

# Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת וירא תשע"ט

*Not to cause unnecessary effort to others*

יִקַּח נָא מַעַט מַיִם (יח:ד)

*Let some water be brought....* (18:4) The question is: why did Avraham order to bring only a small amount of water?

The great Gaon Harav Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement once went to a small shul in Vilna to daven Mincha. Prior to Mincha, the congregation went to wash their hands, as is the Halacha. They each poured an abundance of water on their hands. However, Rav Salanter merely wet his hands with a few drops of water. The people were surprised at his behavior, perplexed that the Rav was so stingy with the water. Rav Salanter explained: "The water we are using is brought by the *shammash*, who toiled to bring the water, and I do not want him to expend any extra effort on my behalf." The Rav concluded that this is a lesson that we were taught by Avraham Avinu. It is surprising that Avraham, who had prepared lavishly for his guests – three *se'ahs* of fine flour and three calves, to serve tongue with mustard – should offer only a small amount of water!

However in the Gemarah Bava Metzria (86b) our Sages teach that Avraham himself hastened to select the fine flour and calves, while a servant drew the water. Of course, when it came to his own efforts, he felt free to be lavish; but when it came to work done by others, he made sure not to cause them unnecessary effort. Since the water was to be brought by a servant, Avraham requested that only 'some water be brought'. (Rav Yisrael Salanter)

*Avraham was superhuman in his serving Hashem*

אַל תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֶל הַנֶּעֱר וְאַל תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאֻמָּה כִּי עֲתָה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי יִרָא אֱלֹהִים אֹתָהּ וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְתָּ אֶת בְּנֶךְ אֶת יְחִידְךָ מִמֶּנִּי: (כב:יב)

"Do not stretch out your hand against the boy nor do anything to him, for now I know that you are a G-d-fearing man, since you have not spared your son, your only one, from Me." (22:12) Instead of the word "spared" – "חֲשַׁבְתָּ" – usually used for saving oneself an expense, a word such as "refused" – מֵאֲנֶת – might have been more appropriate. A parable can help us answer this question: A wealthy businessman was asked by his Rav to donate a large sum for an urgent communal matter. The man promised to deliver the sum the next day. When he came with the money, he was told that the matter had been unexpectedly resolved and his donation was not needed. The rich man felt doubly fortunate: he had shown full cooperation for the great mitzvah, for which he would receive a reward, and it still did not cost him anything! When Avraham was told not to sacrifice his son, he should have been overjoyed. He did a mitzvah of listening to Hashem, and his son was spared! However, the Midrash tells us that the angel added, וְאַל תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאֻמָּה "Do not do

anything to him," because Avraham wanted to at least draw a bit of blood from his son even if he could not sacrifice him. Instead of being relieved and overjoyed, Avraham was disappointed! He did not feel joy for having been spared the trauma of the sacrifice. Because of his superhuman devotion, Hashem said, "Now I know that you are a G-d-fearing man. "How? מִמֶּנִּי ... אֶת בְּנֶךְ ... לֹא חֲשַׁבְתָּ for you have not spared your son from Me." The very next verse tells us that "Avraham offered up a lamb in place of his son," וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הָאֵיל וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֹלָה תַחַת בְּנוֹ on which Rashi comments, "At every step of the sacrifice process, Avraham declared, 'May this be considered before You as if I had done this to my son.'" (Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld on the Parshah)

**Lekavod the Yahrtzeit of the chazon Ish**

*The Torah already paved the way for a cure*

One day, a man who appeared distraught and worn down, knocked at the door of the Chazon Ish. He told the Chazon Ish that he had felt ill for a few days, and eventually he was hospitalized. The doctors performed a battery of tests, and they found a virulent infection which had invaded his body. They sadly informed the man that he had only four days to live; they did not have any medication that would be effective for this infection. The man broke down sobbing as he finished his story, and the Chazon Ish soothed him and calmed him down. The Chazon Ish opened a Chumash Bereishis, and turned to the first pages of the parsha. He said to the man, "Look what Hashem created on the first day," and the Chazon Ish began to recite all the things which Hashem created on the first day of creation and on the second day. He continued with the third day, and the fourth day. "So, if the Creator of the World was able to create so many things in four days, don't you believe that in four days He can create a medicine for you which will heal you completely?" The Chazon Ish encouraged the man not to give up hope, but rather he should daven and plead with Hashem that He heal him from his infection. He reminded him that the gates of Tefilah are never locked, especially before the tefilah of a sick person, which is tefilah at a time of distress. The eyes of the man lit up at the Chazon Ish's words. He began to daven fervently and since he was following the instructions of a holy man, a unbelievable miracle occurred. A new medicine was imported to Eretz Yisroel from America in the following days. This sick man was one of the first people that the medicine was tested on, and it became clear that the medicine was effective for the infection which was ravaging his body. Within a short time, the man was healed completely. (From Sefer Barchi Nafshi)

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

\*\*\*\* *The Rebbe and the Red Velvet Material Saved the Day!* \*\*\*\*

The great Tzaddik Rabbi Meir, fondly known as Meir'l, the Second Rebbe of Premishlan (1783–1850), son of Rabbi Uren Leib, and the most famous Rebbe of the dynasty, was widely known as a 'miracle worker'.

Reb Shloime, a traveling merchant, was very successful and a devoted chosid of Rav Meir'l. Before every trip, he would go to Premishlan with a kvitel to get the OK and a blessing for hatzlacha. Once Reb Shloime came to the Rebbe to get his Bracha, and when the Rebbe read the kvitel, he paused and entered into deep thought. He finally said to Reb Shloime: "Listen to me carefully. In the city where the market will take place, I have a strong request of you. Search in the luxury shops for a large remnant of the finest red velvet material fit for a Poritz, and bring it back to me. I beg you to guard the material as you would guard your money. You should buy this material before you check into a hotel. I really will thank you for this!"

R' Shloime was perplexed by the Rebbe's interesting request. Why would the Rebbe need such fine red velvet material? Besides, why should he have to guard it as he would guard his own money? R' Shloime was a chosid, and would not dare to question the Rebbe. He simply said: "Rebbe, I will fulfill your wishes to the last detail!" The Rebbe gave a Bracha to R' Shlome, who then went on his way.

Reb Shloime was still dazed when he arrived in the city. As the Rebbe had requested, he went straight to the fancy shops and requested to purchase the finest red velvet material fit for a Poritz. Reb Shloime was glad that the first shop he entered had a nice piece of material; a deal was struck, and Reb Shloime wrapped the material neatly into the bag that he kept his money, just as the Rebbe had told him.

Reb Shloime checked into a hotel and settled down to have a good night's rest to be able to do some nice deals the next day. There was a band of robbers who frequently targeted his hotel, knowing that many businessmen stayed there for the big market and they all brought with them large sums of money. That night the robbers, who were professional, slipped into the hotel, and while everyone was asleep, they nabbed in a flash all the suitcases and fled. By the time the guests woke up and noticed that their suitcases were gone, the robbers had escaped into the night.

In the morning, all the merchants went to the police to report the robbery, but the police only sympathized with them as they were really helpless with these professional robbers. However, the officers wrote a report, and recorded the names and addresses of the merchants, for if they would be able to catch the robbers with the suitcases and their money, they would return them to the owners. Reb Shloime had no money for the market, and his biggest pain was that he

would not be able to bring the Rebbe the red velvet material which was in his suitcase!

Reb Shloime decided to hire a wagon to take him home. On the way he stopped of in a town and Reb Shloime went to the Shul to daven and eat something at the Hachnasas Orchim- local guest house-. At the meal Reb Shloime heard interesting news that the police in a nearby city were able to apprehend a band of robbers whom they had been looking for for a very long time, and the funny thing was that the robbers were wearing a very expensive red velvet, which had caused them to be noticed.

Reb Shloime finished his meal and asked the driver to return him to the city where the market was taking place. Reb Shloime prayed to Hashem that he should recoup his money, and they went straight to the police station. He explained to the officer that the red velvet that the robbers were wearing, had probably been stolen from his suitcase. The officer checked Reb Shloime's identity and told him that the red velvet material worn by the robbers was the cause of their capture.

The officer explained that the police had still found many suitcases intact at the robbers' headquarters. If he would give us some description of the appearance of his suitcase and of its contents, they would see if it was still there.

They went to the robbers headquarters. Reb Shloime waited outside impatiently with a prayer in his heart. The officer came out and told Reb Shloime: "Yes, your suitcase was still here." Reb Shloime opened the suitcase and thanked Hashem that all his money was still inside, and all that they had taken was the red velvet material. The officer was amazed at the story, unable to understand: why did the robbers only take the material? Reb Shloime thanked the officers in charge.

Reb Shloime in his haste and perplexity, decided to head home. However, he forgot about the request of the Rebbe; as he neared Premishlan, he remembered, and decided to go to the Rebbe and tell him of his ordeal, with an apology for not bringing the material to the Rebbe.

Reb Shloime waited to see the Rebbe, who greeted him with warmth and Simcha. The Rebbe asked Reb Shloime "Why are you down?" Reb Shloime answered: "I feel foolish that I did not bring the velvet material to the Rebbe!" Reb Meir'l burst into laughter and said "Meir'l doesn't need red velvet material. When Meir'l saw what was going to happen to you, I had to do something to save your money. Hashem gave me the idea to have you purchase the fine material, and I was mispallel that the robbers should be enticed by the material and leave your money intact!"

Reb Shloime was relieved and became full with happiness and thanked the Rebbe for saving his fortune. Everything was now clear to him. Reb Shloime gave the Rebbe a nice present, and returned to his family as a happy chosid.

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