



# מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

וישקל אברהם לעפרן את הכסף אשר דבר באוני בני הת ארבע מאות שקל כסף עבר לסוד ... (כג-א)

Why did Avraham Avinu feel compelled to purchase the Cave of *Machpela* from *Ephron HaChitti*? Ephron was not as powerful as the four kings and Avraham could easily have conquered him and taken it by force. **R' Nosson of Breslov zt"l** explains that this special place, *Mearas HaMachpela*, was wrapped up in the forces of evil. Essentially, money is the currency of the *sitra achra* so Avraham simply tricked the *sitra achra* with its own essence - money - to release the *kedusha*.

The following story took place recently in Lakewood, NJ. It was heard from the protagonist himself: A man lived in a rented apartment with his large family, *bli ayin hara*. One day, the landlord informed him that he needed the apartment back in order to move in himself, and asked the tenant to please find a new place. The tenant began to urgently look for another place to live, but it proved to be very difficult. Most of the apartments were too small for his large family; when there was a suitable one, he was unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with the landlord.

The man found himself without a place to live on the one hand, and the landlord, on the other, hounding him to get out of the apartment already. We are familiar with the words of *Chazal* (*Pesachim* 86b), “Anything that the *baal habayis* (i.e. the landlord) tells you, you should do, except ‘tzei,’ to get out.” But this man had no other choice, because his landlord even warned him that if he was not out of the house by a certain date, he would simply remove the tenant’s belongings from the apartment and throw the whole family onto the street ...

After extensive thought, the tenant decided that under the circumstances, he had no choice but to consider buying a new house. He made some calculations and figured out that he could afford to pay up to \$410,000 for a new home. With this amount, he hoped to buy something spacious to accommodate his family. But after looking into it further, he discovered that he could not purchase a house of the size he needed for that price in Lakewood. Thus, he decided to look beyond Lakewood and made some inquiries in Jackson, the neighboring township. He found a house that was for sale; the owners were seeking at least \$400,000, but on the other hand, they wanted to sell it to the highest bidder.

The man immediately entered a bid for \$410,000 in the hope that the house would stay at that price and he could purchase it. This was the highest he could bid, as he could not afford more. A few days later, when he checked the bids, he saw that there were offers on file for \$480,000. Resigned, he realized that he could not realistically purchase this house, because the cost was too high and he withdrew from the bidding.

A few days later, he received a phone call from the agent of the Jackson house. Excitedly, the agent exclaimed, “*Mazel Tov!* The house is yours!” The man was taken aback and asked the agent in surprise, “I made the lowest offer, for \$410,000. After I checked and saw that there were bids for \$480,000, I withdrew. How is it possible that the house is mine?”

But the agent reassured him and said, “Relax. The house is yours and you have nothing to worry about.” Well, this individual did everything but relax - he could feel that something was not right here, and he pressed the agent to tell him exactly how it came to be that the house was his if his bid had remained the lowest of all the offers.

The agent explained: The house belongs to a non-Jewish couple who filed for divorce. They went to court to settle their financial affairs. The judge decided that the woman was the owner of all the assets, and forced the husband to deal with selling the assets and transferring the revenue to the wife. But the man made every effort to deceive his wife, to ensure she came away with the least amount of money possible. Therefore, he decided that he would sell the house, not for the most money, but to the lowest bidder! Because the woman had no idea what the bids were, as the court had tasked the husband with handling the sale, he could do as he pleased. “Your bid was the lowest and therefore you got the house,” he was told.

Source: “*Noam Siach*” - *sichos of R' Shlomo Zalman Friedman shlita, Rov of Khal Zichron Elazar Santov in Lakewood*

והמלך דוד וקן בא בימים ... (מלכים א' א-א)

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTARAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN

## תורת הצבי על הפטרות

In an effort to establish the continuity of his family, Avraham Avinu sent his devoted servant Eliezer to find a wife for his son, Yitzchok. Similarly, as *Dovid Hamelech's* life was coming to a close and the rumblings of a rebellion were brewing, he deemed it most necessary to ensure the continuity of the Davidic dynasty and thus, arranged for his son Shlomo to be anointed immediately. Wouldn't a royal proclamation stating that Shlomo is to ascend to the throne not be sufficient? Was it so important for *Dovid Hamelech* to have Shlomo anointed while he was still alive?

**R' Moshe Chaim Luzzatto zt"l (Ramchal)** explains that there is no greater danger than one delaying the performance of a *mitzvah* since with every passing moment another

impediment may arise and inhibit him from fulfilling the *mitzvah*. Thus, Although *Shlomo Hamelech's* reign was pre-ordained and promised to Dovid as somewhat of a birthright, it still remained subject to human action, or lack thereof. *Hashem's* promise to Dovid merely meant that an opportunity will be made available for Shlomo to succeed his father but whether this would actually transpire depended on numerous factors - the greatest of which being Dovid's commitment to actualize the promise through deliberate action.

People may feel that since everything is pre-determined by *Hashem*, they might as well sit back and allow nature to dictate their actions. While this is true to a degree, it still does not exempt one from doing his part to make it all happen.

ותשא רבקה את עיניה ותרא את יצחק ותפל מעל הגמל ... (כד-ט)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L

# מחשבת הלב

There is a *Medrash* that states that when Rivkah saw Yitzchok for the first time, he appeared to her as if he were upside down! What was the meaning of this *Medrash*? What message is it conveying? To better understand this, let us digress a moment to review the initial interaction between Eliezer and Rivkah. Once Eliezer saw that *Hashem* had indeed answered his supplication, he proceeded to present Rivkah with jewelry. The *posuk* says that Eliezer himself adorned Rivkah with the jewelry. One may wonder: wouldn't it have been more appropriate to hand the items to the girl and have her put it on herself? **Rashi** says that Eliezer was alluding to the *Luchos* and the *Aseres Hadibros* (ושני צמדים על ידיה עשרה זהב). Perhaps Eliezer's message to Rivkah was that building the Jewish Nation is only possible through *Torah*. But to comprehend all the nuances, to grasp the intricate *hashkafas haTorah*, Eliezer himself had to “adorn her” and explain its significance to her.

Based on the above, we might suggest the following *machshava*. Yitzchok's “upside-down” position was in essence teaching Rivkah that the outlook on life from a non-Jew's perspective, as compared to that of a *Yid*, can seem skewed, backwards, or yes, even completely “upside-down,” In reality, though, a *Yiddisher Mehalech* is the correct view.

Additionally, by appearing this way, Yitzchok was conveying that although children may sometimes question their parents' decisions, claiming that it's “old school” or backwards, parents have their children's best interest in mind. *Chinuch habanim* is *kadosh v'tahor*. Rivkah internalized this and became an *Eim b'Yisroel* by realizing “*Mi k'amcha Yisroel*.” May we all be *zoche* to be *mechanech* our children in ways that will always bring a *nachas ruach* to *Hashem Yisborach*.

## משל למח הדבר דומה

מה' יצא הדבר לא נטבל דבר אלא רע או טוב ... (כד-ג)

**משל:** A man had a daughter who was having trouble finding a *shidduch*. She was 31 years old and her prospects looked dim. One day, the man received a phone call from an elderly *Yid* who was inquiring about his daughter; he wanted to know what she was looking for and what qualities she had.

Then, the older man said that he has a wonderful boy who sounds perfect. He is 26 and from a fine *Yerushalmi* family. He gave him the boy's information ... *Boruch Hashem*, a few weeks later, they celebrated the couple's engagement!

At the *vort*, the girl's father told over how the *shidduch* came to be. “In 1948, the poverty and indigence in the holy city of *Yerushalayim* was overwhelming. People struggled to put food on their family's table. My father a”h, also struggled mightily and we grew up very, very poor.

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

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

## דרגה יתירה

Why is the *parsha* called “*Chayei Sarah*” - shouldn't it be called “*Misas Sarah*”? After all, the *parsha* discusses Sarah's death, not her life? In fact, she is not alive at all in the *parsha*, and we read all about how Avraham buried her in *Mearas HaMachpela*. So, why is the *parsha* called “*Chayei Sarah*”? Why? Because Sarah's death was the greatest lesson of her life!

Sarah's life was about raising her child to be a real *Yirei Shamayim*. She made Avraham send his son Yishmael away from home because she was afraid that he would have a negative effect on her son, Yitzchok. Her life revolved around making sure that Yitzchok had all the conditions necessary to become the greatest *oved Hashem* he could be. This WAS her life.

There is a fascinating *Medrash* that tells us that when Avraham woke up early to take Yitzchok to the *akeida*, Sarah woke up early as well. She understood that this was going to be a monumental day, a great test in the life of her husband and son. She was there in the background, behind the scenes, *davening* for the success of her husband and child. When she asked the giants to look out and tell her what they saw, they told her that they saw an older man walking with a younger man with a knife and wood for a fire. She understood where they were going and where this was headed. She only hoped and prayed that they would pass the test. When she asked the giant a little later to stand up and tell her what he saw, he told her that he saw them both coming back together. Her immediate reaction was one of shock. “Can it be that Yitzchok resisted? Is it possible that my husband took Yitzchok to the *akeida*, but my son refused to go through with it?” Sarah was so utterly devastated to think that her *chinuch* did not achieve the highest results - that she died from the shock! She lived for only one purpose. She wanted her son to live a life of pure *Kiddush Hashem*, to the extent that he would be ready to die for it. The shock that this was not the case caused her *neshama* to leave her body. She felt that her life was over.

Sarah lived and died with the same goal in mind, and therefore her death was truly a testimony to her life. The *parsha* is called “*Chayei Sarah*” because her death and her life were synonymous. She died for what she lived.