בס"ד

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PARSHAS VAYEIRA

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Sweeter than honey is

לזכות רפואה שלימה אריה לייביש בן טויבא

לעילוי נשמת שאלתיאל אייזיק שבנא בן חיים קלונימוס

This is not meant to rule practical *halachah;* rather it's to show the sweetness of learning.

Based on R' Yitzchak Zilberstein's seforim

Q. Is A Video Camera Proof?

Avrumy owned a busy store and paid his workers $3,000 a month.
One day he noticed a $1,500 check was missing! He searched his desk, checked the drawers, and looked through his papers. **NOTHING**! Then he remembered... **THE SECURITY CAMERAS!**

Avrumy quickly pulled up the recordings. He watched as the last customer left the store. **He saw his worker, Ari, looking around to make sure nobody was watching. grabbed the $1,500 check, slipped it into his pocket, and walked out as if NOTHING had happened!**

The next morning, he called Ari into his office. **"Ari, have a seat. I want to show you something." He pressed PLAY.** Ari watched himself on the screen, taking the check! Avrumy looked Ari straight in the eye. **" YOU'RE FIRED! Pack your things and go!"**

Ari stood up. **"Fine! But before I leave, you still owe me my $3,000 salary for this month!"** Avrumy said, **"First you steal, and you still want to get paid. what's next? You also want a bonus!"**

You stole $1,500 from me! The Torah says a thief must pay DOUBLE! That means you owe me $3,000. So we're EVEN and its as if I paid you your payment!"

But Avrumy was an honest Jew; he wasn't sure he was right, so he went to a Beis Din to find out what the right thing to do was.

Who To Ask?

Of course to R' Yitzchak Zilberstein Shlita!

A. Who makes Torah Learning so sweet & geshmak!!!

1) According to the **Torah**, if a thief steals, he must pay back double, a *kenas*, which is a fine. **Only a real beis din with *semichah* tracing back to Moshe Rabbeinu** can rule such a fine, but this line of semichah was broken a long time ago. **Today, beis din can decide the value of stolen goods but cannot enforce a *kenas* (Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat 1:5).**

So if Avrumy goes to beis din, they won't force Ari the double payment, since a *kenas* can't be enforced these days by beis din.

Video Cameras:

If Avrumy doesn't have two witnesses to prove Ari stole, can cameras count as witnesses?

Nowadays, beis din doesn't fully trust video recordings because it might be edited.
However, **R' Zilberstein** said that if the worker, Ari, claims he's owed a month's pay, beis din **might not rely on the video** to let Avrumy avoid paying him.

In our case, since Avrumy is the one coming to beis din and wants to keep the month's pay as payment for the *kenas*, **he can** if he is sure the video footage is untouched and clearly shows Ari taking the check, even without witnesses.

Question: You may wonder why this is okay when we usually need two witnesses.

Answer: Beis din isn't allowed to **assume** someone is wrong; **they need two witnesses to make a judgment.** But sometimes a person himself is **allowed** to assume.

If someone, say Yitzy, sees a person leave his house, then goes into his home and finds money missing, and if Yitzy knows that no one else was in his house that day, **he can assume that person took it.**

Yitzy can take back the money himself, even without witnesses, **not because of a ruling of beis din,** but rather because he can **assume** that he took it. Some say this is allowed from the start, ***lechatchilah***, as he is doing nothing wrong. ***(see Sema, 75 s.k. 49, and Pischei Teshuvah)***

In our situation, while beis din can't force Ari to pay double, if Avrumy decides to take that amount back personally from Ari, beis din won't make him give it back. **Avrumy doesn't have to pay Ari his monthly salary, as that would be his payment instead of the *kenas*.**

My Life Is So Bitter!

Shulem was very down and went to his rabbi and said, **"Rabbi, life is so BITTER! Everywhere I turn, there's another problem!"**

His rabbi listened carefully and said, **"Shulem, come. Let's take a little walk."** They walked to a beautiful lake. The water was crystal clear. **The rabbi took out a cup, filled it with water, and poured in a nice handful of salt. He stirred it and handed the cup to Shulem. "Here, take a drink."**

Shulem looked confused. **Still, he took a sip and immediately SPIT IT OUT! "Rebbe, this is TERRIBLE! It's WAY too salty!"**

The rabbi said, **"Come with me."** He walked to the edge of the lake **and this time poured the same amount of salt into the water.** Then he dipped the cup into the lake, filled it, and handed it to Shulem. **"Now try this."**

Shulem took a sip. **"I can still taste a little salt, but it's not bad at all!"**
The rabbi asked, **"Shulem, did I use any less salt the second time?"**
"No, Rabbi. You used the same amount!"

"EXACTLY!" the Rabbi said. **"Shulem, remember that problems are like salt.** When you **focus all your attention** on your problems, **it's like putting all that salt into one little cup- your mind- and it causes way too much sadness! Life then tastes BITTER and salty!**

The trick is to add more water to your life and make it less salty!
This happens by looking at the BIGGER picture. Your family, your friends, **or whatever things you do have, the things you CAN do, and the blessings Hashem does give you every day.** The less you focus on the salty parts and the more you focus on the better parts, **the less bitter the other problems will feel!**

"I'm not telling you that life is easy, Shulem. And I'm not saying your problems aren't real. **But don't let your problems become your WHOLE life. Make room to notice what's going RIGHT, not only what's going WRONG!"**

What's The Lesson?

Sometimes we zoom in too much on our challenges, understandably so.
Take time to appreciate what **you do have;** it will help you **train to focus more and more on the good and keep moving forward!**

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

Lot was saved from the destruction of Sodom and was told not to look back. His wife decided to looked back at the destruction and turned into a pillar of salt!

What can we learn from this? We shouldn't keep **looking back** at the problems and painful moments **of our past, because it only turns us into a pillar of salt.**

Sometimes we need to look back to learn from our mistakes, fix what we can, and become better people.
But we shouldn't spend our lives thinking only about the past, about what we messed up, about what went wrong. If we spend today thinking only about yesterday's problems, **we'll miss out on today's blessings.**

We can't change yesterday, but we CAN make tomorrow better!

Shocking News!

It was Erev Tisha B'Av at Camp Munk. One boy was very worried about the upcoming fast. It would be his first time fasting. How would he handle an entire day without eating or drinking?

R' Dovid Trenk ztl found out about it and told the boy, **"Why are you so worried about fasting? Who said you will even have to fast? Mashiach can still come TODAY! We might not have to fast at all!"**

But later that day, R' Trenk was very down. He truly believed Mashiach would come before Tisha B'Av. **He was in shock; Mashiach still didn't come!**

What's The Lesson?

Mashiach can come at ANY minute!
Do we believe this? Of course! But we have to remind ourselves and live like this!

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

When Sarah heard she would have a child, she was shocked, since both she and Avraham ***were already very old,*** and wondered if they would really have the pleasure of a son. **She couldn't believe it!**

The **Chafetz Chaim ztl** said that some people think the same way about **Mashiach**. ***"We've been waiting for so long!"*** But no matter how long we've waited, **we must never lose hope!**

Mashiach is a process, and the world is getting more and more ready for that great day!

By learning Torah, doing mitzvahs, and caring for another Yid, we help bring that day closer and closer!

Another lesson: Sometimes we think, **"I'm too old," "I've waited too long," or "Things will never change." "It's too late!" in our personal lives.**

But look at Sarah! ***After waiting so many years,*** **she received the most wonderful news! It's never too late for Hashem to send us GOOD NEWS!**

So keep davening, keep hoping, and never give up. **You never know what wonderful blessings Hashem has waiting for you!**

A Geshmaka Question & Readers Answers

This weeks Geshmaka Question:

The **Midrash** says that the first test of ***lech lecha, of going away from home,*** was the same big test as being told to slaughter and kill Yitzchak, his own son. **How is this the same big test?**

Last week's Geshmake Question:

Hashem tells Avraham that he will have future generations as countless as the dust of the earth. Why specifically the **dust** of the earth?

Yechiel Zev Rosenfeld Answers: We are compared to both the stars and the dust, to hint that klal Yisroel will have times of difficulty and be like dust, but the time will come when klal Yisroel will shine like stars when Mashiach comes!

SK Answers: So that they should keep themselves as humble as the earth.

Text your answer in by Sunday to (347) 669 0369 or by email to torahissweeter@gmail.com

A Joke With A Lesson

Bentzy was speeding down the highway at 1 a.m. A police officer pulls him over and asks, **"Where are you racing so late at night?"**

"To hear a speech!" Bentzy answered.

"Really? At this hour? Who gives speeches so late at night?"

Bentzy said, **"My wife… and believe me, the later I get home, the LONGER the speech!"**

What's The Lesson? **Sometimes, instead of admitting we were wrong, we make excuses.** They say the two hardest words to say are **"I'm sorry!"**

Saying I'm sorry can stop a **small problem** from turning into a **BIG fight!**
Imagine how much more peace there would be in the world if we focused less on proving *who's right* and more on *making things right!*

Yossi walked into the kitchen and told his wife, **"Happy Birthday! I got you something VERY special for your birthday! A burial plot in Eretz Yisrael!"**

A year later, her birthday came around again, but this time, Yossi didn't give any presents.

"Yossi, where's my birthday present this year?" his wife asked.
Yossi asked, "Another present? **You didn't even use the one I got you LAST YEAR...!"**

What's The Lesson? Buying a burial plot is a big ***segulah*** for a long life.
But only Hashem decides how long one lives.

Every day of life is a gift from Hashem. Let's make the most of it while we can!

Short Stories and Inspiration.

Best Way To Teach!

R' Chanina Herzberg ztl was involved in **chinuch** for many years. **After he passed away,** one of his children said at his shloshim, "**Our father never had to tell us to learn, or even sit down and learn with us. He never even learned with us on Motzei Shabbos or on Purim at Yeshiva Mordechai Hatzadik. *He didn't have to. He was our role model!***

He had a room where he learned, but he always kept the door OPEN! With seven children in the house, **you can imagine the noise!** He wanted his children to **SEE** him learning, even with all the noise around him. **Without saying a word, he showed us how GESHMAK and important learning Torah really is!"**

What's The Lesson? **To be a good influence on others,** especially children, **people learn more from how you act than from what you say.**

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

Avraham welcomed guests into his home and prepared food for them. He also asked his son Yishmael to help. Chazal say that **although Avraham was trying to teach Yishmael the mitzvah of helping guests, he was at fault for the way he taught him.**
Instead of **telling** Yishmael what to do, **Avraham should have *shown* him by doing it himself! The best way to teach children is by example! If you show your children how much you enjoy helping others, they will want to do the same!** *(Based on R' Moshe Feinstein ztl)*

Real Self-Growth

Many years ago, when **R' Yom Tov Glaser** first became a ***baal teshuvah***, he went to visit his mother for the first time since becoming frum. She wanted to treat him like a very special guest, so she prepared a special meal for him. **But when he saw the food, he told her he couldn't eat her food because it needed to be kosher, especially meat and chicken.** She said, "Okay," and went to get kosher food.

Later, he told her, **"My rabbi said I still can't eat the food, since you aren't shomer Shabbos."** His mother said, **"Okay, so I will keep Shabbos and become shomer Shabbos if that's the only way you will eat the food I make you."** And she really kept Shabbos!

Many years passed, and she became fully frum. She told her son, R' Yom Tov, **"For many years I kept Shabbos for YOU; now I am finally keeping Shabbos for ME. Because I WANT to keep it!"**

What's The Lesson? **Sometimes we start off doing mitzvahs for the wrong reason, to get honor, or for whatever reason. But as we get older, we should focus more on ourselves: serving Hashem not because of peer pressure, but because we want to come close to Hashem. Because I want to do the right thing!**

This Connects To This Week's Parshah:

R' Yom Tov's mother, preparing food, reminds us of Avraham Avinu, and Sarah who prepared food for guests. It is so important to help others, especially guests. Guests don't only mean people who stay **overnight** or for **a long time**; in the story of Avraham, they stayed for a few minutes, **but one can be very nice and caring to others in just a few moments.**

Chazal teach us how great the mitzvah of serving and helping guests is: Hashem came to visit Avraham Avinu because he was sick and recovering from his bris, yet, Avraham left Hashem's presence to help some random passing Arab strangers and serve them. As Chazal say: **"Welcoming guests is *greater* than receiving the *Shechinah*, Hashem's presence!"**

Think about it! Avraham was having the greatest spiritual experience, being in Hashem's presence, yet he left to help other people! Sometimes **helping others is greater than self-growth;** or better said, **there is no greater self-growth than helping others!**