בס"ד

# Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

*Parshas Noach 5787* *Year 17 #695* פרשת וירא תשפ"ז

## *The Paradox of the Joyful Sinner: Understanding the Word* וְהִנֵּה

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה' בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם: וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲנָשִׁים נִצָּבִים עָלָיו וַיַּרְא וַיָּרָץ לִקְרָאתָם (יח א–ב)

"And Hashem appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, while he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day." Think of the sheer holiness of this moment. Avraham is immersed in direct communion with Hashem, Who comes to visit him. Yet, the Torah tells us, וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲנָשִׁים נִצָּבִים עָלָיו וַיַּרְא וַיָּרָץ לִקְרָאתָם "And he lifted his eyes and saw, and behold, three men were standing over him; and he saw, and he ran to meet them."we are met with one of the most breathtaking moments in the entire Torah. Avraham, our forefather, sits at the entrance of his tent in the blistering heat of the day, recovering from his circumcision.

Our sages in the Talmud take note of this extraordinary sequence and teach us a foundational rule of Jewish life: גדולה הכנסת אורחין יותר מהקבלת פני שכינה (שבועות דף לה:)—"Great is hospitality to guests, even greater than receiving the Face of the Divine Presence." Avraham excuses himself, as it were, from the Almighty Himself, to run out into the burning desert heat and welcome three weary wanderers. But when you pause to reflect on this, a deep question presents itself. How did Avraham know to do this? How did he possess the certainty that it was right to step away from the ultimate spiritual ecstasy of greeting Hashem, just to serve lunch to three strangers walking by?

To understand this, we must look to the heilige Tiferet Shlomo, who reveals a fundamental principle about Avraham Avinu. Avraham worked on himself, purifying his physical existence so thoroughly, that he sanctified every single one of his limbs He brought his body into such alignment with the Divine Will that his limbs could literally do nothing other than what Hashem wanted him to do at that exact moment. His hands, his eyes, his feet were no longer merely physical instruments; they were a living compass responding instantly to the Divine pulse.

We see this echoed throughout Avraham's life. When Hashem said to him, לֶךְ לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַרְאֶךָּ "Go forth from your land... to the land that I will show you"—Hashem did not give him a map or name the city. Yet Avraham just started walking, because he knew his holy feet would physically carry him only where the Almighty wanted him to go. Years later, at the Akeidah, when he bound his beloved son, the Torah records, וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת יָדוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַמַּאֵכֶלֶת לִשְׁחֹט אֶת בְּנוֹ—"And Avraham stretched forth his hand, and took the cleaver to slaughter his son." The commentaries explain that as Avraham raised his hand, he felt his arm freeze; his physical limbs refused to carry out the slaughter. Before the angel even uttered a word, Avraham knew through his own sanctified body that the Almighty did not truly desire the sacrifice of Isaac. Therefore, he listened to the angel!

This is the very key to understanding what happened at Mamre. Avraham was sitting in deep, radiant dveikut, cleaved to the Divine Presence. But suddenly, he lifted his eyes and found himself looking at three travelers. Notice how the Torah repeats the word וַיַּרְא—"and he saw"—twice in close succession. First, he raised his eyes and saw three men standing nearby; then, וַיַּרְא, he saw again, and ran to meet them. Why the double vision? The Midrash Bereshis Rabbah 48:9 explains that first וַיַּרְא בַּשְּׁכִינָה, he saw the Divine Presence, and then וַיַּרְא בַּמַּלְאָכִים, he saw the angels disguised as men. In that second gaze, Avraham felt his eyes opening to those travelers, feeling an irresistible physical and spiritual pull toward them. He understood instantly that if his senses were being drawn away from his Divine Presence toward those human beings, it was not a distraction—it was the true will of Hashem calling him into action. His body knew before his intellect could even process it: right now, serving these people is serving Hashem to do hospitality. And so, his feet took off, running out to greet them.

This holy instinct flowed through every moment of that hospitality. The Torah tells us, וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רָץ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח בֶּן־בָּקָר רַךְ וָטוֹב וַיִּתֵּן אֶל הַנַּעַר וַיְמַהֵר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ—"And Avraham ran to the herd, and took a tender and good calf, and gave it to the young man, and he hastened to prepare it." Ask yourself: if Avraham had a young servant right there to prepare the meal, why did he run to the herd himself, only to hand the calf over a moment later? It was because his feet suddenly bounded forward in the pure enthusiasm of the mitzvah, eager to fetch the meat. But as he went to prepare it, he felt a inner sense that this task belonged to the young man who was a master cook, and involved him in the mitzvah as well. Instantly tuned to that divine nudge, Avraham handed the calf to his servant to complete the preparation. What a lesson Avraham Avinu leaves us for our own lives to become natural extensions of the Divine Will! *(Yehuda Z. Klitnick)*

## STORY OF THE WEEK (*By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)*

## *Reb Dov Berish of Oshpitzin Protected the Parnassa of a Yid*

Harav Dov Berish of Oshpitzin was a talmid of the holy Reb Shlomo Bochner, the Av Beis Din of Kershanov. Reb Dov Berish was a gaon in close with Reb Akiva Eiger. His authored Sefer Divrei Tzaddikim. He brought salvation to Yidden far and wide. His Yahrtzeit is the 20th of Kislev, 5598.

In the town of Yendrichov, near Krakow, Poland, there lived a Yid named R' Eizik, who served as the rosh hakahal. R' Eizik would often come to ask the Oshpitzin Rebbe for advice. One year, Rav Berish saw with his holy eyes that harsh gezeiros had been decreed upon R' Eizik. Without delay, the Rebbe sent a messenger to R' Eizik to tell him what he had seen, along with careful instructions: "Every single day this year, right after washing negel vasser in the morning, set aside money for tzedakah, as much as you can. Put it away in a hidden place, and have in mind that it should be a pidyon nefesh for that day. When the year has passed, the gezeirah will be annulled, and then you shall distribute the money to tzedakah." Reb Eizik did as the Rebbe said. The year passed in peace, and he brought the money to Reb Berish.

Reb Berish blessed Reb Eizik with wealth. Not long afterward, an acquaintance from Lemberg came to Reb Eizik with a business proposal. The governor of Lemberg was looking to sell the exclusive right to sell iron throughout the whole region. He had acquired this right from the town of Sifshin in Hungary, where the iron was produced. Reb Eizik traveled to Lemberg, worked out the details of how much he would pay the governor, and bought the right. Now he would be the only merchant selling iron in the entire area, a business that could make him a very wealthy man.

But it was not long before the gentile merchants became consumed with jealousy. One of them, a goy named Wilczek, who was Reb Eizik's neighbor, wanted a piece of the business for himself. He traveled to Lemberg carrying a great deal of money to bribe the governor. "How can it be," he argued, "that you let only one man profit from this?" And he talked the governor into giving him half the rights. The governor gave in and sent a messenger to Reb Eizik: "I regret giving away the entire right. I wish to give half of it to your neighbor Wilczek, so that two people can earn a living from it."

Reb Eizik understood exactly what would happen. The goy would undercut his prices at every turn, and he would not be able to earn anything at all. Reb Eizik quickly sent a wagon to bring Reb Berish to Yendrichov. When the Rebbe heard what the goy had done, he said: "I blessed you with wealth. I promise you that this goy will not receive any share in the iron business!" "But Rebbe," said Reb Eizik, "the goy already paid, and he promised the governor a great deal more money. How could his right possibly be cancelled?" Reb Berish calmed him and said, "Wait three days. After the third day, you will see whether I am telling the truth."

R' Eizik begged the Rebbe's forgiveness for doubting and said, "I believe that whatever the Rebbe says is true." And Rav Berish returned home. R' Eizik waited patiently to see how things would play out with his neighbor. On the third night, after midnight, he heard a loud pounding on his door and someone crying out: "Eizik! Eizik! I beg you, open the door and let me in!" Reb Eizik looked out and saw that it was only his neighbor standing there, sobbing. He opened the door, and Wilczek fell at his feet, begging Reb Eizik to forgive him. "What happened to you?" asked Reb Eizik. "I promise you," said the goy, "I will never deal in iron for as long as I live! I beg you, forgive me for going to Lemberg and trying to take away your parnassa!"

Reb Eizik understood that the Rebbe had arranged something here. He brought out a very strong wine and gave Wilczek to drink. After a few glasses, Wilczek opened up and told him his story: "For the last three nights, whenever I fall asleep, a man comes to me and warns me that if I don't back out of the iron deal, he will never let me sleep again. He threatened me terribly. I told my wife what was happening, and she said she had read in books that whoever harms a Jew receives a severe punishment, and that this is my punishment for trying to take away your livelihood. So I beg your forgiveness, and I will write you a document giving you my half."

Reb Eizik forgave him, gave him more wine to drink, and escorted him home. Wilczek's wife also came and begged Reb Eizik's forgiveness. The goy fell asleep in his bed and slept for many hours. When he awoke and saw that he had finally slept in peace, he knew for certain that his punishment had truly been for trying to take a Yid's parnassa. He went to Reb Eizik, told him he would keep his word, and handed over the signed document. From then on, Reb Eizik was the only one selling iron in the region, and in time he became a very wealthy man, just as the Rebbe had promised.

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