בס״ד

Ranon Ginsberg

Parshat Lech Lecha

יב׳ בחשון ה׳תשפ״ז

הוֹדוּ לַה׳ כִּי טוֹב

In *Hacksaw Ridge*, based on a true story, a US Army medic named Desmond Doss spends a whole night pulling soldiers off a ridge during the Battle of Okinawa. He saves around 75 men. And after each one he doesn't say, "I did it." He prays, "Lord, please help me get one more." He was a soldier who knew whose strength he needed to rely on.

This week's parsha shows us the same thing with Avraham. It's the first time he goes to war in the Torah. Lot was taken captive, and Avraham sets out to get him back. He takes his 318 men, and Rashi quotes the Gemara that this is only Eliezer because the Gematria of his name is 318. Either way, Avraham is outmatched by four kings and their armies. Despite that, he wins.

But the Torah doesn't allow us to believe that the win was Avraham's alone. He attacks at night, and Rashi brings a Midrash that a miracle was done for Avraham during the first half of the night. And when he returns with Lot, Malki Tzedek, a king and a priest of "El Elyon" (G-d Most High), comes to bless him by saying "Blessed be El Elyon, who has delivered your foes into your hand." He gives the credit to Hashem.

Then the king of Sodom, whose city had been attacked by the four kings, offers Avraham the spoils, and Avraham answers by swearing to "El Elyon, Creator of heaven and earth," the same name of Hashem that Malki Tzedek used. Avraham says he won't take even a thread or sandal strap so the king cannot say that he made Avraham rich. Rashi adds that Avraham had no need for anything from them because Hashem had already promised him wealth.

When Avraham wins, the first thing anyone does is credit Hashem. And when he is offered spoils of war, he refuses it, so that no one can say this win came from anything but

Hashem. Avraham is teaching the first Jewish army whose army it actually is. A soldier who knows it's Hashem's army fights with courage and humility, because the outcome was never in his hands alone.

So when something works out in your life, first and foremost, thank Hashem. And even when something doesn't, Rebbe Nachman teaches in Likutei Moharan that even the troubles a person faces, if he focuses on Hashem's ultimate purpose, will be seen as truly good. So since everything is from Hashem, we need to hold onto that faith that it's good, even when we can't see how yet.

Shabbat Shalom!