

Question:

Regarding the saving of the city of Tzoar during the destruction of Sedom I have the following issues:

1. Why would Lot daven to the malach and not Hashem for mercy?
2. How could the Malach have the authority to go against a decree that hashem had already decided? (Even if Hashem gives a malach the choice how to carry out his shlichus - it seems to me that not destroying one of the cities is a DIRECT defiance of his shlichus)
3. Why is the Malach not punished for changing Hashems decree (especially when considering the fact that the Malach is punished for even seeming to imply that it was he who would destroy the city, and yet here when Lot begs him to save Tzoar the Malach is very comfortable assuming the position of deciding the fate of a city - and yet there is no consequence)?
4. Avraham tried unsuccessfully to get Hashem to save even one city (according to Rashi) but if the reason Tzoar was saved is because it was a younger city of only 51 years... why could Avraham not make that argument himself?
5. It seems unfair that Avraham a tzadik can't achieve through Hashem what Lot (a rasha?) can achieve through an angel?

Lot's Request

The angels that were appointed to destroy Sedom advised Lot to “*flee to the mountain*”¹ [to Avraham²]. Lot replied that that he would prefer to take refuge in the nearby [and

1 בראשית (יט, יז): "וַיְהִי כְהוֹצִיאָם אֹתָם הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמַּלְאָךְ עַל נַפְשׁוֹ אֶל תְּבִיט אַחֲרָיִךְ וְאֵל תַּעֲמֹד בְּכָל הַכְּפָר הַהָרָה הַמְּלֵט פָּן תִּסָּפֵה."

2 רש"י (לבראשית יט, יז) "ההרה המלט – אצל אברהם ברח שהוא יושב בהר".

