חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

AVRITCH · BAT AYIN, CHAYEI SARA

True humility is the root of every good trait

Bat Ayin

True humility—recognizing Hashem's all-encompassing greatness and one's own smallness, and constantly scrutinizing one's deeds and devotions for hidden self-interest—is the foundation from which all other good character traits emerge, as hinted in Avraham's blessing of "bakol" (everything) and his daughter "Bakol." Without this anavah (humility), even Torah study and divine service full of good qualities are worthless and cannot draw the Shechinah (Divine Presence) to rest upon a person, while true humility, as Avraham embodied it, draws every blessing and virtue together. AI SUMMARY

Abraham was old, advanced in days, and Hashem blessed Abraham with everything [bakol] (Genesis 24:1). It is stated in the Gemara (Bava Batra 16b) that Abraham had a daughter, and her name was Bakol. We can say that the Gemara is hinting to us here what should be the essential avodah (service) of a person, that of which all the bodies of the Torah are dependent upon.

Behold, the main point of avdus (servitude/service of God) is the aspect of hachna'ah (submission) and anavah (humility), that one should always contemplate the greatness of Hashem, how He fills all worlds and surrounds all worlds and is within all worlds, and there is no place devoid of Him, "If a man hide himself, etc." (Jeremiah 23:24). And one should always contemplate the smallness of his own worth and the lowliness of his service to Hashem, to Whom belongs the earth and its fullness, and to Whom silence is praise.

And he should reflect on his deeds, that they are not for the sake of Hashem alone, but that he also intends by them his own benefit — and even at the time when he learns and prays with hislahavus (fervor) and great longing, he should watch with an open eye and contemplate this well, and search and probe into the nooks and crannies, lest he find in them also a mixture that is not for the sake of Hashem alone.

Whenever a person has the quality of contemplation and humility, as mentioned above, all the good character traits are included within it. But Heaven forbid, when a person has the quality of haughtiness of heart—meaning, even if he possesses all the good character traits and sits engaged in Torah and in avodah (divine service)—it is considered as nothing, since there is no resting of the Shechinah (Divine Presence) and holiness upon it at all. Rather, he "pushes away the feet of the Shechinah," as it is written in the Gemara (Berachot 43b).

This is the meaning of "And Avraham was old, coming in days" — "yamim" (days) has the gematria (numerical value) of one hundred, which hints at the quality of anavah (humility), as the Gemara states (Menachot 43b, and Rashi there): "Do not read 'mah' (what) but rather 'me'ah' (one hundred)." The explanation is that Avraham Avinu, peace be upon him, attained the quality of true anavah, and therefore "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything." And the Gemara's explanation that "he had a daughter" — for a measure is called a "bat" (daughter), as it is written (I Melachim/Kings

7:26), "it held two thousand bat" — meaning that Avraham Avinu, peace be upon him, had this good measure, namely true anavah, "whose name was Bakol" ("with everything"), meaning that all the good measures are included within this measure of true anavah. May it be God's will that we merit this, amen, so may it be God's will.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

