



Lech Lecha

Every One Of Us Can Do Extraordinary Things

Every single one of us can do extraordinary things. In Parshat Lech Lecha we are told about the very first occasion on which a person was taken hostage, when Lot was captured. Abraham, his uncle, realised that he needed to be rescued and so the Torah tells us that Abraham mobilised every single person within his household – altogether three hundred and eighteen men – and together they went to Damascus, and they achieved their goal of rescuing Lot.

There is a fascinating Rashi on this. Rashi hardly ever resorts to Gematria, (the numerical equivalent of words in the Torah) but on this occasion he does. And he tells us that the name of Eliezer – who was the chief steward of Abraham's household – is equal, in Gematria, to three hundred and eighteen. Therefore, Rashi suggests that actually, there was just one person who rescued Lot – it was Eliezer.

I find this quite amazing, because the Torah spells out for us that there were three hundred and eighteen, so why resort to Gematria to say there was only one person?

And I think that the message of our Torah must be as follows. Of course, there were three hundred and eighteen people, but, each one of them took it upon themselves at the time to do their utmost to achieve the goal of rescuing Lot. And therefore, the success of the mission is ascribed to each individual person.

I believe that this is exactly what we have seen over the past two years. Ever since that black day of Shmini Atzeret, the 7th of October 2023, when over two hundred and fifty people were taken hostage. So many people right around the world, in their individual capacities took on the responsibility to do something. We have seen amazing efforts; demonstrations, vigils, protests, davening, Tehillim, adopting families of hostages, meeting world leaders – the list is endless. Ordinary people came to the fore and they said, I want to do something.

And, if we are going to give thanks to one leader, it must be to President Donald Trump. Thank God for his efforts in facilitating and arranging what has transpired. But ultimately, it has been a joint effort of individuals – thousands upon thousands of individuals, in Israel and throughout the diaspora, each one doing whatever he or she could do. And the result is that, thank God, at long last, we have seen most of the hostages come back home.

So, from this remarkable Rashi, let us never forget the lesson that each one of us can move mountains to achieve the unachievable. Together in partnership with Hashem, the sky is the limit.

Shabbat Shalom.