



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חידושי דעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim

given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Seuda Shlishis Parshas Chayei Sarah 5778

In this week's *Parsha*, Eliezer gives gifts to Rivka Imeinu:

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלוּ הַגָּמְלִים לִשְׁתּוֹת וַיִּקַּח הָאִישׁ נָזֶם בְּקַע מִשְׁקָלוֹ וַיִּשְׁנֶי צְמִידִים עַל
יָדָיָהּ עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מִשְׁקָלָם (בראשות כ"ד: כ"ב) — And it was after the camels
finished drinking, and the man took a golden nose-ring that weighed a
beka and two bracelets on her hands that weighed ten measures of gold.

Rashi explains that each gift referred to something in Am Yisrael's
future. "בַּקַּע" - This hints to the *shekalim* of Yisrael (who donated) a *beka*
for each person. "שְׁנֵי צְמִידִים" - This hints to the two conjoined *luchos*. עשרה
זָהָב מִשְׁקָלָם - this hints to the ten *dibros* that were on the *luchos*"

Among the three items that are hinted to by the gifts, we can understand
the choice of the *luchos* and the *aseres ha'dibros* for they are the root of
the Torah and the foundation of Am Yisrael. However, the choice of
machatzis ha'shekel, the half-shekel which every Jew donated for the
building of the *Mishkan*, is surprising. How is it different than any of the
other six-hundred and thirteen *mitzvos* that could have been chosen.
Why did Eliezer hint to that particular *mitzva* at that point in our history,
and why did it precede the hints to the *luchos* and the *aseres ha'dibros*?

It seems that these questions can be answered in the following way.
Eliezer, the servant of Avraham, had attained very high *madreigos*. As
Chazal tell us, (יומא כ"ח:) Eliezer was דולה ומשקה - drew and disseminated
the waters of his master's Torah to others. In the Midrash, בראשית רבה,
Chazal explain that the title עבד משכיל (משלי י"ז:ב) - a wise servant refers
to Eliezer. Therefore, Eliezer wisely decided to test Rivka in the realm of



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gemilus chasadim, waiting to see if she would not only tell him to drink from her jug, but would also offer to draw water for his camels.

When Rivka responded that she would draw water for the camels until they finished drinking, Eliezer knew that she was destined to become Yitzchak's wife. However, even though she passed the test of *gemilus chasadim*, Eliezer knew that he had to prepare her to be worthy of uniting with such a *tzadik*. For Yitzchak Avinu had been brought up to the *mizbeach* as a *korban* at the *Akeida*, thereby attaining an eternal state of *kedusha*.

This is why the first gift he presented to her was a golden nose-ring that weighed a *beka*, hinting to the *mitzva* of *machatzis ha'shekel*. He wanted to emphasize that particular *mitzva*, because it is the one donation where everyone, young and old, rich and poor, donate equally. No one can give more, and no one can give less. Someone who would give more or less, would transgress the Torah's commandment, הָעָשִׂיר לֹא יִרְבֶּה הָעָנִי לֹא יִמָּעֵיט (שמות ל"ט:ט"ו) - The wealthy shall not give more, and the poor shall give no less.

The wealthy and the poor have equal status. In this *mitzva*, the wealthy can't take pride, or impress others with their exceptionally large donations. It was this principle that Eliezer wanted to bring to Rivka's attention with the gift of the golden nose-ring. For a home that is to be a *beit hashem*, in which the nation of Am Yisrael will take root, must provide *chesed* equally to all, rich and poor. Only when the builders of that household will humbly care for everyone equally, can that home become the foundation of Am Yisrael.

Eliezer gave her this gift before giving her the bracelets that represent the *luchos* and the *aseres hadibros*. This teaches us that the attribute of *anava* is a precondition to receiving the Torah. The Torah and the *Shechina* can only dwell in a home which is suffused with *anava*. Chazal taught us (סוטה ה.) that the *luchos* and *aseres ha'dibros* were given to Am



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Yisrael specifically on Har Sinai, which was chosen because it is lower than the other mountains.

In *Maseches Derech Eretz* (ז"א:א") We learn that the Torah will only remain with a person whose spirit is humble. Why is Torah compared to water? To teach you that just as water doesn't flow to high places, but rather to low places, so too, Torah will only remain with a person whose spirit is humble.

Before bringing Rivka Imeinu to Yitzchak Avinu, Eliezer taught her that the *mitzva* of *gemilus chasadim* must be fulfilled without differentiating between the recipients. Only with *anava* can one build a *beis Hashem*, a home in which the *shechina* dwells.

This is the intention of Rav Mari's statement in Bava Basra, "Someone who is arrogant, won't even be accepted by the members of his own household." Similarly, in *Maseches Sota*, Chazal taught "If someone has within himself arrogance, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, 'I and he cannot coexist in the world'"

May Hashem help us all have the *zechus* to treat everyone equally, with the *midah* of *anava*.

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