



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ואלה תולדת יצחק בן אברהם אברהם הוליד את יצחק ... (כה-ט)

Chazal tell us that the “Toldos” of a *tzaddik* are his good deeds. What one does in this world will truly be his descendants, for a person’s good deeds truly shape his eternity. The following story began seven months ago, but the “Toldos” are forever. A *chareidi* man from *Bnei Brak* pulled up to a gas station in central Israel to fill up his car. He saw a secular man looking very troubled. He went over to him and asked, “*Achi*, my brother, you look like something is wrong, is there any way I can help you?”

The irreligious man looked curiously at the man with beard and *peyos* offering his help. He was quite desperate and so he said, “My car has no gas and I barely managed to make it here, but I left my credit card at home and I have no money on me.”

The *frum Yid* from *Bnei Brak* smiled and said, “Is that it? No problem, I will fill up your car.”

The man was relieved and he said, “Please give me your information so I can pay you back.” To which the *chareidi* man answered, “Oh no! This is my *mitzvah*, don’t take it away from me!” He refused to even consider accepting remuneration.

The irreligious man looked at him incredulously and said, “My friend, I come from a *Moshav* down south called *Kibbutz Be’eri*. People there say all kinds of things about *chareidim* and people like you, but I see that it is not true!”

They exchanged phone numbers and the man from *Bnei Brak* promised to keep in touch. The *Kibbutznik* was moved, but did not believe he would ever hear from that “*dos*” again. On *Erev Shabbos*, the man from *Bnei Brak* called the non-religious fellow and said, “I just wanted to say hello and wish you a good *Shabbos*!” Each *Erev Shabbos*, for six months straight, he would pick up the phone and reconnect with his *chiloni* friend from Be’eri, always ending off with, “Have a good *Shabbos*!”

Finally, after a few months, the *chiloni* said to his friend, “You keep wishing me a good *Shabbos*, but honestly I have no idea what *Shabbos* is all about. I know nothing at all about *Shabbos*. Can you teach me what it is?”

“Of course!” answered the delighted *chareidi* man. “But I don’t think that I can explain to you over the phone what *Shabbos* is. The only way to understand *Shabbos*, to really appreciate a *Shabbos*, is by experiencing one! Maybe you and your family would come to me for *Shabbos* and then you will see what it is all about!”

The man laughed and he said, “I will think about it!” But every week when he asked him again, he would say, “Maybe ... but not this week!” Week after week, there was always a reason or excuse why they couldn’t come from Be’eri to *Bnei Brak* for *Shabbos*. Finally, a few weeks into *Chodesh Elul*, the *chiloni* from Be’eri decided that it was time to see what *Shabbos* was all about and he finally agreed to come! The *Bnei Brak* family felt that although *Rosh Hashana* was coming up shortly, that would probably not be appropriate for his guests from a non-religious *kibbutz*, nor would *Yom Kippur* or *Sukkos*. He said to himself, “*Simchas Torah* would be the perfect time to host this completely secular family. The singing and dancing with the *Torah* would truly be inspiring.” He invited them for *Simchas Torah* and they agreed to come. (In Israel, *Yom Tov* is one day.)

A few days before *Yom Tov*, the *chareidi* man’s father, who lived in the city of Sderot, also in the south, called his son and said, “I want you and the whole family to come for *Simchas Torah*. It is hard for me to be here alone and I need you to come.”

The man said to his father, “*Abba*, I would love to come but I cannot. You see, I invited a *chiloni* family from *Kibbutz Be’eri* for *Simchas Torah* and I cannot cancel now and tell them not to come. Why don’t you come to me?” His father refused and insisted that honoring parents precedes inviting guests and therefore he must come to Sderot for *Simchas Torah*.

The man hung up the phone and was in a real quandary. What should he do? He decided to call up his *Rav* and ask a *shaila*. His *Rav* told him, “Your father must come to you! There is no question about it! Give me his number and I will call him!”

The *Rav* called the man’s father and convinced him to leave his home in Sderot and come to *Bnei Brak* for *Simchas Torah*. That day, the Hamas terrorist attack in southern Israel that shook the entire world, decimated *Kibbutz Be’eri*, leaving very few survivors! And so, three families were saved because of the good deed that one man from *Bnei Brak* did when he met a fellow Jew at a gas station. Indeed, the “Toldos” of this incredible story will surely carry on for many generations to come.

ואתם לו מורא ויראני ... (מלאכי ב-ה)

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY AN UNEQUALLED HISTORIAN

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

*Malachi HaNavi* describes *Hashem*’s special relationship with *Shevet Levi* who always adhered to the word of *Hashem*. The *Navi* says, “*And I [Hashem] gave him [Shevet Levi] a feeling of trepidation [which they used] to fear Me.*” However, by giving them a special feeling of fear of *Hashem*, did the Almighty not take away their sense of choice - their *בחירה*?

**R’ Yisroel Salanter ז”ל** explains that *Chazal (Sanhedrin 99b)* say that every person is born to toil in this world and the one who toils in *Torah* is the privileged one. In fact, **Rashi** says that in reality everyone has a choice. All human beings were created for a life of toil, and if he does not engage and toil in *Torah*, he will toil in other things. But if he chooses to

toil in *Torah*, he will be blessed, and the worries and toils of this world will be released from him. Similarly, human beings were created with awe and fear, and it is only natural for them to be afraid of something. Thus, if one chooses to channel his fear towards *Hashem* then he will be blessed not to have to fear anything else. But if he chooses not to fear the Almighty, then it is only natural for him to fear other things in the world.

The special relationship between *Hashem* and *Shevet Levi* was due to their choosing to fear him and nothing else. Of course, they had a choice. They could have chosen to fear other things like the rest of *Klal Yisroel*, but they chose to take that special “*מורא*” - fear, that *Hashem* gave them all, and channel it to complete “Fear of Heaven.”

ויעתר יצחק לה’ לנכח אשתו כי עקרה היא ויעתר לו ה’ ותהרר רבקה אשתו ... (כה-כג)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOPMAN ZT”L

# מחשבת הלב

While learning this *posuk*, a few questions arise. Firstly, the words of the *posuk* seem out of order. It should have first stated that Yitzchok saw that Rivkah was an עקרה, and that led to his *davening*. Why does it say that he *davened* first? **Rabbeinu Bechaye** answers, based on *Chazal*, who say that *Hashem* desires the *tefillos* of a *tzaddik*. Thus, He gives them reasons that will cause them to *daven*. Therefore, the *posuk* wrote the *ikkar*, their prayers, first, and only afterwards the reason. The second question is, what does the *Torah* want to signify with the words “לנכח אשתו”, opposite his wife?

Every *Shabbos*, for those who *daven nusach sefard* (on *Yamim Noraim* for *nusach ashkenaz* as well), in the *tefillah* of “שוכן עד” there’s an unusual acronym. The first letters of the words, קדושים, חסידים, צדיקים, ישרים, spell “יצחק” and the third letters of תהלה, תתקדש, תתברך, תתרום, spell “רבקה” facing each other, לנכח אשתו. But there must exist a deeper meaning here.

The **Tzvi Latzaddik** explains that when a person *davens* to *Hashem* for something, whether it is *parnassa*, *gezunt*, children, etc., there are two ways to ask. One is to *daven* for it because they really want it. Or they can ask for the same thing but not because they want it, rather because it can be used as a vehicle to promote *Kvod Shomayim*. The latter being the more desired supplication. So, yes, Yitzchok and Rivkah begged for a child but for the sake of שמים, in order to continue building *Klal Yisroel*.

Each *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* when we say שוכן עד, but especially during the *Yamim Noraim*, we are reminded, that as we *daven* for our needs, our focus shouldn’t just be on ourselves - “selfish” - but rather למען, for Your sake, *Hashem*, as the words containing the רבקה acronym teach us. May we *takeh daven* continuously לעלם ולעלמי מברך רבה לעלם ועלמי. “אמן. יהא שמה רבה מברך לעלם ולעלמי which has the power to break all decrees and send us the final *geula*. b’karov!”

## משל למה הדבר דומה

קום נא שבה ואכלה מצירי בעבור תברכני נפשך ... (כו-ט)

**משל**: The *Medrash (Koheles 3:1)* tells of a fascinating incident. One of the prominent men of *Tzipori* made a festive event in honor of the *bris milah* of his son and *Rav Shimon ben Chalafta* came to the event.

At the *bris*, as the father of the boy was giving out aged wine, he pronounced: “Drink this fine wine, and I trust in (pray to) the Master of Heaven that I will also give you to drink from it at his wedding.” To which the guests customarily responded, “Just as you brought him to circumcision, so may you bring him to *Torah* and to the wedding canopy.”

Suddenly, *Rav Shimon* was accosted by an angel. After a quick exchange, the angel revealed himself as the *malach hamaves*, the angel of death. “Why do you look forlorn?” asked *Rav Shimon*. The angel answered, “It is from the

sound of the harsh words that I hear from people every day.”

“What do you refer to?” asked *Rav Shimon*.

“That baby that you circumcised today,” he explained, “I have a document of his fate, which states that I am to take him from this world in thirty days. However, his father gave you to drink and prayed: ‘Drink this fine wine as I trust in the Master of Heaven that I will give you to drink of it at his wedding.’ The prayer pierced the heavens and abrogated the decree. That is what makes me sad!”

**נמשל**: This weeks *parsha* expounds on the *berachos* that *Yitzchok Avinu* gave to his sons. Although it may seem that the blessings given by Yitzchok are of divine nature and we cannot relate to such a lofty position, the above *Medrash* seems to imply otherwise. Every blessing, even the simplest one, like a customary blessing naturally given when greeting a *baal simcha*, contains great power.

ויהי עשו איש ידע ציד איש שדה ... (כה-כז)

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

# דרגה יתירה

There is a fascinating *Yerushalmi* in *Nedarim* (3-8), which describes how in future times, Esav will wrap himself in a *talis* and sit with the *Tzaddikim* in *Gan Eden* until *Hashem* comes and pulls him out. Why would *Esav Harasha*, the quintessential paragon of evil think that he belongs in *Gan Eden*, and why would *Hashem* let him enter, only to throw him out?

The **Pnei Moshe** provides an amazing insight, quite an eye opening message for us all. He explains that Esav believes that because he has *Zechus Avos*, and comes from such an illustrious family like *Zaida Avraham*, *Tatte Yitzchok* and brother *Yaakov*, he can simply cover himself with a *talis* and PRESTO, he will become an automatic *Tzaddik*! In fact, the *talis* and the *Zechus Avos* both have the same quality - they lend themselves to the “*חיצוניות*” - externalism, of a person! They are ways for a person to be considered righteous, even pious, without doing anything at all! So, *Hashem* comes along and throws Esav out of *Gan Eden*, in order to teach all the externally righteous people that this method simply doesn’t work! It is *sheker*, falsehood, a life of lies, which often only becomes apparent after 120 years on this world, when one realizes that the lofty place in *Gan Eden* that he thought belonged to him, really does not!

It is interesting to note that the words, “אלקי אברהם יצחק ויעקב” are found in the midst of the *Tochacha*, the harsh punishment that will befall *Klal Yisroel* if they do not follow the *Torah*. The **Shlah Hakadosh** explains that after describing all the evil decrees, *Hashem* looks at His Nation and says, “Wait, you are the children of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov? You have such incredible *yichus*? So now, the punishments will be even worse!” Being a member of an illustrious family is not a ticket to *Gan Eden*. One cannot cover himself in a *talis* and rest on his laurels, because he is a “*Rebbisha Einikel*” or a descendant of a great *Rav*. It is an awesome responsibility to have *yichus* and *Zechus Avos* is what we must live up to rather than rely upon.