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## פרשת וירא

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פרק יט פסוק כז

וַיִּשְׁכַּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־עָמַד שָׁם אֶת־פָּנָיו יְ-הוָה:

חז"ל

אַבְרָהָם תָּקַן תְּפִלַּת שַׁחְרִית, שְׁנֵאָמַר וַיִּשְׁכַּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר עָמַד שָׁם (ברכות כו:)

מושג

אַבְרָהָם תָּקַן תְּפִלַּת שַׁחְרִית

### Translation:

Avrohom established the Shacharis prayer.

### Explanation:

While Avrohom Avinu davened all three Tefilos, he is the only one of the Avos whom the Torah specifically mentions davened early in the morning. This is because the character of Avrohom connected uniquely to תפילת שחרית<sup>1</sup>.

Avrohom's life was filled with many tests and challenges. However, he never let these shake his faith in Hashem. He remained עומד, standing erect, unfazed by the difficult times in his life. Thus, the Torah teaches us that even when his Tefilos for Sdom were unsuccessful, he awoke the next morning and עמד שם. He was not broken or even slightly bent by his failure and davened to Hashem exactly as he had done before.

If we truly appreciate ה'חסדי ה', we will realize that no matter what happened yesterday, the sun will rise in the morning exactly as it had before. The rising of the sun in the morning thus heralds the beginning of a new day, providing man with the opportunity to begin anew. Avrohom, himself excelling in מדת ההסד, is teaching us to not let yesterday's failures burden you or depress you. Rather, as the sun rises stand unbent before Hashem and daven your עמידה<sup>2</sup>.

**Looking in the Pasuk:** The Torah for the first time tells us that Avrohom awoke early to daven. The word it uses for davening is עמד, which is a new term for Tefilah. Both the early morning Tefilah and the word עמד to describe Tefilah are unique to Avrohom. In addition, the Pasuk refers us back to the place that Avrohom had davened previously. Why? Our Musag comes to explain that all the above describes the Tefilah that is connected to Avrohom Avinu, תפילת שחרית.

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<sup>1</sup> See note #1

<sup>2</sup> See note #2

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## NOTES

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1. The גמרא, from which our Musag is taken, teaches that each of the Avos established one of our three daily Tefilos<sup>3</sup>:

אברהם תקן תפלת שחרית - שנאמר וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום אשר עמד שם, ואין עמידה אלא תפלה, שנאמר (תהלים ק"ו) ויעמד פינחס ויפלל. יצחק תקן תפלת מנחה - שנאמר (בראשית כ"ד) ויצא יצחק לשוה בשדה לפנות ערב, ואין שיחה אלא תפלה, שנאמר (תהלים ק"ב) תפלה לעני כי יעטף ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו. יעקב תקן תפלת ערבית - שנאמר (בראשית כ"ח) ויפגע במקום וילן שם, ואין פגיעה אלא תפלה, שנאמר (ירמיהו ז') ואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל תפגע בי.

It is quite appropriate to claim that אברהם, being the first of the Avos, would establish the first of the daily Tefilos, and thus יצחק the second Tefilah, and יעקב the third. However, that would assume that אברהם did not pray three times a day, which is unlikely<sup>4</sup>. Rather, what our Musag means is that since the Torah tells us that אברהם davened in the morning, יצחק in the afternoon, and יעקב in the evening, we thus know that there are three Tefilos each day. That said, the fact that the Torah chose to tell us about אברהם davening שחרית, and not the other Tefilos, teaches us that there is a special connection between אברהם and תפילת שחרית<sup>5</sup>.

2. In order to fully understand the connection between אברהם and תפילת שחרית, we must look closer at the text and answer a few basic questions.

- From the fact that the Torah says that אברהם arose early and stood before Hashem, we learn that he davened שחרית. But, why does the Torah first teach us this fact at this point? Is this the first time that he davened in the morning?
- By each of the Avos the Tefilah is described in a different way, as the above גמרא teaches. By אברהם the Torah uses the word עמידה<sup>6</sup>. Why?
- Why is it important to tell us that Avrohom stood at the same place that he stood before<sup>7</sup>?
- If each of the Tefilos somehow connect to the מידה of the specific אב, as suggested above, how does חסד, which is the מידה of אברהם, connect to שחרית?

The Mishnah in Avos (פרק ה משנה ג) teaches:

עֲשָׂרָה נְסִיוֹנוֹת נִתְּנָסָה אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם וְעָמַד בְּכָלֶם.

Avrohom, the first believer, did not have an easy life. Even though one would have thought that his complete belief in Hashem would have led to a life of blessing and serenity, this was not the case. Time after time Avrohom is called upon to withstand various hardships and challenges, which were meant to test his mettle. These tests might have broken lesser men or at least shaken their faith, but Avrohom stood firm. Thus the term ועמד בכלם does not simply imply that he passed the test, but

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<sup>3</sup> This does not mean that they established the text of our עשרה, as that was composed by the הגדולה, as that was composed by the אנשי כנסת הגדולה. Rather, it simply means that the concept of davening in the morning is learned from אברהם.

<sup>4</sup> The גמרא on the above מהרש"א argues that if אברהם fulfilled every מצוה, even those that are Rabbinic - as we are taught – it is probable that he also davened every Tefilah.

<sup>5</sup> See מהרש"א who writes:

מהאבות למדנו שצריך לאדם להתפלל ג' תפלות בכל יום לקיים מה שנאמר (תהלים נה:יה) ערב ובוקר וצהריים אשיחה וכי' ונראה עוד דודאי אברהם נמי היה מתפלל מנחה וערבית... אלא שמכל אחד מהאבות למדנו כפי מה שמצינו שהתפלל וכך כתב בספר יוחסין, וכתב עוד אולי כל אחד מהם היה יותר זריז לפי מדתו.

<sup>6</sup> Our Pasuk reads עמד שם and refers back to the Pasuk (יה:כב) in which אברהם began his Tefilah for Sdom where we read: עודנו עומד שם לפני ה'.

<sup>7</sup> The גמרא in indeed learns from this wording that a person must set a permanent place for his Tefilah:

כל הקובע מקום לתפלתו א-להי אברהם בעזרו... ואברהם אבינו מנא לן דקבע מקום? דכתיב: וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום אשר עמד שם, ואין עמידה אלא תפלה, שנאמר: (תהלים ק"ו) ויעמוד פינחס ויפלל.

Why is it so important to daven in the same place? And why is this so unique to Avrohom that we say that אלקי אברהם אלקי אברהם?

that he stood firm and never wavered in his complete trust in Hashem<sup>8</sup>. Avrohom had the unique ability to see past what ever difficult predicament he found himself in and realize that the promised blessing was never far away. In short, he realized that every night is followed by a new dawn. His חסדי ה' כי לא תמנו כי helped him understand that no matter how dark or long the night, still לא כלו רחמי.

Avrohom had just experienced an unsuccessful bid to save the city of Sdom. He had stood in Tefilah and bargained with Hashem, but now he looked out over the smoldering ruins of the city he had tried to save. However, he was not broken, despondent or depressed, but rather stood straight before Hashem exactly as he had done previously, אל המקום אשר עמד שם. He arose early that morning eager to confront the challenges of a new day, and davened his Tefilah, תפילת שחרית.

His Tefilah, to be davened as the sun rose and a new day began, was a Tefilah of hope and new beginnings. It was to praise the חסד of Hashem<sup>9</sup> for the gift of a new start, which allows man to shape his future unencumbered by the failures or difficulties of his past. No matter what transpired yesterday, man can awake, stand up straight – עמידה – and begin anew.

It was, therefore, אברהם אבינו, who was tested and was able to be עומד בכולם, who establishes the עמידה, modeled after his Tefilah immediately after the destruction of Sdom. Even though it was אלקים, the מדת הדין, which had demanded the destruction of the city, as the Torah (פסוק כט) relates, וַיְהִי בְשָׁחַת אֱלֹקִים אֶת־עָרֵי הַכְּפָר, Avrohom did not see it that way. Just as he had stood straight and beseeched ה', the מדת החסד, to try and save Sdom, he does the same after its destruction. He stands in the same fashion and in the same place as he had before, and even now still davens to the same מדת החסד, as the Pasuk says, ה' אשר עמד שם את פני ה'.

Thus, the directive to be קובע מקום לתפילתו, goes beyond the simple meaning - to stand in a set place. Rather, davening in a set place seeks to guide not only our feet but our mind as well. It calls for us to stand in the same way, with a consistent and unchanging mindset. Both the שחרית Tefilah and קובע מקום are therefore intrinsically connected to אברהם אבינו. Both bear the lesson his actions taught: Whether yesterday was blessed with success or cursed with failure, the Tefilah of this morning must remain as consistent and rejuvenating as the rising sun.

This message, the belief in unlimited חסדי השם, is the frame of mind in which one should be as he or she prepares to daven the עמידה as the sun rises every morning. It is to be said standing straight, as אברהם did, with perfect trust in Hashem and the love He has for us.

#### Questions for Further Thought:

- a. Even though the גמרא understands that our Pasuk teaches that Avrohom davened שחרית, there is no record here of what Avrohom actually said. Why do you think this is so?
- b. Do you think that Avrohom's Tefilah for Sdom had any impact? Was Lot being saved a result of his Tefilah?

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<sup>8</sup> See Musag (לך לך יב"טז) footnote #2, where we discuss the meaning of עומד בכולם.

<sup>9</sup> As the end of our Pasuk tells us ה' אשר עמד שם את פני ה'.