!? Is the ram more important than Yitzchak, that only after Avraham slaughtered the ram did Avraham merit to get a blessing for his offspring to be multiplied like the stars in the sky? In order to understand this, we will tell a story about Rav Aryeh Levin Zt'l, who was known as the Rav of the prisoners. This took place 70 years ago in Yerushalayim at the time that the British were ruling over Yerushalayim. Rav Aryeh was walking to visit sick people in the hospitals and to visit the prisoners in jails in order to give them encouragement and to be with them during their time of pain. One night, the British posed a night curfew and it was forbidden for any citizen to be walking around outside at night.

Rav Levin did not pay any attention to the curfew. He went out to visit a prisoner who was jailed in "Kishla", a jail that belonged to the British police located at the gate of Yaffo in Yerushalayim (that was built by the Ottomans at the end of the 1800s).

On his way to the Yaffo gate, two British officers stopped him, one of them a Jew and the other a non-Jew. The officer who was a Jew recognized Rav Aryeh Levin and knew about his deeds of loving-kindness and wanted to allow Rav Aryeh to continue on his way. He tried to explain to the other police officer that the Rav has no intention of rebelling against the government and that the whole purpose of Rav Aryeh being out is that he is going to give the sick people some encouragement. However, the British officer did not agree and ordered Rav Aryeh to go home immediately. The Rav turned around, but he found a hole in the gate on the side and he tried to pass through there. Even there, the officers caught him trying to climb over the gate to get to "Kishla" with all his might.

Immediately, the non-Jewish officer jumped up and to the surprise of the Jewish officer he said, "Please, your honor the Rav! You are given permission to go where you want to go". The Jewish officer was surprised and he asked his friend, "What changed your mind?" The non-Jewish officer answered him, "In the beginning, I thought the Rav is doing what he is doing because he is getting paid for it, so I did not give him permission, but now that I see his self-sacrifice and the way he endangered himself to visit the prisoner, I understood that his intentions are for the sake of Heaven. He could have decided to go home because it was dangerous for him, but instead he decided to endanger his own life for another Jew that he does not know in order to visit him; he did not give up. Therefore, I saw that he is a holy man and I gave him permission to go to Kishla. In light of the story, we can understand our question. Avraham was commanded to bring Yitzchak up as a sacrifice and he did so, but at the last minute the angel told him, "Do not stretch out your hand on the lad". Any other person in the situation would have quickly taken his son and immediately returned home; he would not have waited around on Har HaMoriah for another moment - maybe they will ask him again to slaughter his son. Avraham, on the other hand, stayed there and he did not say, "Blessed am I who was absolved. Instead, he tried to bring a different sacrifice, at least a ram.

ברינה יקצורו

Avraham revealed here that he does not fulfill the Mitzvot by force and that when he is not obligated to do something, he returns to his routine. The opposite, he is not commanded to sacrifice Yitzchak, but he still wants to bring a sacrifice. Here Avraham revealed his desire and love for truly doing the will of Hashem. If someone wants to know if he is doing the will of Hashem from love or by force, the test is when he is not obligated to do something, for example, when he is sick or when he is in a situation that absolves him from doing Mitzvot. Does he say, "Blessed am I who was absolved" or does he feel anguish that he lost out on doing a Mitzvah (Rebbe Zevadiah Cohen Shlita).

"And Hashem appaered to him in Elonei Mamre..."(18, 1)

All the days of the Marharil Diskin Zt'l –"the Saraf of Brisk", who lit up of the skies of Yerushalayim about 100 years ago, were holy to Hashem and he did not take his mind off for one moment from delving into the Torah and clinging to his Creator. During the meals at this house, a lot of guests would be at his table, but he himself would not wash for bread. He would have a quick meal and sit at the head of the table immersed in his learning. One day, during one of the meals, he suddenly got up and moved to sit at a different spot. Everyone turned their gaze towards him. The rav realized there is an elderly person who is missing teeth and is having a hard time chewing his bread, so he took the bread, peeled off the crust and gave him the soft pieces with a happy face. When the guests finished their meal and left, his son, Rav Dov Ber Grossberg Zt'l asked his permission to ask a question: "The Rav was totally immersed in his learning, so how did he realize this elderly person is having a hard time eating"? The Rav answered, "You asked a good question, but why are you asking here. Why did you not ask this by Parashat Vayera"? The son asked, "In Parashat Vayera? What is there to ask there"? The Saraf answered, "In Parashat Vayera it says that Hashem appeared to Avraham. Do we understand the concept of prophesy and how great it is? Do we have any conception of what kind of great clinging to Hashem the prophet experiences during prophesy, to the point that he loses all his senses? We see that during the prophesy Avraham saw the three guests and he runs to greet them. Why is it that you did not ask there how he realized they were there and how he saw them"? Rav Dov Ber answered, "That is a valid question, and so what is the answer?" The Saraf replied, "There and here the answer is the same. When you need to do an act of loving-kindness, you are able to see". There is a story about the Tzemach Tzedek of Lubavitch Zt'l. When he was a young man, he was staying at his grandfather's house, the Baal HaTanya Zya'a, and one time the Tzemach Tzedek was completely immersed in his Torah learning and he did not here his baby crying. The baby cried until his cries became louder and louder and they were even heard by his grandfather upstairs. When the grandfather heard the cries of his great-grandchild, he came downstairs and he was surprised that his grandson got up when he saw the Baal HaTanya, but the Baal HaTanya turned towards the crying baby and picked him up to soothe him. Immediately, his grandchild apologized to him and said, "Please forgive me. I was immersed in my learning and did not hear anything". The Baal HaTanya replied, "I know my son, I know, but tell me was I less immersed in my learning than you??? Or was I closer to the crib than you??? But what? I will tell you a rule and remember this and engrave it upon your heart!

It is not possible for a Jew, on which ever level he may be, that he should not hear the voice of another Jew crying, even if that Jew is so little... And it is not right if he does not stop what he is doing as great as he may be to lower himself and try to help quiet the cry of another Jew".



WITH BLESSINGS OF TORAH
RON BARINA

Rav Ron Barina is a 30 year veteran of the air-force. Since he retired, he has served as a consultant who travels from Israel to USA to also meet with USA air force representatives in the area of engineering/technology. He now dedicates most of his time to learning, teaching and spreading the sweet Torah. He learns with the Gaonim Rav Meir Mazuz Shlita, Rav Yaakov Edelstein, and Rav Avraham Yosef Shlita. He resides with his lovely wife and children in Ramat Hasharon. If you travel to Israel, you are welcome to visit his house and drop in on a class at Hashomer Street, #8, Ramat Hasharon.

"The preparation of the heart are man's, but the answer of the tongue is from Hashem" (Mishlei 16, 1)

L'Iluy Nishmat:



My teacher, my father : Yaakov ben Rahel and Tzadok
My beloved mother: Sarah-Serach bat Simchah and Yosef
My father-in-law : Marchus Mordechai ben Rivkah and Yosef
Rav Yaakov ben Miriam Ztk'l : Yaakov Yisrael ben Galit
Rav Shalom Ovadiah ben Ovadiah Zt'l : Rav Yaakov ben Margalit Zt'l : Mosheh Aharon ben Meir Yitzchak : Tzvi Aryeh ben Aba David and Miriam : Yaakov ben Salam : Binyamin ben Shulamit Rahamim ben Chauru Avraham : Menachem Mendel ben Avraham and Tziporrah : Meir Ben Simchah : The Rabanit Mina bat Mordechai Shemuel Yaffa Nidra bat Neima : Miriam bat Aziza Rahel Bulur bat Miriam : Katun bat Chaviva Rabant Batsheva Esther Kanievsky : Rahel bat Chana

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Due to this newsletter containing the name of Hashem, it needs Genizah (proper burial). Please do not throw away.