

The Torah Sparks

SHABBOS COMPANION

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

Avraham invites three guests into his home. Sedom and Amorah are destroyed; Lot and his family (except his wife) are saved. Avimelech captures Sarah and returns her. Yitzchak is born. Hagar and Yishmael are kicked out. Avraham is tested with his final and biggest test: the Akeida.

PARSHAH STATS

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| 147 | 2085 | 7862 | 0 |
| Pesukim | Words | Letters | Mitzvos |

QUICK VORT

One of the questions we must ask ourselves when reading the beginning of the Parshah is: How can Avraham Avinu "leave" the Presence of Hashem, to go and find guests outside? Chazal tell us that Hashem came to visit Avraham Avinu, who was weak from his recent Bris Milah. There is a special degree of Hashem's Presence on the sick.

Yet, Avraham, upon seeing passersby, "left" Hashem and chased after the guests? How can he do this? I heard an answer to this question a few years ago that really stuck with me and resonated.

You see, it's one thing to talk to Hashem and experience His closeness. But it's a an entirely different realm to ACT LIKE HASHEM. To emulate Hashem is one of the highest levels we can achieve. When Avraham Avinu ran after the guests, he was acting like Hashem, Who is the ultimate Doer of kindness.

GEMATRIA

The word וירא - and He saw - appears twice in the second Passuk of the Parshah.

Together, וירא plus וירא equals 434, which so happens to be the same as דלת, a door.

Can you find a connection with doors and our Parshah?

CHASSIDUS

The heilige Sfas Emes says something in Parshas Vayeira that is so important.

Listen to these words: וכן צריך כל אדם להתבונן כי מעשיו נוגעין לדורי דורות - Each person must understand and think about the fact that his actions reach and impact generations to come!

Never underestimate that power of what you can do!

INSPOGRAPHIC CORNER



TO BUILD A SOCIETY OF FREEDOM, YOU HAVE TO LET GO OF HATE.

(RABBI J. SACKS ZT"l)

Dvar Torah for Parshas Vayeira

Felix Baumgartner

A Jump of a Lifetime and a Message for us



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It is tucked away in an unassuming Rashi, a Rashi that we've probably read dozens of times. The Torah tells us (22:3) that Avraham took two lads - את שני נערי - with him on his trek to perform the mission of the Akeida. The two lads were Yishmael and Eliezer.

Rashi says: שאין אדם חשוב רשאי לצאת לדרך בלא ב' אנשים - the reason why Avraham took two people with him is because **"an important person is not allowed to travel alone."**

On October 14, 2012, Felix Baumgartner, an Austrian-born aerobatic flyer, broke multiple world records. He became the first person to break the sound barrier in a freefall reaching a top-speed of 846 mph (or 1,357.6 kph) without the use of any heavy machinery. At the time, this was the highest freefall parachute jump from 24.2 miles above Earth's surface, which comes out to about 128,000 feet. That's pretty high up, by the way.

After stepping on the edge of his specialty-built capsule, suspended thousands of feet up high in the stratosphere, Baumgartner looked down at Earth below him, and with genuine humility, he said some of the most powerful words you'll ever hear:

"I wish you could see what I can see. Sometimes you have to be up really high to understand how small you are. I'm coming home now." And he jumped.

Greatness and humility are built upon each other; they are two sides of the same coin. There is no such thing as a truly great person that is not humble, nor is there such thing as a truly humble person that is not great. Great people see themselves as "small" simply because they see that their greatness comes from a Higher Being, i.e., Hashem. This is the "Jewish approach" to understanding humility.

When a person is able to recognize that his talents, strengths, and abilities (and even weaknesses!) are gifts from the Divine, given to him with his particular mission in mind, that is when a person is able to soar to lofty levels of greatness and be humbled by this very opportunity and calling.

In Parshas Vayeira, we find that Avraham Avinu referred to himself as עפר ואפר - dirt and ashes - which symbolizes his trait of humility. But we also find that Avraham Avinu viewed himself as great, as important, as an אדם חשוב.

If you think about it, the mere fact that Avraham Avinu kept this Halacha and took two people with him when he traveled is the greatest proof that he viewed himself as an אדם חשוב, a great and important person!

So yes, Avraham Avinu viewed himself as a great person, but that did not in any way detract from his viewing of himself also as עפר ואפר.

Even more, perhaps it was because of his greatness that he saw how small he was.

Sometimes a person has to be up really high and realize his immense greatness and חשיבות to truly know just how small he is in the grand scheme of life.

With this understanding, he will realize that he is on a life journey with a mission and a purpose, gifted to him from the Creator Himself.

He will utilize his G-d given talents to make the world a better place. And he will maintain a level-head awareness that anything and everything that he does and accomplishes, is ultimately from Hashem.

He will live with the attitude that there is always more to do, accomplish and achieve.

He will think about the fact that if he is alive, Hashem is whispering in his ear, "Your work is not yet complete. Keep doing great things. Keep rising in levels of spirituality and holiness."

*Have a holy Shabbos,
R' Ori Strum*

Where do we see this?

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