

# VAYOMER ELIYAHU

Inspiration and Encouragement on Topics of Trust and Faith in Hashem Yisborach  
Based on the Weekly Torah Portion

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In English

ערב שב"ק פרשת  
Pekudei-Chazak  
שנת תשפ"ה

בס"ד

## When One Commits to Serve Hashem Unquestioningly, Hashem Miraculously Fulfills His Desires!

» *Why Was a Miracle Necessary to Erect the Mishkan?*

**The** Medrash (Tanchuma 11, quoted in Rashi 39:33) relates an amazing thing. It says that when Moshe Rabenu wanted to put up the Mishkan, he was not strong enough to lift the heavy beams on his own. Hashem told him, "You work with your hand. You will appear to be erecting it but it will rise up by itself and I will write about you that you erected it."

**We** may ask why Hashem did it this way. We know that we try not to rely on miracles. If so, why did Hashem command the Mishkan to have beams that were too heavy to lift, and which required a miracle to be put up. Why didn't He use smaller beams that Moshe could lift without a miracle?

**The** Sefarim Hakedoshim write that the reason Hashem did caused the Mishkan to be put up this way was to teach Klal Yisroel an important, timeless lesson that can be explained as followed:

**The** purpose of the Mishkan was to create a place for the Shechinah to dwell in this world. So too, the *avodah* of a person in this world is to bring Hashem's presence into his life through fulfilling the words of the Torah and observing the mitzvos.

**Hashem** knew that it would not be easy for Yidden to sanctify themselves and reach a level of holiness that deemed them worthy of connecting to the Shechinah. He knew that the *yeitzer hara* burns within every individual and uses all sorts of tactics to make it impossible for him to properly follow the ways of the Torah. As Chazal say (Kiddushin 30A), a person's *yeitzer* gets stronger every day and, if not for Hashem's help, one would never be able to overcome it. One simply cannot overpower it on his own.

**A** simple person may find it much too difficult to defeat the *yeitzer hara*. If he is told to strengthen his resolve and fight harder to connect with the Shechinah, he will say, "What do I have to do with lofty ideas like that? I am a simple man and I have no concept

of the Shechinah. I have no idea how to connect to something as sacred as that."

**Such** excuses prevent him from putting in the efforts to serve Hashem properly.

**By** having the Mishkan built in this way, Hashem was teaching us that this is how it has always been and that this applies to everyone. Even when the original Mishkan was built, Klal Yisroel was unable to do it all on their own. Even Moshe Rabenu could not erect it without Divine assistance. An open miracle was needed to lift the massive *kerashim*. Even in this exalted time, they had to rely on a miracle. They needed Hashem's help to raise the beams and thereby create a place for His Shechinah to reside.

**From** this, every Yid can learn that all he needs to do is express his desire to connect to the Shechinah and to do whatever is within his ability to make it happen. He is not expected to do it all on his own, and, in fact, it would not be possible for him to do it on his own. He just has to take the first steps and Hashem will then take over and help him do things that are beyond his natural capabilities.

**This** concept is found in the Mishnah in Avos (2:16) that states: "It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work but you are not free to slacken from it." This means that one must put forth the efforts to start the work – just like Moshe was told to hold up his hands and act like he was working – and the rest will be done by Hashem for him.

**One** may not sit with folded hands and do nothing to combat his *yeitzer hara*. One is not allowed to say that since he can't beat the *yeitzer* on his own, there is no point in trying and, instead, he'll just sit back and wait for Hashem to help. Rather, one must first do his part by exerting his own efforts, as much as he can, and he can then rely on Hashem to provide the assistance he needs.

**In** this vein, the Gemara (Brachos 10A) relates that Yeshaya Hanavi came to Chizkiyahu Hamelech and chastised him for

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יוסף בן שמואל

not having children and failing to fulfill the mitzvah of “*pur u’revu*.” The king defended himself by saying that he had been foretold that his children would be wicked.

**The** prophet replied that is not his business to look into the future. What is required of him is to fulfill the mitzvah that he is obligated to do and not to worry about future consequences.

**This** lesson applies to everyone. We all must do what we are required to do at the moment, without worrying about what the end result will ultimately be. If we do as much as we possibly can, Hashem will take care of the rest.

» *When is it Permitted to “Make Shabbos be Like a Weekday” and When is it Forbidden?*

**Only** in this way will one have the ability to overpower his *yeitzer hara* and withstand all spiritual challenges. We must start the battle ourselves and, after receiving Hashem’s assistance, we can be victorious.

**The** *pasuk* in Parshas Ki Seitzei states (Devarim 20:1): “When you go out to war against your enemy and you see horse and chariot, a people more numerous than you, do not fear them because Hashem your G-d is with you.”

**The** Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says that this is a hint to the war one must fight with his *yeitzer hara*. The *yeitzer* comes with a great army and much weaponry. It is much stronger and better equipped for the battle than we are. Still and all, we are commanded not to be afraid because we should recognize that Hashem Yisborach is with us. Although we are not strong enough to win the war, since Hashem is on our side, we can defeat the *yeitzer hara* as long as we put forth our efforts to start the battle.

**Sefer** Avodas Yisroel explains the *pasuk* similarly, by saying that the *yeitzer hara* is the enemy referred to here. The *yeitzer hara* is indeed very strong and mighty but we know that if we do our part, Hashem will not allow us to lose. Therefore, we should not be afraid.

**It** is our obligation to believe that Hashem will help us and to have *emunah* that He will be on our side if we do teshuva and return to Him.

**Rav** Chaim Kaufman *zt”l* (Sefer Mishchas Shemen, Parshas Shoftim) discerns this fundamental concept from the mitzvah of Shabbos. On the one hand, Chazal (Beitzah 15A) tells us: “Hashem told Yisroel: My children, borrow on my

account and sanctify the day, and trust in Me to pay back the loan.” This indicates that one is obligated to honor Shabbos, despite the expense. If he doesn’t have sufficient funds, he should borrow from others and rely on Hashem to pay back the loan.

**On** the other hand, Chazal also say (Pesachim 118A): “Make your Shabbos like a weekday rather than relying on others.” This seems to mean that one should not borrow from others in order to honor Shabbos. (Many Meforshim try to answer this contradiction. See Mishnah Berurah 242:1.)

**Rav** Yisroel Mordechai of Rachmastrivke *zt”l* suggests that it depends on how much *bitachon* the individual has. If one has full trust in Hashem, he will be able to faithfully do his *hishtadlus* and know that he will be provided for without needing to come on to others.

**Even** if it appears that he doesn’t have enough for Shabbos and it will be like a weekday if he doesn’t come on to the support of others, he should not take anything from them. Rather, he should do on Shabbos the same thing that he does on weekdays – which is to trust in Hashem to provide for him.

**If**, however, one does not fully trust in Hashem, he cannot rely on Him to provide his Shabbos needs and he must borrow from others in order to properly honor the day.

**Rav** Chaim Kaufman adds that this concept can be applied to every aspect of *avodas Hashem*. One must rely on Hashem to help him overcome his *yeitzer hara* and to pass all spiritual tests; however, one only may depend on him according to the level of his *bitachon*. The more *bitachon* one has, the more he can rely on Hashem’s assistance.

**This** idea can actually be found in the words of the Rambam (*Hilchos Shegagos* 3:10), which are quoted in *Hilchos Yom*

Kippurim by the Rema (Orech Chaim 607:6) that Yom Kippur only atones for those who do teshuva and truly believe in the power of their teshuva. If one doesn’t believe Yom Kippur will help and thinks his teshuva will not be effective, it will, in fact, not help.

**The** *pasuk* states (Shemos 1:38) that the Jewish midwives saved the lives of the baby boys that Pharaoh had order them to kill.

**The** Medrash (Shemos Rabbah 1:15) says that some of

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told Hashem  
Yisborach, “You  
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Your word.  
Please allow this  
baby to be  
whole and  
healthy so that  
no one should  
think that we  
tried to kill  
him...”*

them were supposed to be born lame or deaf or with some other birth defect. The midwives davened and told Hashem, “You know that we refused to obey Pharaoh’s command because we wanted to fulfill Your word. Please allow this baby to be whole and healthy so that no one should think that we tried to kill him and that is the source of his defect.”

**Hashem** heard their prayers and all the babies were born fully healthy. Rav Levi adds that, in addition to this, some were supposed to be stillborn and some of the mothers were supposed to die in childbirth. The midwives’ prayers for the baby’s to be born hale and hearty so that no one should think that they had a part in their deaths saved those lives of both the babies and the mothers.

**From** this Medrash, we learn the power of a pure desire to serve Hashem and the willingness to exert the efforts to do something good, even when it seems to be impossible.

**Through** their actions and prayers, the midwives reached an extremely lofty level of sanctity and holiness, which went well above and beyond anything they could possibly have naturally obtained. Again, we also see from this that one must do whatever they can, and Hashem Yisborach will then provide supernatural assistance to finish the job.

#### » *How Rav Chanina ben Dosa Brought an Immovable Stone From His City to Yerushalaim!*

**We** also find in the words of Chazal that when a person does whatever is in his ability to do, he receives supernatural strengths that he otherwise wouldn’t have, which enables him to complete the seemingly impossible job.

**The** Medrash (Koheles 1:1) relates that Rav Chanina ben Dosa once saw all the men of his city bringing *korbanos* to Yerushalaim. He was pained that he had nothing to bring. He went into the streets of his city and saw a beautiful, large stone. He decided that he would bring it with him to Yerushalaim and give it as a donation for the Bais Hamikdosh.

**He** got five men together and asked them to help him pick up the stone and carry it to Yerushalaim. They said, “Give us five coins and we will carry it.” He tried to find money to give them but he wasn’t able to come up with it at the time, so he let them go.

**He** still did not give up and he looked for more workers. Again, he found five workers who said, “Give us five coins and we will carry it.” This time, they added, “We will carry it only on condition that you stick out a finger to carry it together with us.”

**Rav** Chanina put one finger on the stone and, suddenly, he found himself standing in Yerushalaim. He

wanted to pay the men but he couldn’t find them anywhere.

**He** then said that perhaps they were *malachim* of Hashem who had come to him in fulfillment of the verse (Mishlei 22:29): “He will stand before kings (*b’melachto*); he will not stand before poor men.” The word “*b’melachto*” can be read as “*b’malachto*” (with His angels), and thus it can be understood as a reference to Hashem sending His angels to help perform a task.

**We** may ask the following question: Why did the *malachim* ask him to put his finger on the stone? Couldn’t they have carried it for him without him doing this small action?

**The** answer is that a person must do his part. Once a person does an action to perform a mitzvah, even if it is a very small action, he has awakened a very great power. His small action is the key that opens all doors and allows great miracles to occur. Hashem wanted to perform a tremendous miracle for Rav Chanina, but in order to do so Rav Chanina had to do his part first.

**Rav** Chanina understood this, which is why he attempted to find a way to bring the heavy stone from his city all the way to Yerushalaim, even though this seemed impossible.

**The** Gemara (Yoma 38A) relates that miracles occurred to help Nikanor bring doors from Egypt to Yerushalaim, to be used for the Bais Hamikdosh. He was transporting the doors by ship when a storm struck and the boat was in danger of capsizing. They threw one of the doors into the sea but the danger did not subside, so they wanted to throw in the second one as well. Nikanor grabbed ahold of it and said that if they threw in that one, they should throw him into the sea with it. Immediately, the storm stopped. Nikanor was now pained that one door had been lost.

**When** they reached the port of Akko, the door that had been thrown overboard surfaced from under the ship. Some say that a sea creature swallowed it and spit it up on the shore.

**To** commemorate this miracle, when all the other doors were changed and painted gold, the Gates of Nikanor were kept as they were.

**Nikanor** was willing to sacrifice himself to save the second door. When Hashem saw his *mesiras nefesh*, He not only saved this door but He also returned the first one.

**We** again see the same lesson we learned from the previous sources – that a person must do all he naturally can do, and he then receives Hashem’s supernatural assistance. When Nikanor clung to the door and did what he could to save it, Hashem stepped in and miraculously saved both doors.