

Drasha du rav Eli Mansour sur la parasha (anglais)

Posté par Teshuva Amitit - le 26 Janvier 2017 à 15:44

Parashat Vaera: Every Drop Counts

Rav Eli Mansour, Daily Halacha

www.dailyhalacha.com/WeeklyParasha.asp?ParashaClipID=624

Parashat Vaera begins with a series of promises that G-d tells Moshe to communicate to Beneh Yisrael in Egypt. One of these promises is “Ve’lakahti Etchem Li Le’am” – “I shall take you for Myself as a nation” (6:7).

The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabba, Parashat Naso) comments that this promise was made in reward for Abraham Abinu’s hospitality to his three guests. When Abraham welcomed these guests, who were actually angels, he invited them to “take a bit of water” to wash their legs (Bereshit 18:4). In reward for this offer to “take” water, G-d promised that He would “take” Abraham’s descendants as His special nation.

The Rebbe of Bobov explained the deep significance of the connection that the Midrash draws between Abraham’s offer to his guests and G-d’s promise to Beneh Yisrael before the Exodus. Water, the Rebbe noted, symbolizes repentance, as in the verse in Echa, “Pour forth your heart like water in the presence of Hashem.” Abraham’s offer to bring the guests “a bit of water” thus represents the value that G-d ascribes to even “a bit” of repentance. While we of course ought to strive to achieve complete repentance, we must recognize that personal change and growth is a long, gradual process that we should be undergoing throughout our lifetime. We cannot make a fundamental change overnight. Change must happen incrementally, one step followed by another. And this is the message G-d was conveying to Beneh Yisrael on the eve of the Exodus. Tradition teaches that during the period of bondage in Egypt Beneh Yisrael fell to the “forty-ninth level of impurity,” and found themselves on the brink of the fiftieth level, from which they would have been unable to recover. G-d wanted to redeem them despite their dire spiritual state, and so He gave them just two Mitzvot – circumcision and the paschal sacrifice – through which they could earn redemption. Even this relatively minor move upwards was very significant – significant enough for a nation on the brink of eternal spiritual destruction to suddenly be deemed worthy of a miraculous salvation. In the merit of “a bit of water,” a small move towards repentance, they were taken as G-d’s beloved nation.

It is told that Rav Haim Vital, the most illustrious student of the Arizal, asked his great Rabbi how their generation of Jews could possibly earn the final redemption. After all, if Mashiah did not come during the times of the Tanna'im or the times of the Amora'im, who were far, far greater in knowledge and piety than later generations, then why would Mashiah come during the times of the Arizal and Rav Haim Vital? The Arizal answered that to the contrary, Mashiah was far more likely to come in his time than during the time of the Talmudic Sages. In periods when society is overrun by sin and impurity, making it exceedingly difficult to remain faithful to the Torah and to live lives of holiness, Misvot are especially valuable and significant. A Misva performed under such conditions, when the atmosphere and culture draw a person away from Kedusha, is worth far more than a Misva performed under spiritually pristine conditions. And thus, the Arizal taught, the Jews of his time actually had a better chance of bringing the final redemption, as their Misvot were especially valuable.

Society has, unfortunately, deteriorated to much lower and frightening depths of depravity since the times of the Arizal – and this makes his message all the more poignant and relevant in our times. We must not despair over the dismal spiritual level of our generation, and figure that our Misvot are worth so little considering our low stature. To the contrary – our low spiritual level makes our Misvot especially precious before G-d. As in the case of our ancestors in Egypt, when even “a bit” of Teshuba sufficed to render them worthy of salvation, we can earn G-d's compassion and His miraculous redemption by working hard to do the best we can. Every drop of Teshuva, of Torah, and of Misvot is immensely powerful and significant, and makes a great impact. We should never minimize the significance of any small Misva act, of any extra bit of effort invested in prayer, of any small amount of charity we give, of any small amount of Torah that we study, or of any wrongful act that we decide to avoid, because each and every one brings us and our nation one step closer to our final redemption.

=====

=====