

Chayei Sarah | Cheshvan 20 - 26 | November 21 - 27

-Shabbos Mevarchim Kislev

Parshas Toldos
The Moad will be early Sunday morning 49 minutes and 15 Chalakim after 4

Rosh Chodesh is Sunday and Monday

PDF

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Kol Hanearim with Rabbi Fried starts at 6:30pm sharp



RABBI YY JACOBSON will be in town for Shabbos

Zmanim by our incredible Gabbaim

Ephrayim Yurowitz
Tzvi Blech



This week we bentsh Rosh Chodesh Kislev.
Moled will be Early Sunday morning 49 minutes and 15 Chalakim after 4.
Rosh Chodesh is Sunday and Monday.

Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
12:12pm and every 15 minutes until 3:00pm

4:10pm Candle lighting	4:20pm Mincha in tent נ	4:20pm Chabad Mincha	4:28pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

6:22am <small>Vasikin, followed by a Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑</small>	8:00am Shachris 2 18 main	9:15am Shachris 3 Tent נ	10:00am Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑	10:00am Shachris 5 18 main
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2:00pm Pirchei	4:10pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:28pm Shkiya	5:08pm Maariv 1	5:13pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
5:45 pm and every 15 minutes until 8:15pm | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of December 1-7

Shacharis – 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv – 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	7:03am	8:40am	9:23am	10:11am	11:45am	3:29pm	4:28pm
Monday	7:04am	8:40am	9:24am	10:11am	11:45am	3:29pm	4:27pm
Tuesday	7:05am	8:41am	9:25am	10:12am	11:46am	3:29pm	4:27pm
Wednesday	7:06am	8:42am	9:26am	10:12am	11:46am	3:29pm	4:27pm
Thursday	7:07am	8:42am	9:26am	10:13am	11:46am	3:29pm	4:27pm
Friday	7:08am	8:43am	9:27am	10:14am	11:47am	3:29pm	4:27pm
Shabbos	7:09am	8:43am	9:28am	10:14am	11:47am	3:29pm	4:27pm

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Parshas Toldos: Remaining Objective

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

The absence of objectivity, along with the natural tendency of a person's mind to hear things and create a false picture of the reality surrounding him or her, is a very dangerous attribute and is a common trap that we all often fall prey to at different points in our lives. This feature can often translate into someone saying something hurtful on email or to a spouse or child believing that it's totally for the sake of justice and peace when in fact it's actually for personal gain. This lack of clarity may be a symptom of a cloudy mind.

Another amazing example of a focused mind is brought down by Chazal with regard to Eliezer himself. When Avraham's servant was on his way to find the shidduch for Yitzchok he too had to focus on being objective and not lose sight of what is the true reality. What was his challenge? Eliezer had his own daughter who he had envisioned marrying Yitzchok. When Avraham sent him out of town to find a mate, Eliezer had to give up his dream and that is why when he recounts the story of his travels to Rivka's family he relates how he told Avraham "oolai" – maybe – the girl won't want to come with me." Chazal point out that the word is missing a vav to hint that he was thinking of himself "eilai" – to me... maybe after all there was a chance that Yitzchak could marry my daughter.

So what can we do to deal with this challenge? How can we hone in on objectivity and focus on the truth? The answer to this question is taught by Eliezer himself and is the power and theme of this week's parsha, parshas Toldos: Tefila-- there is no better secret weapon than pouring out one's heart to Hashem and pleading, "Hashem, please, I am in a situation where I know that I might be blinded with my own *negios*, my own desires and therefore might say or do the wrong thing. Please help me out."

There is an amazing sefer called *Hishtapchus Hanefesh* which begins with an incredible step by step proof based on midrashim and the Zohar that all the Avos and Imahos accomplished nothing without days and nights of pouring out of their hearts and praying to Hashem. Eliezer was no different and neither were Yitzchok and Rivka when it came to praying for a child. We tend to think that after a few weeks or maybe months of prayer we did our job but we see that real prayer can take years, and Chazal say that the reason for this is because Hashem desires our tefilos.

Why he desires our prayers is a schmooze for another time, but the important thing is to appreciate this gift and power that Hashem gave us.



A PRESENT FROM THE PAST Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

"Because Avraham obeyed My voice" (26:5)

The Rambam teaches that Avraham was forty years old when he became aware of his Creator. From the age of forty and on, he began preaching to the world about monotheism, amassing tens of thousands of students, until he reached Eretz Yisroel. There he continued to proclaim the name of Hashem to the entire world.

The Talmud teaches that a *Baal Teshuva*, a penitent, is on a greater level than one who has always been righteous. This is derived from the verse "shalom, shalom larachok v'lakarov" – "Hashem greets those who were distant from Him prior to those who were always close." It is difficult to understand why the Torah describes a *Baal Teshuva* as a "rachok", one who is distant from Hashem. Even if we interpret the term, as the Talmud does, to mean someone who "was", but is no longer distant, it would still seem deprecating to associate him with having been distant from Hashem in the past. The Talmud must be teaching us that his distance in the past is what makes him greater.

Very often we find that a person who has reformed from a certain behavior will act as a crusader against others who exhibit the same behavior. For example, the person who will be most vocal about someone in his vicinity smoking is a reformed smoker. This can happen with *Baalei Teshuva* as well. Sometimes we find that *Baalei Teshuva* can be the most intolerant of others who are in the same position that they once were.

The psychology behind this behavior is as follows: A reformed smoker may still have an urge to smoke, and the way he

represses his own feelings is to attempt to repress them in everyone else. However, a *Baal Teshuva* should not attempt to disassociate himself from his past and repress everything that he has experienced. He is in a position to identify with people who are going through the same things that he went through, and therefore, he is better equipped to help extricate them from their situations. A *Baal Teshuva* is more capable of being "megaleh kavod shamayim" – "revealing the glory of Hashem to the world", for he can connect more effectively to those who are distant from Hashem. Therefore, the Torah refers to the *Baal Teshuva* as one who was "rachok", for this is precisely what gives him the opportunity to be greater than someone who was always a *Tzaddik*.

It is because Avraham grew up in an environment of idol worship, and was even involved in it, that he is able to impact upon the world more effectively than Shem, who grew up in the house of a *Tzaddik*. The Talmud does not say that Avraham served Hashem from the age of three, rather it says that for the last one hundred seventy-two years of his life, he served Hashem. Once he perfected himself, Avraham put all of his previous experiences to use in a positive way. This changed all of his past experiences to mitzvos. The Talmud refers to this concept as "zedonos na'asos lo k'zechuyos" – "rebellious sins are transformed into mitzvos."

It is important that we do not view our past as wasted time, for every experience that a person has can be utilized in a positive manner. We can help others who are in the same position that we were in. This outlook allows a person to feel more positive about who he is now, for what he was can be used to make him a better person.



Rabbi YY Jacobson

Why were the fathers of the Jewish people so connected to wells? And why does the Torah, a book of instruction and teachings, a roadmap for life, dedicate a significant part of this week's portion Toldos to discuss the details of Isaac's struggles to discover wellsprings?

Two Water Sources

In Jewish thought, water represents wisdom and inspiration. Just as water quenches the thirst of an arid body, rejuvenating its spirit and resuscitating its energy, the gifts of wisdom and enlightenment refresh a soul and grant it inspiration and vitality.

We have two sources of water in our world. The waters above the ground—oceans, rivers, lakes, streams, and rain, and water that flows below the earth, covered by grit. These latter waters seep out from sand and gravel, from amid soluble rocks and cleavage planes, as they struggle to emerge from beneath the earth that conceals them.

One would assume that the restricted flow of water fighting to emerge from rock and gravel would be inferior to the unrestricted and smooth beds of water that lay above the ground. Yet the reality is that there is something uniquely refreshing and clear about spring water. The very fact that these waters are hidden beneath the ground keeps them free from pollution and germs and grants them a freshness and sparkle not to be found in the above-ground waters. Plus, the journey through rocks filters and refines these waters, so rich in minerals and nutrients.

Two Sources of Inspiration

The two sources of physical waters in our world parallel two sources of wisdom and inspiration in our lives. There is the wisdom and inspiration born above the mess of life's challenges. It comes to lucid people at lucid moments; it is straightforward, easy, and smooth. These are the waters that emerge from the hearts of pristine spiritual individuals; men and women unsoiled by filth and muck.

But then there is the wisdom that emerges from life's grime, from amid struggle, pain, and failure; there is the clarity and passion born from hearts tarnished by toxicity. When a person, burdened by the daily pressures of earning a livelihood and raising a family, bogged down by trauma, fears, and anxiety; when a human being troubled by his earthly nature and his immoral urges, bursts out with a yearning to transcend his dirt and connect to Truth -- this small, restricted flow of water seeping out from a sandy and rocky psyche is more refreshing and potent than all of the serene waters located above the "ground."

When a Jew, feeling so distant, engages in a mitzvah, cries out to Hashem in yearning, or makes one move to excavate the inner faith, resilience and idealism that lay buried in his or her soul, he or she connected to this spring of Divine infinity flowing deep below our earthiness. This is the most sparkling and refreshing water to the soul, to the universe, and to G-d.

This is why the fathers of the Jewish people were digging and preserving wells. They taught us to fight for and to cherish those moments of truth, fleeting as they are, and those small sparks of idealism, buried within the deep rubble of trauma and confusion. For this is the purpose of life, to discover heaven within the earth, to find your springs of joy, confidence, and wholesomeness that always flow beneath your surface.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
 Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)
Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
 Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.

UFARATZTA



Letter to a shlucha, who wrote about the difficulties and troubles she was experiencing.

... Planting a tree that bears good fruit, worthy to be served on the table of kings, especially of a *great* king, requires great efforts. And it is, of course, clear to the planter that the fruit will not be complete and pleasing to the eye on the same day he invested his efforts...

When planting potatoes – the effort is incomparably lower, and so is the time that needs to be waited until potatoes grow, etc. Nevertheless, one who was chosen by the king and appointed by him to plant his vineyard and orchard does not ask the king to switch his work to planting potatoes. Not only that, but he is *happy* that the king believes in him and chose him for this responsible mission, etc...

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Rosh Chodesh Kislev / 5778 – 1977 is when the Rebbe left his room in 770 for home after having a major heart attack on Shmini Atzeres night at the hakofos. Every year, the national Kinus Hashluchim coincides with Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

Thursday, December 5th

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by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel



Vach Nacht

The idea of making a *seuda* on the night before the *bris* is already mentioned in the *Rishonim*. In the *sefer Zichron Bris Larishonim* (written by Rav Yaakov Hagozeir, who was a *mohel*) a *Midrash* is quoted which states that the Jewish nation goes all out spending a lot of money to show their affection for the *mitzvos*. He adds that this is a source for the custom to make festivities on the night before the *bris*, as well.

The *Magen Avraham* (640:13) quotes some *poskim* who rule that the festive meal on the night before the *bris* is also a *seudas mitzvah*, but the *Magen Avraham*, as well as other *poskim* rule, that it is not. The Munkatcher Rebbe, in his *sefer Darkei Chaim V'shalom*, adds that one should be careful not to make the *seuda* at night more extravagant than the *seuda* after the *bris*, which is the main *mitzvah*.

Some have the custom to stay up the whole night before the *bris* to learn. Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky commented that a reason we don't see great *gedolim* in today's generation is because the fathers do not stay up the night before to learn their child's *bris*.

Shlishi L'milah

The Maharshal quotes his rebbi, the Maharash, who writes about the greatness of making a *seudas shlishi l'milah* on the 3rd day – 2 days after the *milah*. In a way, he writes, it is considered greater than the *seuda* on the day of the *bris* itself. In the Torah we do not find explicit mention of a *seuda* on the day of the *bris*, but we do find it in regards to the *shlishi l'milah*. But the *poskim* write that this *seuda* is not classified as a *seudas mitzvah*.

SUMMARY

There are many sources for the *seuda* after a *bris*. Some say that it is a requirement, but all agree it is a *seudas mitzvah*. There is a *machlokes* if one must have meat, or if poultry or fish is sufficient. Some say that *milchigs* is also acceptable. One should not be stingy about making a proper *seuda*.

One should be sure to make a proper *seuda* after a *bris*, and one who partakes in a *seudas bris*, will be saved from *gehinom*. It is customary to have a *minyan* by the *seuda*. We do not invite people to a *bris*, since one who does not join a *seudas bris* deserves to be put in *cheirem*. Some have a *minhag* to light candles at a *seudas bris*. It is customary to sing *zemiros* at a *bris* and recite "*Nodeh L'Shimchah*" when introducing the *bentching*, and extra "*Harachamans*" at the end of *bentching*.

A *shalom zachor* on Friday night is considered a *seudas mitzvah*. There are a number of reasons:

- To thank Hashem for the safe delivery of the child.
- To celebrate that the baby is now fit for the *bris*.

• To comfort the newborn baby who learned the whole Torah from an angel and forgot it all.

• To remind the baby of his commitment to keep the Torah in this world.

A *shalom zachor* is celebrated on Friday night for a number of reasons:

- Friday night is when people are home.
- We celebrate that the baby is ready for the *bris*.
- We comfort the baby who forgot all that he learned on Shabbos – a day of remembering.
- We show that this world has a day that one can reach great levels of spiritual pleasure.

Some have the *minhag* to make a *seuda* the night before the *bris* and on the 3rd day from the *milah*, but both are not considered a *seudas mitzvah*.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
- Currently: מסכת מועד קטן
- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

- Chavrusa learning - Halacha
- Currently: הלכות קריאת התורה

SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

- Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45pm
- Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00pm

• ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR | 8:15-9:00pm Thursday Nights

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- Yarchei Kallah / Shuirim on Legal Holidays - by acclaimed Guest Speakers
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...THE PRINCIPLE WAY OF MERITING THE WORLD TO COME IS THROUGH GUARDING ONE'S MOUTH, WHICH IS GREATER THAN TORAH LEARNING AND MITZVOS BECAUSE THE MOUTH IS THE HOLY OF HOLIES...

(EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY THE VILNA GAON)

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Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

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The Haftarah of Parashat Toldot

Rabbi Gershon Winkler

The very opening of Sefer Malachi that we are privileged to read this Shabbat makes it clear why Chazal chose this *perek* as the *haftarah* for *Parashat Toldot*. The Torah reading describes the essential differences between Eisav and his twin brother Ya'akov and, while doing so, includes Hashem's choice of Ya'akov over his twin to carry on the mission that He charged Avraham and Yitzchak. Likewise, our *haftarah* powerfully expresses that choice by stating: "*Hahlo ach Eisav l'Ya'akov.... va'ohav et Ya'akov.... V'et Eisav saneiti...*"

It is this choice of Ya'akov and his descendants to go and spread the message of Hashem's sovereignty over the universe that sets the theme of the *haftarah*. Malachi sees the corruption of the leadership of Yehuda – especially as found within the *Kohanim* themselves – as an undermining of that mission. Therefore, the bulk of the *haftarah* is focused on the navi's message to the *Kohanim* that, unless they set the proper example to Israel, the nation could never live up to the divine mission given to their ancestors.

Interestingly, Rav Soloveitchik also points to the very opening word of the *Sefer* (and our *haftarah*) as a source of challenge and of inspiration for us all. The word "*massa*", "burden" is also used, as it is here, as a synonym for "prophecy." The Rambam in the *Moreh Nevuchim* (2: 37) explains that prophecy truly is a "burden". He writes:

"In experiencing his divine vision, the prophet encounters a sublime truth that others have not. He is compelled to share this vision with others, to impart the information so they will know what he knows. Hashem's revelation is a "burden" weighing on his consciousness. Sharing his vision may place him in grave danger... yet the burden of prophecy gives him no rest. He must repeat what he hears from G-d, whatever the consequences."

These words find prophetic expression in the statement of the navi Amos (*Amos* 3; 8): "*Hashem Elokim dibber – mi lo yinavei?*" –Hashem has spoken – who will not prophesy? The Rav then expands on this idea, saying that when we are presented with a great truth – whether it be Torah or tradition – we should be unable to withhold the knowledge. It should feel as a "burden" that we must unload by telling others, teaching others, inspiring others. As the Rav adds: "The message springs out of the mouth spontaneously – the pressure is too strong; he is unable to suppress his words."

This should be our inspiration – but it is also our challenge. Applying this thought to parents, Rav Soloveitchik explains that, if we wish to have the divine message truly internalized by our children, we too must consider the message to be a "*massa*", a burden. If we have experienced a Shabbat, if we have understood the Tanach or if we have studied the depths of the Oral Law, how can we avoid revealing this to our children? We should feel compelled to convey this information to the next generation. Indeed, if we hope to effectively convey our mission to our future, we parents and teachers must feel that "*massa*"!

יום כיפור קטן מוקדם

ערב ר"ח כסלו

יום ה' פרשת תולדות Thursday, November 28th

12:15 pm	Tent ה'
12:15 pm	Tent ד' ויחל -
12:30 pm	Tent ב'
1:00 pm	Tent ה'
1:30 pm	Tent ב'
2:00 pm	20 Upstairs
2:30 pm	Tent ב'
3:00 pm	20 Upstairs
3:30 pm	Tent ב'
4:00 pm	20 Upstairs
4:30 pm	Tent ב' 2

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

יום ה' פרשת תולדות

10:00 AM - TENT א

FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Light Refreshments

Yaakov Obviously was Learning for Those 14 Years!

“וילך עשו אל ישמעאל ויקח את מחלת בת ישמעאל בן אברהם אחות נביות
על נשיו לו לאשה” 28:9

“And Eisav went to Yishmael and took Machlas, the daughter of Yishmael son of Avrohom, sister of Nevados, in addition to his wives, as a wife for himself.” Rashi says that the Torah tells us this to teach us that Yaakov Avinu was hidden away in the house of Eiver for fourteen years, and only after that he went to Charan. Why didn't the Torah tell us this wonderful thing, that Yaakov learned for fourteen years straight in the Yeshiva of Eiver, explicitly?

Rochel Imeinu was thirty-six years old when she passed away, and Leah lived until she was forty-four years old. When Rochel and Leah got married, they were twenty-two years old – they got married the same year, and they were twins. When Yitzchok Avinu said to Yaakov Avinu that he should go get a wife for himself from the daughters of Lavan, Rochel and Leah were not born yet.

When Yaakov was on his way to Lavan, he heard that Lavan did not have any daughters, thus he went and hid himself, and toiled in Torah in the study house of Eiver. Since the *tzaddik* Yitzchok spoke about the “daughters of Lavan,” at that time, Lavan's wife became pregnant, and they had daughters at the end of that year. Yaakov heard that they were born, but they were too young to marry, thus he did not go to Charan, and instead remained in the Yeshiva of Eiver for fourteen years. (בראשית רבתי)

Yaakov Avinu's parents told him to go to the house of Lavan to marry the daughters of Lavan. Yaakov Avinu saw with ruach hakodesh that at that time, Lavan did not have any daughters. It was actually what Yitzchok said which caused him to have daughters. It would take some time until his daughters would grow up and be ready to marry. Thus, what did Yaakov do? What one is supposed to be doing at all times, unless there is something else one is obligated to do? Learn the *Torah hakedosha*.

The Torah does not explicitly state that Yaakov learnt for fourteen years while waiting, to teach us that learning Torah is part and parcel of the fabric of one's life. It is not a *chiddush* that one is learning Torah; the *chiddush* is when one is not learning Torah. Why is he not learning Torah? One has his physical needs and needs to perform *mitzvos*. One is to marry and hopefully have children and raise a family. There is much that one is obligated to do. However, above all, one is obligated to be learning Torah at all times.

When one has to fulfill his other obligations, that is a reason not to be learning. However, without a good reason – one is always to be toiling in the *Torah hakedosha*. The Torah is what saves us from evil, and it is what makes the world turn. In order to be a *tzaddik*, in order for one to become a *talmid chochom*, one must work on it. It doesn't come from *brachos* – but from true *ameilus* in Torah. May we be *zoche* to have true *ameilus* in Torah.

Going Straight to the Source

“Vaye'eter Yitzchok Lashem- and Yitzchok Avinu prayed to G-d.”

When you pray for what you need and when you need to depend on someone to have your dreams realized- pray to Me, rely on Me, alone. This fact is that we live in an age of segulahs, too much hishtadlus and waning emunah. Relying totally on Hashem is a lost art and one we need to internalize. Davening to Hashem for help and relying on Him to fulfill our needs will always yield the best results. It's guaranteed!

R' Yechiel was bothered by the gentleman in front of him in line at Osher Ad. It was a few days before YomTov in one of the busiest supermarkets in Yerushalayim. The fellow in front of him had a full cart of groceries but every second jumped to get another item or return an item from his cart that he did not need. He did this over and over again till R' Yechiel could stand it no more.

“Why are you shopping this way on the busiest day of the year, he screamed? Get what you need and then stand in line! Don't you realize that you alone are holding everybody up?”

After those words left his mouth he immediately regretted uttering them. The Yid in front of him looked down sheepishly at the floor and mumbled through tears- how could you embarrass me in public like that? R Yechiel looked again. The man's face had turned totally red. R Yechiel was a *gvir*, and decided right then and there to do teshuvah. Turning to the cashier he said- I will pay for all this man's groceries.. Every penny!

Quietly the man turned to R' Yechiel and said, “You should not worry, you have not embarrassed me, you are an angel, a

shaliach from Hashem.”

“How so?” R Yechiel asked.

The man told him- I had nothing in my house this morning for Yomtov. No money to buy anything and I have been out of work for a while. I had a plan. I decided to daven to Hashem- then I would go to the market and start purchasing and my wife would take a sefer Tehillim in hand and daven. I was here for a while and still no answer or sign from the Heavens. Getting closer to the time I would need to pay- I hesitated - jumping up and exchanging items to delay. Then you did what you did and because of that, agreed to pay for my purchases. My prayers were answered.

R' Yechiel was not convinced that this was really the case so the man called home and handed the phone to him and he heard the fellow's wife in the middle of saying tehillim...nu nuu..

It is a tried and true fact.

We must rely on Hashem alone- the salvation may come through the hands of others, but we should pray to and rely on Hashem.

It's most obvious now that we are reading these words- but let's put it into action. Let us daven straight to Hashem for everything we need.. Several times a day. Remember you can and should daven to Hashem in your own words..like a child to their father. Hashem will surely hear our pleas!

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



The Cynics

Rabbi Eli Mansour



The opening verse of *Parashat Toldot* introduces the story of Yitzchak Avinu and his family, and writes, "This is the story of Yitzchak; Abraham begot Yitzchak." Curiously, the Torah found it necessary to "remind" us that Yitzchak was Abraham's son, despite the fact that we are already very well aware of who Yitzchak was from the previous chapters of *Sefer Bereisheet*.

The *Midrash* explains that the Torah here tells us not that Abraham begot Yitzchak, but rather that it was clear to one and all that Abraham begot Yitzchak. The "*leitzanim*" – "cynics" – of the time charged that Yitzchak was actually fathered not by Abraham, but rather by the Philistine leader Abimelech. After all, Abraham and Sara were married for many years without children, and then immediately after Sara was abducted by Abimelech, Sara conceived. The cynics pointed to this as "evidence" that Yitzchak was not really Abraham's son. G-d therefore made Yitzchak appear exactly like his father, thereby putting to rest the cynical denial of Yitzchak's relationship to Abraham.

The Chida (Rav Haim Yosef David Azulai, 1724-1806) noted how the rumors spread by the cynics of Abraham's time are typical of the way cynics speak. In a certain sense, the claim that Sara conceived as a result of Abimelech was true. After Abimelech returned Sara to Abraham, Abraham prayed on his behalf, asking that his wives should have children. In reward for his prayer, Abraham was blessed with a child. Hence, when the cynics went around proclaiming, "Sara conceived from Abimelech," they were not outright lying. Indeed, the Chida notes, the Midrash calls these people not "*resha'im*" – wicked people who spread lies – but rather "*leitzanim*" – cynics. They spoke the truth, but deliberately phrased in a way that guaranteed that it would be misunderstood. Part of the reason why cynics are so dangerous is that they do not lie. Instead, they find a way to portray all things in a negative light, without actually speaking dishonestly. Liars could easily be dismissed; formulating the truth in a negative, disparaging way attracts an audience.

Ensuring that we speak the truth does not always ensure that we speak appropriately. The truth can be expressed in many different ways. The cynics excel in spinning the truth to make everyone and everything look bad, so they don't have to take anything seriously. We can learn from this the importance of exercising care and caution with regard to not only what we say, but how we say it, and of seeking to find all that is noble and commendable in other people, rather than constantly looking to insult and malign.



Zera Shimshon

לזכר נשמת רבינו שמשון היים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

Eisav and the Bechora

And Esav said, "I am going to die so of what use is this birthright to me?" (25:32)

The Medrash (*Rabba* 63:17) says in the name of Reish Lakish that Esav began to curse Hashem and denied His existence. Reish Lakish learns this out from the fact that Esav added the word *זה*. Esav could have simply said - *ולמה זה* - of what use is a birthright to me? Instead he said - *ולמה זה לי בבורה* - of what use is this birthright to me? Reish Lakish says that since the *passuk* elsewhere refers to Hashem with the word *זה* (*Shemos* 15:2, *זה א-לי ואנווהו*, "This is my G-d" etc.) and Esav used this word while he was degrading the *bechora*, he also included Hashem in his curses.

The *Zera Shimshon* asks that although the word *זה* may seem slightly unnecessary, it still seems drastic to therefore learn from it that Esav cursed and denied the existence of Hashem. The *Zera Shimshon* explains how Reish Lakish saw this in the word *זה* as follows.

The Gemara (*Eruvin* 19a) says that even the wicked sinners, when they are eventually punished by Hashem for their evildoings, proclaim Hashem's justice and agree with Him for punishing them for their actions. On the other hand, when a person is sentenced to death by a king, his mouth is stuffed so that he cannot curse the king. This is the difference between the way the Jewish people accept punishment from Hashem, and the way people of the nations of the world accept punishment from their respective rulers.

On this Gemara, the Maharsha says that even amongst the Jewish sinners, those that have become heretics and do not believe in Hashem react to punishment as *goyim* would, namely, they curse Hashem.

Rashi writes that when Esav asked Yaakov what the *bechora* was all about, Yaakov answered him that it brings along with it many punishments and deaths. Upon hearing this, Esav should have asked Yaakov, if so, why was he so interested in it? It is apparent that Esav understood that Yaakov was ready to accept any punishment and possible death associated with the *bechora*. This, Esav had no interest in, and he promptly sold his rights of the *bechora* to Yaakov.

It is from here that Reish Lakish understood that the word *זה* represents more than meets the eye. From this exchange, Esav made it clear that he was not from those that are willing to accept, from Hashem, punishments, and possible death, willingly. As we've seen even the wicked sinners of the Jewish people, so long as they have not become heretics, accept Hashem's punishments. This places Esav in the group of those that are heretics.

Therefore, it now makes sense for Reish Lakish to back up his insight, that Esav denied the existence of Hashem from the seemingly extra word *זה*. This shows that it is no longer unfair to accuse Esav of heresy. Once Esav showed he would not accept Hashem's punishments, he grouped himself with the heretics, uncovering his real intention with the word *זה*.

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Reggio, Italy. His Seforim were named, Zera Shimshon (al HaTorah) and Toldos Shimshon (Pirkei Avos). He passed away on the 6th of Elul 5539 (1779). His passionate plea and promise regarding learning his Chiddushim:

that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth my soul etc...

"This righteousness will stand by you forever - to eat in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.

"...and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children..."

"I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece

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The Wayward Child

Rabbi Berel Wein



The troubling question that has persisted throughout the ages of biblical commentary on this week's parsha is: What is Yitzchak thinking in regard to giving the blessings and heritage of Avraham to Eisav? Basically the comments and explanations fall into two categories. One of them is that Yitzchak is fooled by Eisav and is really unaware of his true nature and wanton behavior.

Rashi, quoting Midrash, interprets that Eisav "hunted" his father with his pious speech and cunning conversation. Yitzchak is fooled by Eisav and believes that Eisav, the man of the world and the physically powerful figure, is better suited to carry on Avraham's vision than is Yaakov, the more studious and apparently more simple of the brothers.

The other opinion, more popular among the later commentators to the Torah, is that Yitzchak is aware of the shortcomings in behavior and attitude of his elder son. His desire to give the blessings to Eisav is due to his wish to redeem and save his son, and to enable Eisav to turn his life around and become a worthy heir to the traditions of his father and grandfather. He thinks that by somehow giving the blessings to Eisav, Yaakov will not really suffer any disadvantage in his life's work, while Eisav will find his way back to holiness through the blessings that he has now received.

These two divergent attitudes towards the wayward child in Jewish families is one that is enacted daily in Jewish family life. Later "Yitzchaks" either willfully allow themselves to be deluded regarding the behavior and lifestyle of children or they are aware of the problem and attempt to solve it with a

giving nature and a plethora of blessings.

Rivkah, Eisav's mother, is not fooled by her son's apparently soothing words nor does she believe that granting him blessings will somehow accomplish any major shift in his chosen lifestyle. To a great measure she adopts a policy of triage, saving Yaakov and blessing him while thus abandoning Eisav to his own chosen wanton ways.

The Torah does not record for us the "what if" scenario – what if Eisav had received the blessings? Would he then have been different in behavior and attitude, belief and mission. However, from the words of the later prophets of Israel, especially those of Ovadiah, it appears clear that God somehow concurred with Rivkah's policy and holds Eisav to be redeemable only in the very long run of history and human events.

The verdict seems to be that one must be clear eyed and realistic about the painful waywardness and misbehavior of enemies of Yaakov, be they from within or without our immediate family and milieu. There are many painful choices that need to be made within one's lifetime and especially in family relations.

There are few pat answers to varying and difficult situations. Perhaps that is why the Torah itself does not delve too deeply into the motives of Yitzchak and Rivkah but is content merely to reflect the different emotional relationships each had with their two very different sons. The Torah emphasizes the role that human emotions play in our lives and does not consign all matters to rational thought and decision-making.



Present and Future *Rabbi Shalom Rosner*

The first major action in the *parsha* occurs while Yaakov was cooking lentil soup for his father, who was mourning the death of Avraham. Eisav arrived home tired after a full day of hunting. He walked into the tent and demanded some of the soup. Yaakov agreed to provide soup to Eisav in exchange for the *bechorah*. What was Eisav's response?

"What do I need the *bechorah* for? I'm going to die anyway." Eisav then sold the *bechorah* for the lentil soup. What exactly did Eisav detest about the *bechorah*? Even after he had sold it and eaten the soup, he scorned it and despised it. It was as if he put a stamp of disapproval on the *bechorah*. What about the *bechorah* did Eisav detest so much?

Rav Pincus (*Tiferes Shimshon*) suggests as follows. What does the *bechorah* symbolize? It represents the *avodah*, the service in the *Beis HaMikdash*. Prior to the *cheit haeigel*, the responsibility of performing the *avodah* in the *Mikdash* came with the *bechorah*. The *bechor's* greater stature in our nation yielded higher levels of responsibility and obligation. The *Kohen Gadol* has more limitations, obligations and *mitzvos* than the average person. *Kohanim* and *Leviim* have more responsibilities in the *Mikdash* than *Yisraelim*.

Eisav was not interested in obligations. He desired immediate pleasure and satisfaction. Eisav was at fault for being focused only on the present and not anticipating the future. But... מי שטרב בערב שבת יאכל בשבת. As they say, "there is no free lunch." If one just focuses on the immediate pleasure, without investing

and planning for the future, he is destined to fail. Animals eat whatever and whenever they desire, yet no one envies these creatures. They are below humans on the pyramid. The more responsibility we have, and the more obligations we take upon ourselves, the greater *kedushah* and spiritual heights we can obtain.

Eisav had animalistic desires – to be satiated immediately by whatever he craved. Therefore, he sold the *bechorah*. He was not interested in future growth, but rather immediate gratification. We, on the other hand, have to recognize limitations in the present on account of the future.

When a non-Jew first becomes interested in *geirus*, we inform him of *mitzvos kalos* and *chamuros*. (*Yoreh Deah* 268:2). Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz discusses what the term *mitzvos kalos* means. Why do we inform a potential *ger* specifically about the *mitzvos* of *leket*, *shikecha*, *pei'ah*, and other examples of *tzedakah*? Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz answers that when it comes to other religions, there are primarily *mitzvos chamuros* – major laws like no killing and no stealing. But the nitty gritty things about life – that is ignored. Judaism has something to say about how one puts on his shoes, how to eat, and when to wash one's hands. Eisav couldn't fathom that. Yet, that's what we are to inform a *ger*: know what you're getting yourself into, but at the same time, realize that it is a great *zechus* to be part of such a special family. God is in the details!

May we focus on the "little things" and appreciate each and every command and act that we perform to fulfill *Ratzon Hashem*.

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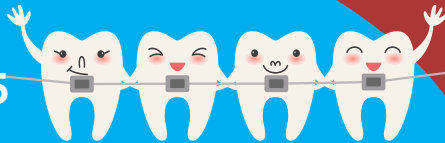
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To Be and Not to Do

Rabbi Frand



The verse says “And Yitzchak loved Esav, for game was in his mouth; and Rivkah loves Yaakov” [Bereishis 25:28]. There is a strange use of grammar in this verse. By Yitzchak it says “*va’ye-eh-hav*”, meaning “and he loved” — in the past tense. By Rivkah it says “*o-heves*” meaning “she loves” — in the present tense.

The Dubno Maggid once asked why there is this grammatical discrepancy. He answered with a powerful truth which is very applicable, particularly in our time: He said that one of the differences between the non-Jewish world and ours, is that in the former people are evaluated by what they do, whereas the Jew is evaluated not by what he does, but by what he is.

If one ever asks a child what he wants to be when he grows up, the child will answer “I want to be a...” doctor or lawyer or teacher. This is improper usage! The child was asked what he wants to be, and instead he answers with what he wants to *do*. ‘Doctor’, ‘teacher’, and ‘lawyer’ are professions, what you *do* — not what you are. However, we are conditioned in this country that one’s whole importance or value is based upon what one does.

A columnist recently wrote a piece in the Baltimore Sun complaining about the conversations at cocktail parties. While standing at a cocktail party, drink in hand, he will introduce himself to someone. When the conversation is not fifteen seconds old, he will be asked, “What do you do?” The columnist writes that “in America you *are* what you *do*.” If one does something important, then he is important. If one does something menial, then he’s not important. The type of person that someone is, makes no difference whatsoever.

He writes that he is so turned off by this line of questioning, that now, if anybody asks him what he does, he says he is an undercover agent for the IRS, at which time the conversation ends. However, this writer identified a tremendous truth. We are preoccupied not with who we *are*, not with what type of person I *am*, but with what we *do*. This reflects a very non-Jewish outlook. It does not reflect the outlook of Judaism.

This is what the verse is hinting to us. “Yitzchak loved Esav (past tense) for game was in his mouth” — because Esav, reflecting non-Jewish values, evaluated himself based only upon what he does. If he is only what he does, then if he ceases to do what he does (e.g. — hunt), he loses his value. A grandson of Esav [Pete Rose] once said “You’re only as good as your last ‘at bat’” He accurately reflected his society’s values. He saw no inner importance, only the pragmatic importance of what he does. When he stops doing what he does “the love is nullified” [Avot 5:16].

However, a Jew is not what he does, but what he is. Whether he makes a lot of money or he doesn’t make a lot of money; whether he does something which has status in the world or whether he does something menial — it makes no difference. If one is an ethical person and a mensch and one who Fears Heaven and Loves Israel, that is what counts. One is what he is, not what he *does*.

“And Rivkah *loves* Yaakov.” Because Yaakov was loved not for what he *did*, but for what he was. The character of Yaakov, the qualities of Yaakov, the truthfulness of Yaakov — these are constants. These are forever. Therefore, the love for such a person is forever.

Shabbos Story for Kids

Malka Touger / Chabad.org

“Oh, Mom,” groaned Josh, “I’m so bored. Being stuck in bed with a broken leg is no fun at all.”

Josh’s mother nodded sympathetically. “I agree, Josh. Still, there is a lot of good a person can do even if he stays in one place.”

“Like what? If I could go out, I would have more fun, and be able to do much more for you, too. I could go shopping for you or pick Channi up from school. What good can I do when I have to stay in bed?”

Josh’s mother sat down next to him. “You know, Josh, there’s a lesson in this week’s Torah portion which might help you think about things you can do. The Torah portion of Toldot tells us about the life of Yitzchak. We read about a famine in Israel, just like in the days of Abraham.”

“I remember learning about that,” recalled Josh. “Yitzchak thought about traveling to Egypt like his father did, but G-d told him not to leave Israel.”

“Have you ever wondered about that?” asked Josh’s mother. “After all, both Avraham and Yaakov journeyed in and out of Israel. But Hashem told Yitzchak to stay put.”

Josh thought for a moment. “I really don’t know, Mom. I remember learning how Avraham and Jacob did many important things on their journeys.”

“You see, Josh, there is a lot of good a person can do when he goes outside to be involved with other people. Still, by telling Yitzchak to stay in Israel, G-d is teaching us that there is a lot a person can — and should — do by staying in one place. Instead of being involved with many outside things like Avraham and Yaakov were, Yitzchak concentrated on working with the inner strength that G-d gave him.”

“Maybe that’s why the Torah tells us about all the wells he dug,” suggested Josh. “It’s like digging into yourself and trying to bring out what you have inside.”

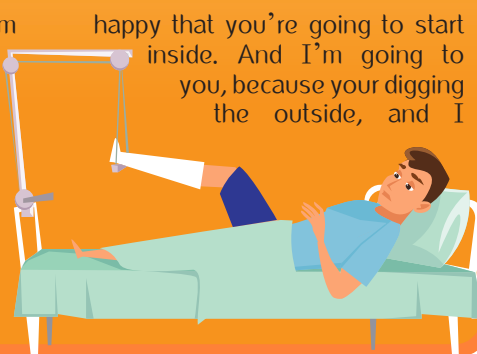
“Very good thought,” Josh’s mother complimented him, patting his head proudly. “And if you remember what happened later, you’ll see how working with the inside influences things on the outside too. Abimelech, king of the Philistines, had argued with Yitzchak and caused trouble. But later he came to Yitzchak with the general of his army and asked for his friendship, telling him: ‘We realize that you are blessed by G-d.’

“We can see how much influence Yitzchak had on the outside even while he stayed inside, concentrating on what he had within.”

“You just got me thinking, Mommy,” Josh said excitedly. “There really is a lot I can do in here.”

“Good for you, Josh! I’m happy that you’re going to start working with what you have inside. And I’m going to straighten up this room for you, because your digging inside is bound to influence the outside, and I wouldn’t want anyone to come in now.”

“Not even Abimelech, king of the Philistines!” Josh laughed.



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JOKES

The Truth About Children

- A child will not spill on a dirty floor.
- A young child is a noise with dirt on it.
- An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.
- Having children is like having a bowling alley installed in your brain.
- If you have trouble getting your children's attention, just sit down and look comfortable.
- It rarely occurs to teenagers that the day will come when they'll know as little as their parents.
- Money isn't everything, but it sure keeps the kids in touch.
- You can learn many things from children ... like how much patience you have.
- Summer vacation is a time when parents realize that teachers are grossly underpaid.

When her father came home he saw the present immediately. He asked the little girl, "What is it?"

"I can't tell," she said proudly, with a look towards mom. "It's a surprise."

"Can I shake it and guess what's inside?" asked Dad.

"No," she replied, "shirts don't rattle."



The Marine

As the crowded airliner is about to push away from the gate, the peace is shattered by a three-year-old boy who picks that moment to throw a wild temper tantrum. No matter what his frustrated, embarrassed mother does to try to calm him down, the boy continues to scream furiously and kick the seats around him.

Suddenly, from the rear of the plane, an elderly man in a Marine uniform is seen slowly walking forward up the aisle. Stopping the flustered mother with an upraised hand, the white-haired, courtly, soft-spoken Marine leans down and, motioning toward his chest, whispers something into the boy's ear.

Instantly, the boy calms down, gently takes his mother's hand, and quietly fastens his seat belt. All the other passengers burst into spontaneous applause.

As the Marine slowly makes his way back to his seat, one of the cabin attendants touches his sleeve. "Excuse me, sir," she asks quietly, "but could I ask you what magic words you used on that little boy?"

The Marine smiles serenely and gently confides, "I showed him my pilot's wings, service stars, and battle ribbons, and explained that they entitle me to throw one passenger out the plane door on any flight I choose."



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A gentleman goes to an estate sale and notices that one of the items for sale is a large parrot.

He's always wanted a talking bird, so when it comes up for bid he offers \$50.

The bidding proceeds hot and heavy with someone always bidding ten dollars more than he until the parrot is finally sold to him for \$1,500.

When he goes to get the bird, he asks the auctioneer, "Can the bird talk?"

The auctioneer replied, "Whom do you think was bidding against you?"

It's a Surprise!

A three-year-old was helping to wrap a present for her father. While they were wrapping, her mother kept reminding her daughter to keep the present a secret so it would be a surprise. After the present was wrapped, she proudly put it on the table.

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