

Gavriel remembered a statement said by the Steipler Gaon – that by providing for a bride, one can break the cycle of sickness and death. “I happen to know of a bride who needs \$3600 for her wedding,” he told his father. “If you could send me the money, it would be a great merit for you.”

Gavriel knew this was not a minor request, for his father was not a wealthy man – and his illness had sapped the resources he had. Yet he knew that his father’s life hung in the balance. Certainly, he couldn’t allow a lack of money to stand in his way.

When the envelope arrived the next morning, Gavriel eagerly ripped it open. He tasted bitter disappointment when he realized that the check was for only \$180. Gavriel understood that his father had meant well, but he also knew it was vital for him to pay for the entire wedding.

Desperate, he called his father. “The wedding costs \$3600. I’m returning the check. If you don’t grab this opportunity, then someone else will.”

There was only silence from his father’s end.

Gavriel took a deep breath. “If you have the check sent by overnight mail, you can still make it in time – the wedding is next week.”

The check for the full amount arrived the next day. An ecstatic Gavriel delivered the money and called his father to thank him. He then called the doctor to see if there was any change in his father’s condition.

The doctor had some encouraging news. “There is a new medicine available. It hasn’t been tested extensively on humans, but it’s very promising and has no major side-effects. I’m going to try it for your father.”

“That medication? But-but I discussed this medication with you just two weeks ago, and you told me that my father is too ill, that he is beyond any medical help! Now you’re planning to use it? What changed?”

The doctor was adamant – that earlier conversation had never taken place. “We never discussed this at all!” he insisted.

The medication was administered, and Gavriel’s father recovered without any major side-effects. (Visions of Greatness IX)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition
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SHABBAT
 VAYERA ☆ τ♦ρ↓H≥υ , □X♥↑
 Haftarah: Melachim II 4:1-23

OCTOBER 26-27, 2018 18 HESHVAN 5779

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| Friday Minhah: 5:43 pm | Shaharit: 6:21, 6:40, 8:10, 9:15 am |
| Candlelighting: 5:43 pm | Morning Shema by: 9:22 am |
| Evening Shema after: 6:41 pm | Shabbat Classes: 4:20 pm |
| | Shabbat Minhah: 5:20 pm |
| | Shabbat Ends: 6 :40 pm (R" T 7:12 pm) |
| These times are applicable <u>only</u> for the Deal area. Sunday Minhah: 5:35 pm | |

**This bulletin is dedicated by Steven Levy
 in honor of his wife, Linda, a true eshet hayil.**

A Message from our Rabbi

"וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה צָחַק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים כִּלְהַשְׁמֵעַ יְצַחֵק־לִי"
 “Sarah said, ‘G-d has made laughter for me, whoever hears will laugh for me.’ (Beresheet 21:6)

Rashi comments that when Sarah Imenu gave birth, there was so much rejoicing everywhere. Many other childless women gave birth as well. Many sick people were healed, many prayers were answered, and there was much happiness in the world.

What was the purpose of these miracles? Rav Pam zt”l answers that Sarah’s happiness at finally attaining parenthood could not be complete if she had friends and neighbors who were still childless. Therefore, to complete Sarah’s happiness, Hashem helped others gain relief from their own personal sufferings.

Rav Pam would extend this concept to the obligation to ensure universal Torah education opportunities for all Jewish children. How can we rejoice with the success of our children’s education when we know that there are so many other Jewish children who are not given such an opportunity at all? Does it make any difference to Hashem, our Heavenly Father, which one of his children is excelling in Torah study when others are totally ignorant of it? We must not rest until

"כל בניך למודי ד" (Yeshayahu 54:13)

Beyond Repair

"וַיֹּאמֶר ה' זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וְעַמּוֹרָה כִּי־רַבָּה וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי כָבְדָה מְאֹד"

"Hashem said, 'Because the outcry of Sedom and Amorah has become great, and because their sin has been very grave.'" (*Beresheet* 18:20)

Even sin has limits. In order for Hashem to destroy an entire population, the evil must have reached its nadir. Indeed, we find only two places in the Torah which manifests destruction of such magnitude: The *mabul*, flood, and the cities of Sedom and Amorah. True, other individuals sinned, but in these two incidents iniquity reached a milestone. What was there about these sins that was so baneful that the consequences for the sinners was total annihilation?

As long as *teshubah*, repentance, is an option, Hashem refrains from striking the final blow. Hashem's disciplinary measures are not punitive. They are therapeutic, a means for us to mend our ways and return to the Almighty. In other words, the characteristics of the sins of the generation of the flood and the inhabitants of Sedom seem to have precluded *teshubah*. *Hazal* teach us that while the generation of the flood was morally corrupt, Hashem sealed their doom only because of theft. Their theft was of a unique form. The stole only less than the value of a *perutah*, which is the smallest coin. *Halachically* speaking, this is not even considered to be stealing. A *Bet Din* does not punish a thief for such an act of stealing. Hence, the thief can even strut around, head held high, in total contempt of the law. Ostensibly, such a person will not repent. After all, what did he do wrong?

A similar behavior pattern was manifest in Sedom, where the people simply changed the rules to suit their needs. If an evil they sought to commit did not fit into their code of law, they conveniently altered the law. Thus, in their eyes, they did no wrong! If so, what would motivate them to repent? The people of these two generations had one thing in common: they felt that they had done no wrong; therefore, they had no reason to repent. Consequently, there was no expectation that they would mend their ways. They would continue living an iniquitous lifestyle without any hope for change. This is why Hashem destroyed them. When one either does not care, or deceives himself into believing that he is doing the right thing; when there is no hope that a person will one day say, "I have sinned," then there is no hope for reprieve. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

Genuine Concern

"וְהָיָה זָכָר לְפָנָיו כִּי־עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שָׂרָה כִּי־אָמְרָה...וַתַּהַר"

"Hashem remembered Sarah as He had said...And she conceived." (*Beresheet* 21:1,2)

Rashi quotes *Hazal*, who explain the juxtaposition of Sarah's conception to Abraham's prayer on behalf of Abimelech and his family. As punishment for Abimelech's abduction of Sarah, he and his household were subjected to a complete cessation of their reproductive functions. Abraham prayed for them and, in turn, was himself blessed. The inference is that, if one prays for another, and he himself is in need of that same cure/help, his prayers will soon be answered.

The *Tiferet Shmuel* interprets this statement with a slightly different twist, providing an important lesson. He reads the dictum in the following manner: If one prays for another as intensely as he would pray for his own personal needs, he will soon

be answered. When a person shows that the concern he has for a fellow Jew is equal to that which he has for himself, then he merits a quick response from the Almighty.

Ve'ahabta le're'acha kamocha, "Love your fellow as you do yourself." The Golden Rule is meaningful, but how many of us can say that we achieve this plateau? Can we say that when we pray for someone who is sick, that we expend as much *kavanah*, concentration and feeling, as if it were for ourselves? Abraham *Abinu* set the standard. He prayed for Abimelech, a gentile who had abducted his wife, as if he were praying for himself. This is the paradigm of *hesed*. Do not ignore your family – as a Jew, your family has just been extended. The concern you demonstrate for others is what you may come to expect from Hashem. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

Baby Stuff

Some people do achieve happiness. Others chase the dream of satisfaction and joy unsuccessfully for a lifetime. The ones who fail to catch the dream are burdened with attitudes and traits that prevent them from reaching their goal.

One characteristic that causes people to feel dissatisfied is envy. Rabbi Elazar haKapar used to say: "Envy, desire, and honor take a person out of the world" (*Pirkei Abot* 4:28). The world he referred to was *this* world, since these traits yield a life of sorrow and dissatisfaction with whatever people acquire.

Babies are fun to watch as they develop and grow into little children and then into adults. Every little step – from rolling over, to crawling, to clapping hands – is greeted with cheers of approval from adult onlookers. The baby responds with a gleeful smile to the adult accolades. The child is truly happy.

If little children were to compare their capabilities to those of adults, they would realize how many basic skills they were lacking, and might be overcome by a strong sense of emptiness. But since babies are only aware of themselves, they are happy.

Be smart enough to learn from a baby. A key to happiness is to avoid looking at those who are better off than you are. Learn from the infant not to look at levels that are beyond you.

We can all learn from the words of Rabbi Alexander Aryeh Mandelbaum (*Simcha, The Spark of Life*): "There is never a need to consider others' material advantages, and even other people's spiritual accomplishments should be taken only as possible goals, not as a basis for negative comparisons. By properly appreciating the good that Hashem bestowed upon you and by taking pride in whatever spiritual perfection you have attained, according to your own level, you will be able to feel true happiness, in every situation, all of the time." (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Seedlings into Sunflowers

"How can a plant, which is a living thing, come into existence? The answer is a seed, which has life. A seed was put into the ground and as a result, non-living materials are transformed into a living and growing plant."

Planting the right seeds of spirituality and connecting to Hashem, can transform a person to reach his true potential. (Norman D. Levy; Based on Rabbi Miller's, *Duties of the Mind*)

Wedding Expenses

Gavriel's father had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Thankfully he had responded well to the treatments, and was declared cured. Then the illness reared its ugly head again, and the disease returned with a vengeance.

This time the doctors held out no hope for his recovery. “He has just two weeks to live,” the doctor told Gavriel. “There’s nothing medical science can do for him now.”