



The Weekly Parsha Shiur of Maran, Rosh HaYeshiva, the righteous Kabbalist,

Our Rabbi Benayahu Yissachar Shmueli, Shlit"a

An excerpt for Lech Lecha 5787 (2026)

He got angry with them and killed them

At that time Terach was a seller of idols and earned his living from this. **One day Terach did not feel well**, and said to Avraham: "Avram, sell in my place, so we will have a livelihood." Avram took with him 2 idols and called out in a loud voice: "Who wants to buy an idol that does not know how to speak? **And it is worth nothing, who wants?**" And everyone was laughing...

There was a person there who said to him: "I want something special." Said to them: "Where is your idol?" He says: "They stole it from me." Avraham answered them: **"Are you crazy?..."** In short, father was not at work, **and Avraham was sanctifying the name of G-d.**

He took a hammer and broke all the idols, and put the big hammer in the hand of the big idol, his father came and says to him: "Who broke everything?" Said to him: "There was a war between them, **and the big idol got angry and beat them.**" Said to him Terach: "There is no such thing!" Said to him Avraham: "Let your ears hear what you are saying: there is no such thing! If so, how can it be a Deity?" **And Terach took him again to Nimrod.**

Nimrod assembled his wise men again, until everyone said to Nimrod: "There is no advice. The only advice is that we make a huge furnace, a huge fire, **and throw Avraham into the fiery furnace, there is nothing else to do.**" And so they decided to do. They prepared a huge and terrible furnace, that it was impossible to even approach it, everyone who approached – burned, because

tongues of fire were coming out of it. They caught Avraham, and from afar threw him, and dropped him into the furnace, and everyone is watching.

And behold, as soon as Avraham entered the furnace, all the wood inside the furnace began to sprout flowers, and G-d created grass and trees and coolers there... and Avraham our father walks there, shouting from there: **"Hashem is the L-rd, there is none beside Him!** Everyone leave all the idol worship! Do you see how Hashem saves me?" And there was such a great sanctification of G-d's name! They knew that there is G-d in heaven.

From that day **a revolution started in Haran**, people were streaming after Avraham our father: **"Avraham the Hebrew": he is on one side, and the whole world is on the other side.** Thus slowly Avraham our father sanctified the name of G-d, may He be blessed, more and more, **and made activists for the Torah the likes of which do not exist.** Thousands came after Avraham, and he converted them.

How is it written? **"And Sarai was barren, she had no child."** Says the holy **Zohar:** Avraham and Sarah did not have children, and they were **generating** souls, and what are these souls? **All those** who were converted, and began to walk in the way of Hashem, Avraham and Sarah threw out the soul of the gentile that they had, **and injected them with a new soul that was born to them.** And so also "Sarai: converted the women. They had yeshivas, study halls, factories, businesses, soup kitchens, what not!"

The Vilna Gaon was very impressed by this

And now, after everything that Avraham and Sarah built, and thousands follow them, G-d says to him: **"Go for your sake from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house to the land that I will show you."**

An ordinary person looking at this would say: "What is this? Entire families, thousands of people, following me! What will they do? They all depend on me, there are yeshivas here, businesses, shops, factories, how can I leave all this?" But Avraham our father **has no questions!** G-d tells him "Go", and does not tell him where, what, who, or why.

And Avraham our father says to his entire congregation: "Listen, the Holy One blessed be He, commanded me to go, I am going, I don't know where, we will see soon. Goodbye, good luck! Whoever wants to come, **welcome**, can come." And where? **Don't worry!** "The Holy One blessed be He commanded me to go, I am not worried, not about food and not about anything, 'For He spoke, and it was done; **He commanded and it came to be, he commanded and it stood.**"

A wonder of wonders! **This is no simple trial!** Avraham our father does not question the Holy One blessed be He. **"And Avram was very heavy with cattle, with silver, and with gold"** and this does not interest him. The Holy One blessed be He tells him "Go for your sake from your land", he pays no

attention to anything, he was happy, thus Avraham stood in all the trials, is there such a thing, such a mighty person?

It is told that someone came to the Vilna Gaon who wrote a commentary on the prayer book. The Vilna Gaon studied it, and found that the author gave a reason why the prayer begins with "Adon Olam Asher Malach", [there is a great secret in this, awe-inspiring intentions], and that prayer book author wrote: **Rashbi wrote "from the day The Holy One blessed be He created the world, no person called Him Master (Adon), until Avraham our father came and called Him Master."** And since this is so, who instituted the Shacharit prayer? Avraham our father. And he called Hashem, "Adon Olam". Therefore we begin with the praise of "Adon Olam", which is attributed to Avraham our father. **And the Vilna Gaon liked this very much.**

Avraham our father called the Holy One blessed be He, "Master" with such self-sacrifice, and the Holy One blessed be He, implanted this in Avraham our father, and it helps his children after him, that we will succeed in standing in trials – "You have given those who fear You trials with which to be tested" – how does a person elevate himself? Angels have many things, but we have trials. A person who stands in a trial and is not tempted after the evil inclination, the Holy One blessed be He, raises him up. Thus it goes, always. The trial raises and elevates the person!

Took the expensive medicine and drank it...

A hundred years ago there were immigrants moving abroad—from Aleppo, from Europe—coming to New York. The Shrem family went there, and there was one, Rabbi Moshe Shrem, who was a leader of a large community in America, and when he was an infant, there in America, he contracted a severe illness, and his mother sacrificed herself for him, for this son.

What happened? They lived in great poverty, earning three dollars a month, tremendous poverty! And she called a doctor. The doctor said: "The visit costs 10 dollars." He saw a neglected house, such great poverty, nothing to eat, and a truly sick child. He examined him and said: "I am not taking money, but the medicine will cost you money, that is not up to me." He wrote her a prescription: "He will drink this, he will be healthy, there is a pharmacy in Manhattan, go there, the pharmacist there will prepare the medicine for you."

She ran there, and the pharmacist tells her: "This costs 40 dollars! Do you have forty dollars?"

She started crying: "I don't have it." "So how will you pay?" She said: **"You know what? I will work for you, I'll be a maid, I'll do cleaning."** And he agreed. They calculated: two and a half years, twice a week, she would be a cleaner, and settle the debt. They made a contract, she signed, and the pharmacist prepared the medicine for her.

Her son was burning with fever, and the doctor said to give him the medicine as quickly as possible. Therefore she ran, taking a shortcut through a Black

neighborhood. On the way, a big man—a Black guy—stopped her: **"What do you have in the bag?"** A thief, wanting money. He grabbed the bag, which had a few cents in it, and saw a bottle there. "What is this?" "It's my son's medicine." "Liar! It's rum, something people drink, it's good!" He drank half, and oh boy, his whole mouth tasted bitter... **He poured out the rest over her**, hit her, threw her to the ground in extreme anger, and left [and apparently he died later].

The poor woman fainted. When she woke up she said: **"Master of the World, there is no despair!"** "What shall I do now? Leave my son?" She returned to the pharmacy and told them what happened. The pharmacist said to her: "Listen, there is no warranty for this. Broken, gone. Go home! And tomorrow you must come to work, it costs money, the medicine." She said: "I will add five more years of work for you. Instead of two and a half years, 5 years, **as long as my son gets healthy**," and he agreed, and they made a new contract.

Suddenly the pharmacist sees colors on her hand. "What is this?" "It's from the medicine that spilled on my hand." **And the pharmacist was struck with shock:** "Oh no! If you had given him this medicine, he would have died on the spot! It was the wrong medicine by mistake, it is our mistake, good that you came back." **He began to praise the Creator of the World:** "G-d saved us and saved you, take the medicine without money, **without any price at all!** And also for the previous time, everything is on our account." He prepared the right medicine for her: "Now this will help your son."

This is how it is, the **Cause of Causes and Reason of Reasons**. He beat her, poured on her, did this to her, and everything for the best! What can a person know? Everything is for the best from Him, blessed be He, all is determined by the Holy One blessed be He. Therefore everything is a test from G-d, and it is for the best, no need to tell you, everyone knows what a test is.

The book was authored within prison walls

The Ben Ish Chai recounts in his book *Od Yosef Chai* **a story about a certain sage** whom they put in prison. And they say that this story happened to the Ben Ish Chai himself, whose family had a business belonging to all the brothers, and a false accusation was framed against them, and they put his brothers and him in prison in Baghdad. And he was alone in a small room, with no books or anything at all. **And in this room, he authored the book *Da'at U-Tevunah***—a Kabbalah book entirely based on the teachings of our master the Ari z"l. And he wrote it all by heart! His mind was completely submerged in study.

After a month, they came in to interrogate him, saw that he had no connection to the matter, **saw where his head was** and what he was doing there, and said to him: "Go home." **And at night he dreamed** that tens of thousands of souls came to him: "Thank you very much!" And he asks: "What happened?" They said to him: **"We are the souls that were in the stones of the prison wall**, there was no one to rectify us, and we connected to your soul, they put you here intentionally, to rectify us." Everything is the Cause of Causes and Reason of Reasons, **something doesn't just happen to a person**.

Afterward, when the Ben Ish Chai saw that they put him and his brothers in prison.

He said: "This is not for nothing, **it is a sign from Heaven.**" And therefore he took upon himself the penance of the *Kaneh*—to fast for six years, **"and in the seventh year he shall go out free for nothing"**—every day fasting, and at night eating; and during these days he eats no meat and drinks no wine. Thus for six years. Because when something happens to a person, he should know: it is not for nothing, **these are hints from Heaven.**

Even now, I see every week, may it not be upon you or me, all over the world there are problems, things are not simple. **In Panama** there was an earthquake, 9 on the Richter scale, but far away, not near homes. I heard it reached as far as China, tremendous magnitude, incomprehensible! **France**, Paris: thousands protesting, looting, taking, killing. Istanbul, **Turkey**: floods, shops, everything is going to ruin. **In short, the whole world is in turmoil.** Why? The Holy One, blessed be He, says: "Listen my dear, nation of Israel, see and learn a lesson for yourselves." **It is all from Heaven.** There are trials, and we must see and learn a lesson. It is no simple matter.

All because of 'Mister Lot'

Why did Avraham our father **endanger himself**? Because of Mister Lot, Mister Lot resembles him, as we said earlier; **he was afraid that Nimrod would capture him** and burn him, saying: Here, we won, **therefore he sacrificed himself** and said: It shall not be, this is a desecration of Hashem's name, **he saved Lot** and his property.

"And the king of Sodom said give me the persons and take the property for yourself." He says to him: "If I will take from a thread to a shoelace", it is from the land of **Sodom**, it is written in the holy Zohar: **Sodom** initial Hebrew letters: can be arranged to this is the Samech-Mem [The S"M angel]. He says unto Avraham: Listen, everything doesn't matter, **I want the souls**, take the property for yourself.

He said to him: **Silly foolish man.** Will I give you the souls? If I will take from a thread to a shoelace, take it for yourself, so you won't say I made Avraham rich, **the Holy One blessed be He, protects me**, "I am a shield to you, your reward is very great." **I don't need you**, I have the King, the King over Kings, the Holy One blessed be He; he is a father, he is a savior, not you Sodom, **take what you want**, I don't need anything from you, all these are the "Sitra Achra" [other side], take everything, I don't want it, **give me only my brother's son** Lot, and return his property to him, also those who worked—pay them, and I don't need anything, go home. A wonder of wonders. And then came Malchizedek king of Shalem. There are many things to talk about, only there is no time.

Who agrees that they give beatings to his son?

So I will tell you what he used to say about: "And it came to pass, as the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Avraham, and he said to Avraham, know for certain that your offspring will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and they shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years, and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge and afterward shall they come out with great property." **These verses require contemplation.** A deep sleep fell upon Avraham, "And He said know for certain that your offspring will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and they shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years", Avraham says to Him: **I agree.** What is this? You are Avraham our father, **400 years they will afflict them**, Egypt will do to them **whatever they want**, and you when dealing with Sodom and Amorrhah **you were pleading** before the Holy One, blessed be He, so now, pray, say why my son, why, **forgive them**,

What?! You agree? And afterwards, how does He appease him? "And afterward shall they come out with great property". This is like someone coming to a person and saying to him: "Listen, bring your son, **we will beat him severely**, torture him, and afterwards we will give him **a lot of money**." Who would agree? Don't torture him! I don't need you, and don't bring money. Whereas Avraham our father says—okay [literally: goes along with it].

Refinement Before Receiving the Torah

Rather, Avraham our father knows that the children **need to be refined**. Avraham our father still has a somewhat impure part in him, **which needs to be cleaned**. For this, Avraham our father brought Yishmael out of Hagar. But afterwards came Yitzchak, and there was still a bit of moisture (of impurity) in him. Yaakov came, and afterwards came the Tribes, and it was still attached to them. **And so that it would no longer be attached to them even a bit**, they needed to undergo refinement in order to receive the Torah—that is **the great property**, that is the receiving of the Torah. The Holy One, blessed be He, says: "I want to give you this great gift. Therefore know for certain that your offspring will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and they shall serve them and they shall afflict them. All this is for the best. And afterwards they shall come out with great property—**this is not money**, this is spiritual property. That—Avraham our father will surely want."

This is like a child coming in with a life-threatening illness. They brought into the hospital. Doctors come and say to the father: "**We must bring him into the operating room**, perform incisions, remove parts, arrange everything, and then we will return him whole, **he will be healthy**. Do you agree?" He says: "Of course I agree! Just bring me back a healthy child, no problem." So the Holy One, blessed be He, tells him: "**They must undergo these afflictions**, but afterwards they will be able to receive the Torah, **the Torah will enter their very bones**."