



# מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ה' אלקי השמים אשר לקחני מבית אבי ומארץ מולדתי ... הוא ישלח מלאכו לפניך ולקחת אשה לבני משם (כד-ו)

Avraham Avinu sends Eliezer with a mission: to find a wife for his son Yitzchok who is willing to separate from her family and move away to the promise of a great future. This precisely echoes Avraham's own beginnings and Eliezer well understands that his master essentially wants a daughter-in-law like himself. He must find someone who is not only willing to leave home, but someone who exemplifies Avraham's attributes of *chessed* and values of kindness and hospitality. The litmus test by which any potential fiancée for his master's son must pass, is the test of hospitality. Will this young woman be capable of carrying on the tradition of Avraham and Sarah, bringing people closer to *Hashem* through kindness, love and hospitality? Fortunately, *Rivkah Imeinu* passed the test with flying colors - and the future of *Bnei Yisroel* was secured.

The following story originally appeared in the *Gilyon "Noam Siach"* of **Rav Shlomo Zalman Friedman *shlita***, *Rov of Khal Zichron Elazar Santov*, in Lakewood, New Jersey. He writes that while he was in *Bnei Brak* a number of years ago, he visited a relative who shared a beautiful story about *hashgachah pratis* that happened to him.

This relative is a widower, having lost his wife a while back, and a suggestion was recently mentioned to him of a widow, whom he believed to be a good match. After making inquiries, both sides wanted to pursue the *shidduch*, however, there was one major problem that impeded it from happening. The widower lives in *Bnei Brak*, where he has a position as a *maggid shiur*; he also gives various *shiurim* in a number of other *yeshivos*, and learns in a *kollel*. He did not want to leave the city where he had been living for many years, to go settle elsewhere. On the other hand, the widow was from *Yerushalayim*, and served as the principal of a very prominent school there. She did not want to leave her job to move to a different city either, however, keeping her job and traveling from *Bnei Brak* to *Yerushalayim* each day was also not a realistic option. As a result, the *shidduch* grinded to a halt and for some time, did not move forward. He needed to live in *Bnei Brak*, she wanted to live in *Yerushalayim*, and being unable to reach an agreement on the matter, the *shidduch* stalled.

One day, the daughter of the widower met one of the board members in the school where she works in *Bnei Brak*. The board member saw that she was very preoccupied and dejected about something. When she asked her about it, the daughter of the widower replied that perhaps she could help; she was concerned with the fact that a *shidduch* was being suggested to her father which was very appropriate to both sides, but it was being held up by the fact that the woman worked as a principal in *Yerushalayim* and did not want to leave her job to move to *Bnei Brak*, while her father could not leave *Bnei Brak* for his various reasons. It was very hard for her to handle her father's situation; he depended on his daughters to prepare his food, take care of his house and the like. This match would be great for everyone involved, but she was at a loss.

When this board member heard the daughter's dilemma, she exclaimed how *bashert* it was that they had spoken. She then proceeded to disclose a secret that was not yet public knowledge, but she happened to know about it. To the daughter's astonishment, she told her that the principal in this very school that they both worked was soon leaving, and it would be very challenging to find a suitable replacement. The board member suggested that she go right away to the president of the board, and suggest the widow from *Yerushalayim* as a candidate. "She is the best qualified person to take the place of our principal, and if he agrees to hire her, then she can move to *Bnei Brak*," she said excitedly. "She will be principal of a distinguished institution, and everything will work out for the best. The *shidduch* can be completed without further delay!"

The daughter was moved by the clear display of *hashgachah pratis*. They both went to the president of the board and suggested the widow from *Yerushalayim* as a candidate to replace the principal. The suggestion found favor in his eyes, because the widow was quite renowned and had an excellent reputation. He immediately called the widow and offered her the job. After she looked into it, she accepted. She agreed to move to *Bnei Brak* to replace the principal of the school - and a few hours later the *shidduch* was finalized. A short time after that, the wedding was held, to the delight of all involved.

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAPTORAH BY AN UNEQUALLED HISTORIAN ולי אני עבדיך ... לא קרא (מלכים א' כו)

As *Dovid HaMelech* grew old, his son *Adoniyahu* launched a rebellion hoping to ascend the throne even though it was already promised to *Dovid*'s younger son, *Shlomo*. *Shlomo*'s mother, *Bas-Sheva* came before *Dovid* with *Nosson HaNavi* to plead with the king to do something. Describing the feast *Adoniyahu* made with important people in attendance, the *Navi* says: "לא קרא ... ולא אני עבדיך ... *I, me your servant ... he did not call.*" The words of *Nosson HaNavi* seem redundant. Surely *Dovid* would know that when he said "ולא", he was referring to himself. Why did the *Navi* say "אני עבדיך" immediately after, to clarify who he had been talking about?

**Targum Yonason ben Uziel** makes an interesting deduction in the *Navi*'s words. At the time, it was unclear who

was on *Dovid*'s side and who was with *Adoniyahu*. *Yoav ben Tzruia*, *Dovid*'s long-time general, was among the defectors, as well as *Evyasar HaKohen*, and this shook up the king tremendously. *Dovid* simply did not know who to trust at all.

Thus, *Nosson HaNavi* first needed to emphasize where his own loyalties stood before discussing anything further with the king. Therefore, he began by saying "ולא אני עבדיך" - meaning: I, *Nosson HaNavi*, who is your devoted servant, was not among those called to *Adoniyahu*'s feast. After hearing these words from him, *Dovid* was then sure that *Nosson* could be trusted to carry out the vital mission of taking *Shlomo HaMelech* to the *Gichon Spring*, to be crowned and anointed as the new King of *Israel*.

וידיו היו שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים שני היו שרה ... (כג-א)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPMAN ZTL

# מחשבת הלב

The last three words of the *posuk* seem redundant, as the *Torah* already enumerated the years of Sarah. **Rashi** explains that the *Torah* wishes to advise us that "כולך שוין לטובה" - they were all equally good. I saw a novel *pshat* from the *sefer דורש לפרקים*. He wants to translate the words "שני חי שרה" not as years, but rather as "שני" - "two" - the two lives of Sarah. Meaning, most people are rewarded for their *mitzvos* and *maasim tovim* performed during their waking hours. For the third of their lives (or so) that they are asleep, they don't receive *schar*. *Tzaddikim* and *אנשי מעשה* who exert themselves throughout the day in their *avodas Hashem* and only sleep to have strength to continue their respective *avodah*, are duly rewarded even for those sleep hours. Thus, Sarah, the quintessential *tzadekes*, received her just reward for both parts of her day. Hence, "שני חי שרה".

He uses this *pshat* to explain a famous *medrash*. Rabbi Akiva was once delivering a *shiur* when he realized his *talmidim* were dozing off. He woke them up with the following *Chazal*: "Why was אסתר המלכה *zoche* to rule over 127 provinces? In the *zechus* of Sarah who lived 127 years." What does this mean and what was the message therein to awaken his students?

If you do the math, Esther should have only received 85 provinces, because Sarah lived less than 127 waking years. It must be, as we said, that even her sleeping hours counted, because they were utilized for good. But Rabbi Akiva's message was, "You are not receiving *schar* like Sarah, for your nap during *shiur*! Sleep must be at its proper time." They got the message.

Based on the above, perhaps we can suggest another *pshat*. *Sarah Imeinu* led two lives - a communal life and a private life. As a *tzadekes*, she excelled at both. While performing *chessed* par excellence, she didn't forgo her domestic obligations. She was the true *eishes chayil*. That is a very important lesson she imparted to her descendants.

כולך שוין לטובה, leading fulfilling days and nights, which will also be deemed

## משל למה הדבר דומה

ויאמרו נקרא לנקרה ונשאלה את פיה ... (כד-ג)

**משל**: As a deputy sheriff assigned to courthouse security, Officer Mike Brown has a number of other facets to his job aside from just keeping the peace and calm in the courthouse. As part of his job, he also gives tours to visitors and visiting groups, as well as explains the court procedures.

One day, Officer Brown was showing a group of ninth graders around the courthouse. The court was in recess and only the clerk and a young man in custody wearing handcuffs were present in the courtroom.

"This is where the judge sits," he began his tour, pointing to the bench. "The lawyers sit at these tables. The court clerk sits over there. The court recorder, or stenographer, sits over here. Near the judge is the witness stand and over there is where the jury sits." He then went on to explain in great

detail all the proceedings of a typical court case and added some of his own "spice" to the spellbound group of kids drinking in his fascinating explanations.

"As you can see," he finally concluded, "there are a lot of people involved in making this system work."

Suddenly, a voice was heard from the corner of the room. It was the prisoner, who raised his cuffed hands and laughingly pronounced, "Yeah, but I'm the one who makes it all happen!" **נמשל**: This week's *parsha* enumerates the entire process of *shidduchim*, *Yitzchok* and *Rivkah*'s marriage and the divine life they lived together thereafter. The *Torah* tells us that *Rivkah* was asked if she wanted to go through with the marriage and she readily agreed. While there are a lot of people involved in making the *shidduch* system work, ultimately the decision is up to the man and the woman. It is their choice to make it or break it, whether before or after.

ותמדר ותער כדה אל השקת ותריץ עוד אל הבאר לשאב ותשאב לכל-גמליו ... (כד-ג)

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

## דרגה יתירה

Many years ago, I heard a *shiur* given by a famous speaker who was discussing the *middah* of *chessed*. Someone in the crowd suddenly asked a question: "How can a person keep giving and giving and not feel like they are being taken advantage of? Didn't little 3-year old *Rivkah* wonder why a big, strong, able-bodied servant like *Eliezer* was letting her run back and forth so many times to bring him and his camels water? He could have done it himself. Didn't she feel like she was being used?"

The speaker's brilliant answer still reverberates in my ears. "In the *beracha* of 'Sim Shalom' at the end of the *Shemona Esrei*, we ask *Hashem* for many blessings including 'chayim, chein, vachessed, v'rachamim.' A few lines down, we again ask *Hashem* for *chayim* and *chessed*, but this time we say, 'toras chaim v'ahavas chessed' - we ask for a life of *Torah* and loving kindness. In other words, life without *Torah* is not really life and *chessed* without LOVING *chessed* is not really *chessed*! A person who does *chessed* for ulterior motives is not really doing *chessed* for others; he is doing *chessed* for himself! But a person who LOVES to do *chessed* and does *chessed* because he wants to emulate *Hashem* will never feel that he is being taken advantage of. It has nothing to do with him. He is not just a *baal chessed*, but an *oheiv chessed*, and such a person is so happy to do *chessed* simply because he loves *Hashem* and wishes to emulate Him."

The speaker concluded, "*Rivkah* did not think for a second that *Eliezer* was taking advantage of her, the same way that Sarah did not feel 'used' when she stayed up all night to sew clothing for the poor. Avraham who was 100 years old and in terrible pain from his *Bris Mila* did not feel like he was going overboard for his guests even though he ran all the way to *Chevron* to catch the animal he needed to slaughter. He never felt that it was beneath his dignity to serve people so much younger than him, in fact, he felt that it was an honor for him to serve and cater to the needs of anyone regardless of age or status."