



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **חדוותא דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Seuda Shlishis Parshas Vayeira
(ספר חדוותא דזעיר אנפין עמ' קל"ו)

The Torah introduces Avraham Avinu's *tefilla* on behalf of *Sdom* with the phrase **ויגש אברהם** - "and Avraham approached". Rashi comments that sometimes, we find that the verb **הגשה** means going to war. The *Sfas Emes* (תרל"ח ד"ה ברש"י) asks, "With whom was Avraham going to war?"

He explains that because of Avraham Avinu's great humility (as exemplified in his statement in **פסוק כ"ז** - **אני עפר ואפר** - I am dust and ashes) it was very difficult for him to *daven* to his creator. In fact, we find no example in the Torah of Avraham *davening* on his own behalf. The *Zohar Hakadosh* notes that even when he did *daven* for *Sdom*, he didn't daven specifically for his own nephew Lot to be saved.

The *Sfas Emes* explains that when it came to this *tefilla* on behalf of the people of *Sdom*, his great *rachamim* motivated him to fight and overcome his natural reluctance to approach Hashem in *tefilah*. This is why he introduces his *tefillah* with the statement **אני עפר ואפר**. He meant to say that even though he is truly dust and ashes, his *mida* of *rachamim* overcame his reluctance and enabled him to *daven*. Therefore, *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, the *Av Ha'Rachamim*, should certainly have mercy on them.

This internal battle is the **הגשה למלחמה** that Rashi refers to in his commentary.

This *peirush* reminds me of a precious *maamar* that I heard in the month of *Sivan* 5736. The Amshinover Rebbe Rav Meir'l zy"l had just passed away. His oldest grandson, the Amshinover Rebbe *shlita* vehemently



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objected to the suggestion that he should take his grandfather's place. Only after numerous entreaties of *Gedolei Hador* led by the Gerrer Rebbe, the *Beis Yisrael zy"a*, did he finally agree.

I remember that during that period, I spoke with a highly-respected Amshinover Chasid. He said that on Shabbos, the Rebbe *shlita* repeated a lesson from his grandfather Rav Shimon Shalom of Amshinov zy"a.

When Moshe Rabeinu sees the bush which is burning but not consumed, he says **וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרָה נָא וְאַרְאֶה אֶת הַמִּרְאָה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה מִדּוּעַ לֹא יִכָּעַר הַסֵּנֶה** - And Moshe said, 'Let me turn and see this great sight, why is the bush not consumed (שמות ג':ג').

Rav Shimon Shalom asked why Moshe used the word **נָא**. The *Gemara* teaches us (ברכות ט.) That the word **נָא** always signifies a *bakasha* - a request. Moshe Rabeinu was speaking to himself. Did he ask himself for permission to go and see the burning bush. (In fact, Chazal noted this difficulty and explained, (ילקוט שמעוני שמות קס"ט) that he was speaking to other shepherds who were with him. Nonetheless, this requires more explanation.)

Rav Shimon zy"a explained that since Moshe Rabeinu was the humblest person on the face of the earth, (במדבר י"ב:ג), he was reluctant to approach that miraculous revelation. He felt that he wasn't worthy to go any closer. Therefore, he had to "ask permission from himself", to awaken a sense of self-esteem that would "allow" him to approach and gaze at the miracle.

This explanation parallels the *peirush* of the *Sfas Emes* that we brought above.

The *chasid* went on to say that when the Amshinover Rebbe *shlita* repeated this lesson, it was clear to the *chasidim* that he was referring to his own internal struggle that took place before his eventual agreement to lead the *Chasidus*.



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This is an important lesson for our generation. Today, most individuals assume that they are worthy of any leadership position or honor. Each of us needs to take time for a “reality check”, that will enable us to see the truly miniscule dimensions of our wisdom, talents, and stature. If even Moshe Rabeinu, the *Ish Elokim* felt unworthy to witness a miracle, how can anyone in our generation be so arrogant as to feel that he deserves to be elevated to positions of leadership? When viewed through the lens of reality, that person’s arrogance simply makes him look foolish.

We must all cultivate the *midos* of *anava* and *shiflus*, which allow us to realize how unworthy we truly are. The more we understand that reality, the more we will worthy of being a dwelling place for the *Shechina* in this world.

As the *pasuk* says:

כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה וְנִשְׂאָ שָׁכֵן עַד וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ אֲשָׁכֹן וְאֶת דִּכָּא וְשָׁפֵל רוּחַ

For so says Hashem the high and exalted who lives forever, and whose name is *Kadosh*, ‘With the lofty and *Kadosh* I dwell and with the crushed and humble in spirit.

אמן כן יהי רצון



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