



TIFERET HASHABBAT

תורת תפארת

“Continuous Effort is the Key to Unlocking Our Potential”

-Winston Churchill

Mrs. Bracha Stefansky

Parashat Vayera

Parshat Vayera opens up with the story of Avraham Avinu welcoming guests into his home, and ends with the story of Akedat Yitzchak. Rav Zevin, in his sefer, Torah Umoadim, claims that these two stories have the same theme. How is that possible? The first story seems to be one of chessed and the last story is one of din.

Explains Rav Zevin that in the beginning of the parsha, we see Avraham Avinu waiting outside his tent. Even though it was the third day of his brit milah and he was in tremendous pain, he so yearned to do this mitzvah that he was waiting outside, in the heat of the day, hoping for a chance to be machnis orchim. Finally, his dream comes true. Avraham sees three men and he rushes forward to help them and feed them and give them something to drink. He is so excited and eager and thrilled to be able to do this mitzvah of hachnasat orchim!

Continues Rav Zevin, did Avraham really do a mitzvah? After all, these three men were really angels, who don't need food or drink, so although Avraham's heart was in the right place, what exactly did he accomplish? If everything that Avraham did wasn't necessary - then did he actually accomplish anything?

Although what Avraham tried to accomplish wasn't needed, what he did accomplish was show his excitement for fulfilling a mitzvah. What we see is how much he loved doing a mitzvah, the inner aspect of what a person is feeling, distinct from the act itself. Avraham Avinu extended himself in terms of what he thought and wanted to do with all his heart.

The midrash tells us that for each aspect of what Avraham did, Hashem rewarded Klal Yisrael. Because he gave them “me'at mayim”, Hashem gave us the Be'er Miriam when we were in the midbar. Because Avraham gave them “pas lechem”, we were given manna in the desert. For each action of Avraham that expressed his love for doing a mitzvah, s'char was given to his children.

Let's take a closer look at the akeda. Here too, we see Avraham trying to fulfill Hashem's will, but not really accomplishing the goal. Avraham really thought he had to shecht his son, and he tries, even though it was very hard for him (as it would be for any of us) Avraham does it with ratzon and zrizus. However, he doesn't accomplish it. In

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Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Arielle Rabinowitz (madricha) on her wedding to Yosef Chaim Stefansky, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Jon and Bracha Stefansky!** May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Rebecca Davidson (madricha) on her engagement to Yona Friedman! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Michael and Shaindy (Broker, 5771) Friedman on the birth of a daughter, Aliza Rachel! May they be zochim to raise her l'Torah, l'chupa, u'l'maasim tovim!

Mazal Tov to Elyssa Heino (5772) on her engagement to Chaim Frenkel! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Risa Birn (5773, 5774) on her engagement to Yehuda Weinman! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Rachel Simon (5772, 5773) on her engagement to Jeremy Joseph! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Leora Englard (5772) on her wedding to Josh Rosenwald! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Gabriella Fadlun (5773) on her engagement to Yitz Mendlowitz! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Renina Michelson (5773) on her wedding to JD Lifshitz! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

תורת תפארת (המשך)

the end, Hashem shows him that that was not what he wanted to happen. Yet we say Avraham passed the test. The test of doing what Hashem wants with effort and happiness and ratzon.

Both stories highlight the important principle that Hashem gives schar on effort as well as on the act itself. This doesn't mean we shouldn't accomplish things, but that when we do something that is according to ratzon hashem, we should do it with excitement, showing our effort and giving it our all.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot says: Rabbi Tarfon would say It is not incumbent upon you to finish the task, but neither are you free to absolve yourself from it. If you have learned much Torah, you will be greatly rewarded, and your employer is trustworthy to pay you the reward of your labors.

The sechar for a mitzvah, is not only the act of accomplishing the mitzvah, but also, in how we behave when doing the mitzvah. "Anu ameilim Umekablum Sechar" we put forth effort and Hashem gives us schar for it.

When we are faced with a mitzvah, let's use Avraham Avinu as our guide as to how to behave. Let's use the mitzvah as an opportunity to come closer to Hashem and fulfill what Hashem wants us to even if its hard, as was with Akedat Yitzchak. Let's use the mitzvot as a chance for us to show Hashem our excitement and enthusiasm for his mitzvot as Avraham Avinu acted when doing the mitzvah of hachnasat orchim.

Some KIND of Example Tova Haft (5773)

In this week's Parsha, Parshas Vayeira, Avraham's true character is introduced in the Torah. The Torah explains that Avraham was "ישב פתח האהל כחם היום..." "...sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day." Rashi tells us that Avraham was sitting there to see if there were any people passing by, in order to bring them into his house. The Pesukim then continue to explain that Avraham saw three men standing before him, and he ran towards them, pleading to give them water to drink and food to eat, so that they can rest from their travels.

Rav Judah Mischel quotes Rav Chaim Voloshin who points out that we learn from last week's Parsha that Avraham was extremely wealthy, so he had many servants he could have asked to sit outside instead of him. We also learned from the end of last week's Parsha that Avraham had just received a Bris Milah, so he truly had every excuse in the world to send one of his servants instead. But the greatness of Avraham Avinu is that he wanted to do it himself. The Pesukim explain "ויומר 'אברהם' 'אברהם'..." "And he hurried..." Nothing was done with kvetching. And nothing was done with complaining. But rather, everything was done with his full heart, running to do the will of G-d.

We learn from Pirkei Avos that the world stands on 3 pillars: Torah, Avodah, and Gemilus Chasadim. Meaning, the world stands on Chessed just as much as it stands on Torah. So many of us connect to Hashem when we learn Torah, but the question we need to ask ourselves is do we feel that same connection when we do acts of Chessed? Avraham Avinu teaches us here that Chessed is just as important, and through acts of kindness we can connect to Hashem ALL DAY, EVERY DAY. Whether it's smiling down the street, thanking the custodians for making the environment clean, helping someone bring in groceries, keeping the door open for the next person walking through, cleaning the mess we make so that no one else slips, helping our friend out when they are in need, complementing the people around us, and the list goes on and on because CHESSED IS ENDLESS! If we begin to declare ourselves as "constant Chessed machines", always ready to jump at the Chessed opportunity that we can grab, then we can truly come to emulate the ways of our forefather, Avraham Avinu.

Rabbi Andi Yudin explains that "מעשה אבות סימן לבנים" means that the ways of our Avos are supposed to be a sign for us, for how we should act and the way we are supposed to be. May this week's Parsha inspire us to concentrate on our Chessed like Avraham Avinu, to do acts of kindnesses with a full heart like he truly performed, so that we can continue striving for greater and greater heights.