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A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

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פרשת וירא

וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא ה' יִרְאָה, אֲשֶׁר יֵאמַר הַיּוֹם בְּהַר ה' יִרְאָה. (בראשית כב, יד)
And Avrohom called the name of that site "Hashem Yireh," as it is said this day, on the mountain Hashem is seen. (Bereishis 22:14)

This week's *Sidrah* relates how, after the Akeidah, Avrohom named the site "Hashem Yireh," which translates to "Hashem will see." Rashi cites the interpretation of the Targum, explaining that Hashem will select this place as suitable for His Presence, where His Shechinah will dwell and where *korbanos* will be brought. He further interprets the continuation of the *possuk* to mean that they will say of it in the days of future generations, "On this mountain, Hashem appears to His people."

The Vilna Gaon (*Shir HaShirim* 7:1) offers a different understanding of this *possuk*. The Gaon explains that Avrohom called the site "Yireh," which means "He sees," because, through his deed of the Akeidah, Hashem's *hashgachah* became apparent in the world. By performing this act, Avrohom brought (evidence of) the Shechinah down to earth, allowing for a display of Hashem "seeing" everything that occurs in this world (as will be explained further). Consequently, Avrohom referred to this location as "Hashem sees," signifying that through this place, the world became aware of Hashem's supervision over all human thoughts and actions.

The Gaon expounds that the second clause of the *possuk*, refers to the time when Moshe built the Mishkan as a dwelling place for the Shechinah, following Matan Torah. In that era, there was an enhanced clarity in recognising Hashem, as whenever Hashem rests Himself among us, we experience and witness through the *giluy Shechinah* a deeper revelation that helps us to understand Him more profoundly.¹ The word הַיּוֹם, *today*, is referring to the time when the Torah was written, during the days of Moshe. Following the *giluy Shechinah* at Har Sinai and the construction of the Mishkan, Klal Yisroel gained a deeper appreciation of Hashem, which resulted in "Hashem being seen," meaning that Hashem was understood at a greater level.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*, drawing on an insight from the Malbim, explains the connection between these two revelations, and discusses how Avrohom's act of the Akeidah paved the way for the *giluy Shechinah* during the time of Moshe. The Malbim likens the relationship between Hashem and Klal Yisroel to that of a *chosson* and *kallah*, with both partners contributing to the union.

The *possuk* (*Hoshea* 2:21-22) states: וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי לְעוֹלָם, וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי בְצִדְקָה וּבְמִשְׁפָּט וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים, וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי בְּאֵמוּנָה, וְיָדַעְתָּ אֶת ה'

¹ This was evident from Krias Yam Suf, where Hashem's revelation allowed all of Klal Yisroel, even the lowliest maidservant, to gain profound awareness of Hashem, surpassing the great prophecies of the Nevi'im.

righteousness, with justice, with kindness, and with mercy; and I will betroth you to Me with fidelity, and you shall know Hashem. Hashem declared that Klal Yisroel eternally remains His betrothed, and this was through the principles of **חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים**, **מִשְׁפָּט**, **צְדָקָה**, as the Malbim will explain.

The Malbim elaborates that there are two aspects in *avodas Hashem*: **בֵּין אָדָם לְחַבְּירוֹ** and **בֵּין אָדָם לְמַקּוֹם**, and in both these areas, Klal Yisroel contribute a “dowry,” and Hashem reciprocates in kind. Regarding laws pertaining to interpersonal relationships, Klal Yisroel is expected to act with integrity in two ways: by adhering to the law - **מִשְׁפָּט**, and by going beyond what is strictly required - **צְדָקָה**. With these two valuable “gifts” that Klal Yisroel brings to this relationship, Hashem, as the One engaging with Klal Yisroel, provides two precious qualities in return: **חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים** which corresponds to **מִשְׁפָּט**, indicates that Hashem will act with compassion when the recipient is deserving. In contrast, **צְדָקָה**, matching beyond mere entitlement – **צְדָקָה**, represents goodness that exceeds what the recipient deserves.

In addition, regarding *mitzvos* between man and His Creator, a person is expected to act with **אֱמוּנָה** – faith and belief in Hashem, His Torah, and everything that happens. In response, Hashem will provide us with **וַיַּדְעֵתָ אֶת ה'**. Hashem will make for us signs, wonders, and miracles leading us to a clear and tangible faith in Him. The reward for having faith and *emunah* in Hashem is that we will come to **know** Hashem; He will be real to us rather than just an abstract belief.

This explanation provides a deeper understanding of the connection between the *emunah* of Avrohom and the increased *giluy Shechinah* during the times of Moshe. The reward for *emunah* is an enhanced insight into comprehending Hashem. Avrohom’s *mesirus nefesh* during the Akeidah was an extraordinary act of faith and belief in Hashem. Throughout his life, as the Meforshim explain, he had been challenging the practices of idolatry that advocated for the sacrifice of children to idols. He had consistently proclaimed that Hashem did not desire such savage methods of worship. Yet now, he was faced with the troubling command to perform that very “detestable” act against his own child. Furthermore, this was his only child, promised to him in his old age, and the command of the Akeidah contradicted all he had been told previously. Therefore, when Avrohom set aside these conflicting thoughts and focused solely on the will of Hashem, it demonstrated an astonishing display of absolute and total *emunah* in Hashem.

Avrohom was rewarded for this remarkable act with the clarity and insight that his descendants, Klal Yisroel, would receive in the future. Because of Avrohom’s achievement that demonstrated “Hashem yireh” – showing Hashem’s *hashgachah*, Klal Yisroel ultimately attained “Hashem yairoeh,” (lit. Hashem was seen,) meaning that Hashem was perceived and understood at a deeper level.

May we merit to attain unwavering *emunah* with total clarity and understanding, in the *zechus* of the Akeidah, when Avrohom displayed remarkable trust and faith in Hashem. Furthermore, may we embrace the lesson learnt from here: by strengthening our *emunah* in Hashem, we are rewarded with clear and tangible belief in Him.

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל and is presented by the Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association. To receive by email, please register your interest by sending an email to parshasheet@gyalumni.org.