Parshas Vayakhel - Zrizus

וְהַנְּשִׂאִם הֵבִיאוּ אֶת אַבְנֵי הַשֹּׁהַם וְאֶת אַבְנֵי הַמִּלֻּאִים לָאֵפוֹד וְלַחֹשֶׁן: (שמות לה, כז)	And the נשיאים brought אבני שהם and אבני מלאים for setting, for the אפוד and for the חשן;
רשי: וּלְפִי שֶׁנִּתְעַצְּלוּ מִתְּחִלָּה נֶחְסְרָה אוֹת מִשְּׁמָם, וְהַנְּשִׂאִם כְּתִיב	Because, however, they were lazy at the beginning, a letter yud is missing here from their title - it is written והנשאם instead of והנשיאים

Instructions For Teaching This Lesson:
Present to your class the amazing מדה of זריזות

Step 1:
Teach the students about the נשיאים and how we learn that a lack of זריזות is a form of laziness.

Step 2:
Explain to the students how זריזות has two steps: זריזות in the beginning/running to do the מצוה and זריזות in completing the מצוה. Highlight how acting with זריזות changes a person into a זריז by nature.

Step 3:
Show the students examples from תנך of the צדיקים who acted with זריזות.

Step 4:
Play the video or audio of R' Reuven Epstein in "Daily Dose #1,677: Run After It"
https://www.torahanytime.com/lectures/412349

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רש"י:
והנשאם הביאו. אָמַר רַ' נָתָן: מָה רָאוּ נְשִׂיאִים לְהִתְנַדֵּב בַּחֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בַּתְּחִלָּה וּבִמְלֶאכֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן לֹא הִתְנַדְּבוּ בַּתְּחִלָּה? אֶלָּא כָּךְ אָמְרוּ נְשִׂיאִים, יִתְנַדְּבוּ צִבּוּר מַה שֶּׁמִּתְנַדְּבִין, וּמַה שֶּׁמְּחַסְּרִים, אָנוּ מַשְׁלִימִין אוֹתוֹ, כֵּיוָן שֶׁהִשְׁלִימוּ צִבּוּר אֶת הַכֹּל – שֶׁנֶּ' וְהַמְּלָאכָה הָיְתָה דַיָּם – אָמְרוּ נְשִׂיאִים מֶה עָלֵינוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת? הביאו את אבני השהם וְגוֹ', לְכָךְ הִתְנַדְּבוּ בַּחֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תְּחִלָּה, וּלְפִי שֶׁנִּתְעַצְּלוּ מִתְּחִלָּה נֶחְסְרָה אוֹת מִשְּׁמָם, וְהַנְּשִׂאִם כְּתִיב
In this week's Parsha the Pasuk says that the נשיאים brought the אבני שהם and the אבני מלאים . In the Pasuk the word נשיאים is written without a Yud. Rashi famously explains that when it came to the חנוכת המזבח the נשיאים came first to donate, however by the Mishkan they came last. They had the following rationale, let everyone else donate, and we will provide anything that is missing. However over two days Klal Yisrael donated generously and there was nothing left for them to bring. Therefore when it came to the Chanukas HaMizbeach they made sure to donate first. Since they procrastinated and were "lazy", a letter is missing from their name.

Rashi is difficult to understand. Where is there any indication of laziness? They had a very good Cheshbon: we will cover whatever is missing. It must be, that Chazal understood this to mean that if they were not running to donate, even if their Cheshbon was sound, it could only be because they were ever so slightly lazy.

We see from here that our Middos are so powerful, and they can even influence us to come up with a rationale that makes sense, when in actuality it is stemming from the negative Middah. This "rationalization" caused the נשיאים to have a letter missing from their name forever.

פסחים ד.
זְרִיזִין מַקְדִּימִין לְמִצְוֹת
The people who have זריזות are early in the performance of mitzvos. This way, they ensure that they fulfill them before something distracts them and it gets too late, and the opportunity is gone.

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מסילת ישרים פרק ז' חלקי הזריזות

מסילת ישרים says that there are two steps to זריזות the first is to hurry to do a מצוה when the opportunity arises so as not to lose the chance. The second is after one begins a מצוה to complete it quickly in its entirety.

כִּי הַתְּנוּעָה הַחִיצוֹנָה מְעוֹרֶרֶת הַפְּנִימִית

For the external movement rouses the inner one. If you do an action, it helps you feel a corresponding feeling internally. So if you move quickly on the outside, it affects your brain on the inside and helps you actually become someone who rushes to do things and doesn't procrastinate.

מסילת ישרים teaches us that צדיקים act with זריזות. It brings examples from תנך:

וְכֵן תִּמְצָא כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם שֶׁל צַדִּיקִים תָּמִיד בִּמְהִירוּת. אַבְרָהָם כָּתוּב בּוֹ (בראשית י"ח:ו'): וַיְמַהֵר אַבְרָהָם הָאֹהֱלָה אֶל שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר מַהֲרִי וְגוֹ', וַיִּתֵּן אֶל הַנַּעַר וַיְמַהֵר.

You will observe that all the actions of the Tzadikim (righteous) are always performed with זריזות.

- Avraham ran quickly to tell Sarah to hurry and prepare the meals for the מלאכים. He also told ישמעאל to hurry with the preparation for the הכנסת אורחים.

רִבְקָה, (שם כד) וַתְּמַהֵר וַתְּעַר כַּדָּהּ וְגוֹ'.

- Rivka hurried to fill up the water for אליעזר and his camels.

וְכֵן אָמְרוּ בַּמִּדְרָשׁ (במדבר רבה פרשה י): וַתְּמַהֵר הָאִשָּׁה וְגוֹ' (שופטים יג),

- Shimshon's mother ran to tell her husband about the 'מלאך ה who came to her.

מְלַמֵּד שֶׁכָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם שֶׁל צַדִּיקִים בִּמְהִירוּת, אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִתְּנוּ הֶפְסֵק זְמַן לֹא אֶל הַתְּחָלַת הַמִּצְוָה וְלֹא אֶל הַשְׁלָמָתָהּ.

This comes to teach that all the deeds of the righteous are done with זריזות. They do not allow an interruption of time to pass - not before beginning the Mitzva nor in completing it.

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שמות יב, יז
וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־הַמַּצּ֔וֹת כִּ֚י בְּעֶ֣צֶם ׀ הַיּ֣וֹם הַזֶּ֔ה הוֹצֵ֥אתִי אֶת־צִבְאוֹתֵיכֶ֖ם מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֑יִם וּשְׁמַרְתֶּ֤ם אֶת־הַיּוֹם֙ הַזֶּ֔ה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶ֖ם חֻקַּ֥ת עוֹלָֽם׃
You shall observe the חג המצות - the Yom Tov of Pesach, for on this very day I brought you out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day throughout the ages for all time.

רש"י:
רַבִּי יֹאשִׁיָּה אוֹמֵר אַל תְּהִי קוֹרֵא אֶת הַמַּצּוֹת, אֶלָּא אֶת הַמִּצְוֹות – כְּדֶרֶךְ שֶׁאֵין מַחֲמִיצִין אֶת הַמַּצָּה, כָּךְ אֵין מַחֲמִיצִין אֶת הַמִּצְוָה, אֶלָּא אִם בָּאָה לְיָדְךָ, עֲשֵׂה אוֹתָהּ מִיָּד (שם):
Rabbi Yoshiah said: Do not read "את המַצּוֹת", the matzos, but את הַמִּצְוֹת "the mitzvos" — just as we may not cause the matzah to become חמץ by letting the dough remain in its raw state too long so we may not let the Mitzvos become "חמץ" by waiting too long before we perform it; rather if it a mitzva comes to your hand, perform it immediately.

במדבר כב, כא
וַיָּ֣קָם בִּלְעָ֗ם בַּבֹּ֙קֶר֙ וַיַּחֲבֹ֣שׁ אֶת־אֲתֹנ֔וֹ וַיֵּ֖לֶךְ עִם־שָׂרֵ֥י מוֹאָֽב׃
When he arose in the morning, בלעם saddled his donkey and departed with the Moavi dignitaries.

רש"י:
אָמַר הַקָּבָ"ה רָשָׁע כְּבָר קִדְּמָךְ אַבְרָהָם אָבִיהֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (בראשית כ"ב) "וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת חֲמֹרוֹ" (תנחומא):
Hashem said: You wicked man! Their ancestor Avraham has already anticipated you in this when he saddled his own donkey in preparation for עקידת יצחק. You are coming for bad, but you think you have the זכות of זריזות? Rasha, אברהם came before you with a זכות of זריזות for עקידת יצחק. Your זריזות cannot cancel his!

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דוד המלך had conquered the enemies and decided it was time to build the בית מקדש. He said to Nosson Hanavi, "רְאֵה נָא אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית אֲרָזִים וַאֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹקִים יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ הַיְרִיעָה:"
"Behold I am living in a palace of cedarwood, while the ארון of ה' is in a tent!"
Meaning - I want to build the בית מהקדש

On that very night, ה' appeared to נתן הנביא. Why specifically on that very night? What was the big rush?

<u>שמואל ב ז, ד</u>
וַיְהִי בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיְהִי דְּבַר־ה' אֶל־נָתָן לֵאמֹר:
But that same night the word of Hashem came to Nosson:

<u>רש"י:</u>
וַיְהִי בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא בַּר פָּפָא: אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְנָתָן, הָאָדָם הַזֶּה שֶׁאֲנִי מְשַׁלֵּחַ אֶצְלוֹ, מָהִיר הוּא, שָׂמָא יִשְׂכּוֹר פּוֹעֲלִים וְנִמְצֵאתִי מַפְסִידוֹ, מַהֵר וֶאֱמוֹר לוֹ, לֹא אַתָּה תִּבְנֶה הַבַּיִת.
"And it was on that night." Rebbe Chanina, the son of Popoh said: the Holy One blessed be He said to Nosson, "The man I am sending you to is a quick one, he may hire workers and it will turn out that I [cause] him loss. Hurry and tell him, 'It is not you who will build the Temple'."

Hashem had to tell the נביא **<u>that same night</u>** to stop דוד because he would not build the בית המקדש. His son שלמה could. Why did the נביא have to tell him this on that very night? Because דוד was such a זריז, Hashem knew that if He wouldn't stop him that night, he would already have hired workers to build the בית המקדש! Imagine being such a זריז to start on such a long project right away on the first night!

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קִיצור שולחן ערוך סימן יב
מִצְוָה לָרוּץ כְּשֶׁהוֹלֵךְ לְבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת אוֹ לְבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ אוֹ לִשְׁאָר מִצְוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר נִרְדְּפָה לָדַעַת אֶת ה'. וּכְתִיב, דֶּרֶךְ מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אָרוּץ. וְלָכֵן אֲפִלּוּ בַּשַּׁבָּת מֻתָּר לָרוּץ לִדְבַר מִצְוָה

It is a mitzvah to run to shul, the בית מדרש, or to perform other mitzvos based upon such verses as הושיע ו,ג ("Let us run to know G-d") and תהילים קיט,לב ("I will run the way of Your mitzvos"). Even on Shabbos, when we do not run in general, we may do so for the sake of a mitzvah. (משנה ברורה צ,מ informs us that the best place to run is the part of the trip closest to shul, so it's clear that he's hurrying there.)

A nephew remembers:
My uncle, Rav Shmuel Gedalia Pollak was makpid to always be early to davening. I remember as a kid going with him to shul one day. He realized that he wouldn't be as early as he usually was makpid to be. He literally ran all the way to shul. He was already an older father with a bunch of children, yet he ran the entire four blocks to shul, briefcase in hand and a smile on his face! I, a teenager, struggled to keep up with him. Although many many years have passed, that picture of a choshuv grown man running through the street to shul remains imprinted in my mind to this day.

Story:
Rav Aryeh Levine, known as the "Tzaddik of Jerusalem," was legendary for his commitment to being the first to greet every person he encountered. It was famously said that it was impossible to say "Shalom" to him before he said it to you.
One man in Jerusalem reportedly made it his personal mission to try and greet Rav Aryeh first. Despite his best efforts to catch the Rabbi off guard or spot him from a distance, he never once succeeded; Rav Aryeh always anticipated the encounter and offered a warm greeting before the man could speak.

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Story told by Reb Aryeh Levine's granddaughter:
An eyewitness told me a story that perfectly illustrates how my grandfather was always on the lookout for any mitzvah he could do. Walking one day past the old Shaare Zedek Hospital building on Rechov Yafo, he noticed an attendant wheeling a body out of the cheder taharah - the purification room - where the deceased were prepared for burial. Ascertaining from the attendant that the deceased was a
woman and that she had no relatives to accompany her to her final resting place, the Tzaddik Reb Aryeh Levine began giving a hesped - a eulogy - on the spot, for this woman he did not know. Recognizing him, people stopped to listen and a large crowd gathered. When he finished, he encouraged the crowd to fulfill the mitzvah of הלוית המת - accompanying the dead. In her lifetime, would this woman ever have imagined that she would merit a funeral oration from the Tzaddik of Yerushalayim or that such a large crowd would attend her burial? But this was typical of Reb Aryeh, walking the streets of Jerusalem and looking to see where he could do mitzvos.

There is a beautiful story about Rav Shmuel Salant, the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem in the 19th century.
One freezing winter night, long after midnight, there was a frantic knocking at Rav Salant's door. A woman was standing there in tears. Her only cow—the family's sole source of income—had been slaughtered, but a question had arisen as to whether the meat was kosher (treif). If it wasn't kosher, her family would be destitute.
Most people would have told her to wait until the morning or to leave the question with a student. But the moment Rav Salant heard the urgency in her voice, he didn't even put on his heavy coat or boots. He grabbed his slippers and a lamp and headed straight for the door.
He didn't just give her a ruling; he insisted on going to the butcher shop right then to inspect the animal himself. He walked through the dark, snowy streets of Jerusalem at 80 years old, moving with the speed of a young man.
When his students later asked why he didn't wait just a few hours until sunrise, he replied: "A Jewish woman is in pain. Every minute she waits is another minute of suffering. Is there any reason to delay her relief?"