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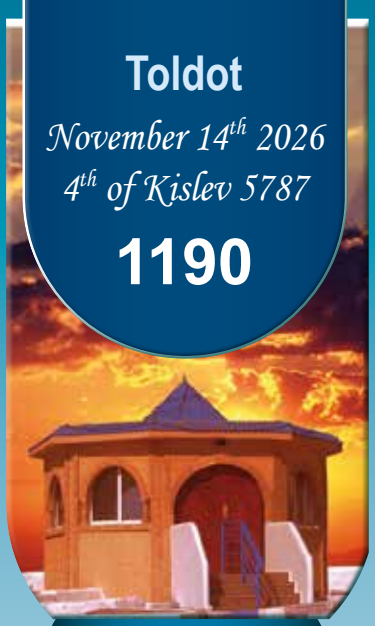
Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

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Toldot

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Weekly talk on the Parshah given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

The Power of Sarah Imeinu's Complete Faith

"Yitzchak entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren. Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him, and his wife Rivkah conceived"*

(Bereishit 25:21)

On the words "Yitzchak entreated" Rashi writes, "He prayed abundantly... He stood in one corner and prayed and she stood in another corner and prayed". It is necessary to understand why we do not find that Avraham and Sarah prayed to merit children. Rather, as soon as Sarah saw that she was unable to bear children, she gave Avraham her maidservant Hagar, as it says (Bereishit 16:2), "And Sarai said to Avram, 'See, now, Hashem has restrained me from bearing; consort, now, with my maidservant, perhaps I will be built up through her'. And Avram heeded the voice of Sarai".

Why did Sarah not pray and beg the Master of the World to bless her with offspring, just as Rivkah Imeinu did? This question can also be asked of Avraham Avinu who prayed on behalf of all mankind, even for the wicked people of Sodom. He prayed abundantly and begged Hashem to have mercy on them. If so, why did he not pray for Sarah his wife that she should merit giving birth?

There is a further question. Why, when Hashem wished to announce to Sarah about Yitzchak's birth, did He send an angel to announce the news as it says (Bereishit 18:10), "And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year, and behold Sarah your wife will have a son". while Rivkah and also Rachel did not merit being told by an angel?

With siyata dishmaya I would like to suggest the following answer. There are different levels in the attribute of bitachon (trust) in the Creator. A man may declare that he trusts in Hashem, but his heart is not convinced. His words are insincere and the proof is that he expends much effort in trying to achieve his desire, toiling and worrying for its fulfillment. If his words are sincere and he truly has complete trust in the Creator, why is he not at peace?! He is consumed with thoughts on how to achieve his desire and spends the entire day pursuing the options. This is a proof that his trust is dubious and unstable.

On the other hand, there are those who genuinely trust in Hashem with all their heart. They believe that Hashem has the power to save them from their troubles, and their utterances and feelings are one and the same. Deep inside they believe that only the Creator has the power to come to their aid, but they expend the smallest amount of effort which certainly does not contradict their complete trust. For this is how Hashem runs the world, man is expected to expend some slight effort (hishtadlut) but at the same time must know that it is the Creator alone who affects the outcome.

However, there is an even higher level of bitachon, which is bitachon in its most complete form. This is demonstrated by one who trusts in Hashem that He will fulfil his desires and is not prepared to put forth even the smallest amount of effort to achieve his goal because he knows and believes with all his heart that Hashem will give him that which he desires. Even if much time has passed and still he has not merited salvation, he does not despair and is not afraid because he has complete bitachon in the Creator that the day will come when Hashem will carry out his wish and fulfill his request.

The extent of Sarah's greatness was also reflected in the immensity of her faith and trust in Hashem. Sarah Imeinu said to herself that if Hashem promised Avraham that he will have children from her, why should she be concerned? She is absolutely certain that Hashem will fulfil her desire. That is why she was not prepared to do even the smallest amount of hishtadlut for this because if she would pray and beg abundantly it would be a proof that her faith and trust in Hashem are lacking and she is afraid that He might not fulfil her wish. Therefore, she did not even ask Avraham her husband to pray for her and she was prepared for him to marry Hagar. This did not bother her, on the contrary, she said, "perhaps I will be built up through her", for she knew that if she has a promise from Hashem that He will give them children, why does she need to be concerned about it. Sooner or later Hashem will fulfil His word. This was the greatness of Sarah Imeinu's level.

This is why she merited giving birth to Yitzchak Avinu who fathered the dynasty of Ya'akov Avinu and the G-dly tribes, just as Hashem promised (Bereishit 21:13), "since through Yitzchak will offspring be considered yours". He too cleaved to the holy path that his mother specified for him. When Hashem commanded that he be brought on the Mizbeach as an offering and stretched out his neck to be slaughtered, he had no doubts and questions about how the dynasty of Am Yisrael will continue through him. Rather, he went with complete faith and innocence to fulfil Hashem's will just as He commanded, for he followed in the path of his righteous parents, Avraham and Sarah.

Certainly, Rivkah and Rachel, our holy Imahot, also had enormous trust in Hashem and relied on Him with all their heart, but on a different level to that of Sarah Imeinu. That is why Rivkah felt that she was obligated to do some hishtadlut so as to merit offspring. She therefore stood in prayer and supplication to the Master of the World, and Rachel Imeinu too asked Ya'akov, "Give me children" (Bereishit 30:1), implying that he should pray for her to merit children. They thought that they had not yet merited rising to a level of such immense bitachon that precludes any hishtadlut, like Sarah Imeinu. Sarah's great level of bitachon was why a heavenly angel appeared to her to announce the news of Yitzchak's birth, something that our holy Imahot, Rivkah and Rachel, did not merit.

May it be His will that we merit following in the path of our holy Avot and implant complete faith and trust in Hashem in our hearts, Amen v'Amen.

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Hilulah of

5 – Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi Idells, the Maharsha

6 – Rabbi Shmuel Pinto, son of Rabbi Daniel Pinto

7 – Rabbi Rafael David Sebban, Rav of Turkey

8 – Rabbi Avraham HaKohen, author of 'Mishmerot Kehunah'

9 – Rabbi Natan Salem, of the Chachmei Yeshivat 'Porat Yosef'

10 – Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, Rosh Yeshiva of 'Eitz Chaim'

11 – The Dayan, Rabbi Moshe Harrari, a Gadol from Aram Tzova



Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Salvation in the Merit of Charity

In a city near New York lives a family who was hit by tragedy. An expectant mother slipped and fell, and she and her unborn child sadly passed away. This calamity shook the entire community. In its wake, the community members asked various Rabbanim to deliver words of inspiration.

I, too, was asked to provide words of encouragement. After my speech, an appeal would be made for tzedakah for the poor. I asked my host in New York to drive me to the Beit Hakneset where I was scheduled to deliver my talk. As we were traveling, the man turned to me and asked if I minded if he made a detour. He very much wanted to show me the yeshiva where his son learned. At first, I hesitated. But as he promised that it would take no longer than a minute, I acquiesced.

After showing me the yeshiva, we continued on our way to the Beit Hakneset. We were suddenly met by a ghastly sight. Exactly at the spot where we would have driven a moment earlier, a terrible accident had occurred. A mammoth truck had smashed into a private car that was coming in the opposite direction. The two occupants had been flung into the street and were lying by the roadside. No one knew if they were still alive.

I trembled at this sight. Had we not changed our route, we would most likely have been a part of that horrific scene.

I have no doubt that the upcoming appeal for tzedakah was what saved us from this accident since the mitzvah of tzedakah has the power to save a person from all harm.

The Haftarah

"The prophecy of the word of Hashem" (Malachi 1,2)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah speaks about Ya'akov and Esav, as it says: "Was not Esav the brother of Ya'akov", while the Parsha tells of the birth of the twins, Ya'akov Avinu a"h and Esav the rasha, and their offspring.

Guard Your Tongue

Speaking About Outward Appearance

We previously mentioned that it is forbidden to say negative words even if the speaker does not consider it as something negative, just as it is also forbidden to say something that is not essentially negative, if the speaker or the listener consider it as negative.

This can be demonstrated with the example of speaking about someone's external appearance and way of dress. Even though there may be nothing wrong with this way of dress, it is nevertheless forbidden to say that he dresses in this way if the speaker or listener do not consider this way of dress in a positive light.



In Our Father's Path

Why did Maran Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef Remain Awake?

On the verse in our Parsha, "The children agitated within her" (Bereishit 25:22), Chazal expound: "When she would pass the Torah academy of Shem and Ever, Ya'akov 'was running' and struggling to come forth; and when she passed a temple of idol worship, Esav 'was running' and struggling to come forth".

The Torah commentaries ask the famous question: While we can understand that when Rivkah passed a temple of idol worship Esav was struggling to come forth since he had no idolatry in his mother's womb, but why when she passed the Beit Midrash was Ya'akov struggling to come forth, for the Gemarah (Niddah 30b) explains the verse "when his lamp would shine over my head" (Iyov 29:3) as implying that there is an angel who teaches the entire Torah to a baby when in its mother's womb?

Several answers have been offered to reconcile this difficulty. The central idea focuses on the lofty value of Torah when it is studied with toil and effort, and not when it comes easily. The verse tells us (Iyov 5:7), "For man is born to toil" and Chazal (Sanhedrin 99b) explain that it refers to toiling in Torah.

It follows then that when Rivkah passed by the entrance to the Beit Midrash, Ya'akov was struggling to come forth since he felt that the Torah that was studied there involved great effort and toil. More than the Torah that was given to him as a heavenly gift and came easily through an angel, he desired this other kind of Torah. This is in line with the Chazal, "A person prefers one kav of his own produce to nine kav of another's produce." His own produce refers to that which he has toiled over (Baba Metzia 38a).

This is the kind of Torah that Ya'akov Avinu wished to study. And indeed for fourteen years he studied and toiled in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever without ever lying down to sleep on a bed, as Chazal tell us. Rashi quotes this Chazal on the verse (Bereishit 28:11), "he lay down in that place": "That place is an expression of exclusion, in only that place he lay down, but during the fourteen years that he studied in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever, he did not sleep at night because he was engaged in Torah."

This concept corresponds wonderfully with the words of the verse (Bamidbar 19:14), "This is the teaching (Torah) regarding a man who would die in a tent". Chazal expound on this (Berachot 63b), "Torah only endures in one who kills himself for it", only for one who kills himself in the tent of Torah, immersing and devoting himself in the Torah day and night and studying it with toil and effort.

Maran Rabbeinu Ovadiah Yosef zt"l would study Torah every night until two or three in the morning. This was also the time when he would write down his chiddushim. This was a custom that he continued even when he was ninety years old!

There was an avreich, forty years younger than Maran, who was entrusted with the publishing of his many manuscripts. Rabbeinu Ovadia would tell him, "That's it, it's enough. Go to sleep now", while he himself would continue studying...

One morning, Rabbi Eliyahu Shitrit, who would write down Maran's chiddushim, saw a large stack of papers with Maran's chiddushim that had piled up during the night. He turned to Maran and asked him, "Did Rabbeinu not sleep the entire night?" Maran answered, "No. I was not overcome with sleep."

How remarkable and compelling! Maran would never go to sleep. He studied and studied until he was overcome by sleep. Right there, in the place where he learnt, he fell asleep. Just as it says about Ya'akov Avinu, "He spent the night there because the sun had set" (Bereishit 28:11).



Pearls of the Parsha

Healthy Children Enable the Father to Devote Himself to Prayer and Torah

"Yitzchak entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren" (Bereishit 25:21)

The holy Tiferet Shlomo explains this verse according to the Gemarah (Yevamot 64a) where Rabbi Yitzchak asks: "Why were our forefathers' barren? Because Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous".

The way of the world is that children naturally take their fathers away from Torah study and prayer, through the need to care for them and continuously provide for their needs.

This is why we ask that Hashem should give us "living and surviving offspring, offspring who will neither interrupt nor cease from words of the Torah". We are asking to merit living children who will not interrupt us from studying Torah, meaning that we should be able to immerse ourselves in Torah and mitzvot and still they should always be healthy and well and not make us cease from words of Torah out of our concerns for them.

This is a possible interpretation of the above Gemarah. Our forefathers were barren so that they could pray with serenity without the disturbances that are a natural result of having children, for Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous...

Not Mentioning the Name of a Rasha When Praying

"Yitzchak entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren" (Bereishit 25:21)

The Gemarah (Berachot 34b) writes that when one prays for recovery in the presence of the sick person, it is not necessary to mention his name, just as we find with Moshe Rabbeinu who prayed the following prayer for Miriam, "Please G-d, heal her now", without mentioning her name.

Here too, the 'Nefesh Chaya' points out, Yitzchak was afraid that if he has to mention his wife's name, he will also have to mention the name of her parents who were wicked (Rivkah daughter of...), and he did not wish to refer to their memory when praying for her. That is why he cleverly prayed "opposite his wife" so that he should not have to mention her name.

A Valid Sale on a Full stomach

"Esav said to Ya'akov, 'Pour into me, now, some of that very red stuff for I am exhausted'" (Bereishit 25:30)

Esav asked Ya'akov for food using the expression "pour into me", meaning that Ya'akov should pour the stew into his mouth. However, Ya'akov presented him with the food in the normal manner, as it says, "Ya'akov gave Esav bread and lentil stew, and he ate".

Rabbi Avraham HaKohen of Djerba zt"l in his sefer 'Keneh Avraham', asks two questions:

First of all, why did Ya'akov not do as Esav asked? Besides, Esav asked to eat "that very red stuff", referring to the lentil stew, so why did Ya'akov also give Esav bread? Also, the order of the verse is that he first gave bread and after that the lentil stew. Why was this?

He explains that since Esav was overcome with ravenous hunger and was in a situation of danger, as it says, "Look, I am going to die", Ya'akov was afraid that later on Esav might come and claim that the entire sale of the birthright was carried out under compulsion and therefore carries no weight.

Therefore, Ya'akov first gave Esav bread, and once he had eaten to satisfaction and was no longer in danger, he can no longer claim that he was forced to sell the birthright for the lentil stew, rather he sold the birthright willingly in complete accordance with the law.

Treasures

Based on the teachings of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita



Showing Love Diminishes the Evil

Rivkah went to the academy of Shem, a prophet, who could inquire of Hashem on her behalf, and she was told (Bereishit 25:23) "Two nations are in your womb; two regimes from your insides shall be separated". So already before they were born, they knew that one was a tzaddik and the other a complete rasha. Since Yitzchak Avinu was certainly aware of this prophecy, why did he nevertheless show love for Esav and even wished to give him the blessings? He was wicked already in his mother's womb.

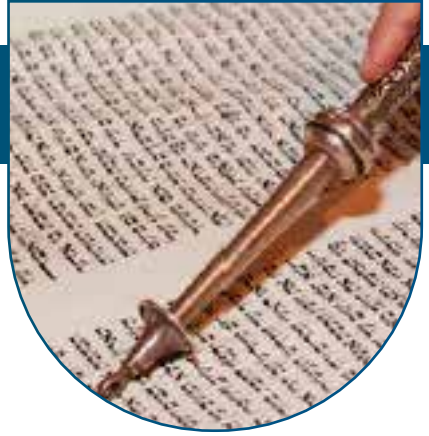
I would like to suggest that Yitzchak Avinu was certainly aware of his son's wicked ways, but despite this, he wished to draw him close to him so that this would diminish his wickedness in some way. This is why he showed him feelings of love and affection and did not push him away. If he realizes that his father respects and appreciates him, he will be embarrassed by his evil ways and give them up. Yitzchak even wished to give him the blessings so that they should have a positive effect on him and through them, he will return to the good and the correct path.

Just as Yitzchak was concerned for his son, so too Ya'akov was concerned for his brother. This is the reason why Ya'akov took the birthright from Esav because he was concerned for his soul and wished to prevent him from receiving harsh punishments for his bad deeds. For on that day that Esav returned home exhausted from the fields, Ya'akov heard that he had transgressed five of the most serious sins. He thought to himself that if Esav retains the birthright, the claim on him will certainly be much greater and accordingly, the punishment will be more severe. So out of compassion for his soul, he bought the birthright from him so as to diminish the consequence of the Heavenly judgement.

It follows that Yitzchak Avinu a"h certainly recognized the great wickedness of his son Esav, nevertheless he treated him well, loved him and tried to bring him close and encourage him so that he should not kick at everything that is precious and holy, and thereby he will retain some spark of holiness.

"G-d has made the one as well as the other" (Kohelet 7:14). About Ya'akov Avinu it says (Bereishit 25:27), "a wholesome man, abiding in tents". The word 'תם', wholesome, can be rearranged to spell 'מת', dead. Throughout his life, Ya'akov killed himself in the tent of Torah and showed self-sacrifice in studying Torah and performing mitzvot. But the goal of the wicked Esav was to seek a solution in how to fight against Ya'akov and weaken the power of his Torah. For Esav knew that if "the voice is Ya'akov's voice", then "the hands are Esav's hands" have no power. Esav's main goal is to remove the letter 'vav' from the word 'voice' 'קול יעקב', and change it to 'קל יעקב', creating in its place the word 'light, easy' so that G-d forbid he should be light-minded (קל דעת) in his learning. He should become lax and weak in his Torah study and then he too will crave the pleasures and lusts of This World. In this way, he will lose the Torah that he possesses and then automatically Esav will be able to overcome him.

Ya'akov Avinu who was aware of this battle, guarded himself closely and strengthened himself with the sound of Torah. His holy voice was always heard loudly. As long as the voice of Ya'akov can be heard in the Batei Knessiot and Batei Midrashot, we are promised that "the hands are Esav's hands" will have no power. Hashem will save us from Esav's hands in the merit of the power of the holy Torah.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

When Rabbi Aryeh Leib Birnbaum passed away, his father Rabbi Shmuel, the Rosh Yeshiva of Mir in America, gave a hesped for him. It was a heartrending sight, a bereaved father giving a hesped for his dear son. But his sincere words calmed the grieving participants and greatly reduced the intensity of the questions that preyed on the minds of all those present. These were his words:

"On the words in this week's Parsha, "And it came to pass, when Yitzchak had become old, and his eyes dimmed from seeing" (Bereishit 27:1), Rashi explains that when Yitzchak lay bound on the altar and his father was about to slaughter him, at that moment the heavens opened. The ministering angels saw and wept and their tears fell into Yitzchak's eyes, and that is why his eyes dimmed from seeing.

The question arises, why did Hashem open the heavens so that the angels should see the Akeidah? Was it not possible for them to see the Akeidah without opening the heavens?"

"But," Rav Birnbaum explained, "Hashem opened the heavens for the angels at the time of the Akeidah because had He not done so, they would not have been moved at all by the Akeidah, for in heaven there are no questions. That is why Hashem opened the heavens and showed them how it appears down in This World, and when they saw the Akeidah from the perspective of This World, with all the questions and doubts and feelings that the matter aroused, they immediately began to weep.

Had they observed the sight from Above, through the revelation of the Heavens, it would not have aroused either questions or pain or tears. There they would have understood that this is the ultimate good. In This World too, there are some matters that mortals only understand after a long time has passed and some matters that are understood only in the World of Truth."

Rabbi Birnbaum's words are so accurate and so stirring. These are questions that we face daily, and we hardly have the answers. We simply do not understand anything. But we must know, that Up There, there are no questions. To enable the angels to grasp our position down in This World it was necessary to open up all the heavens for them so that they should understand us and so that they too, should be able to weep. On occasion, Hashem reveals the secret of His conduct also to us down here and then all our questions disappear; everything is clear and our complaints and difficult questions merely melt away.

On this subject, we present a remarkable story which the famous writer, Rabbi Chanoch Teller, recounts in one of his books: By the end of the Second World War, the Nazis ym"sh had killed the majority of European Jewry. The Allied Forces carried out a relentless war against the Nazis and with Hashem's help, succeeded in driving them into Germany. The Nazis retreated on all fronts but did not leave the Jews alone. They took the imprisoned Jews with them in their retreat to Germany, in some cases a journey of hundreds of miles, some on foot and others by train.

In the Bergen-Belsen camp in Germany, the situation was unbearable. Hunger, thirst and sicknesses were only part of the tribulations that surrounded the inmates. The camp was divided into different wings, one of which also housed Russian prisoners of war.

A survivor from that division relates that one morning the Nazis announced: We know that in another few days the British will arrive and we want you to tell them how well we treated you... so we have brought you fresh rolls.

The hunger that prevailed in the camp was indescribable. For five years that particular Jewish survivor had barely eaten and all his thoughts were centered around the question of how to acquire food.

After receiving his roll, he suddenly noticed that there were more baskets full of rolls lying next to the Nazi. It immediately sprung to his mind: If there is such an abundance of rolls, why not stand in line for another one? The Nazi will certainly not recognize him among so many other Jews.

So when the Nazi asked, "Who is next in line?" he replied, "I am" and duly received another roll. He was now the happiest man; he had two fresh rolls in his hand.

Suddenly he felt a hand grasping his neck and a threatening voice whispered in his ear:

"I saw what you did, Jew!" He turned around to see who was talking. It was not a Nazi but one of the Russian prisoner-of-war soldiers. The Russian gripped him tightly and demanded, "Give me the second roll!" The Jew made a calculation: He is a prisoner just like me, why should I give it to him? "I will not give it to you," he answered firmly.

The Russian then dragged him inside the bunkhouse and began beating him cruelly. When he was certain that his soul had departed, he took the rolls and left.

The Jew felt the shadow of the Angel of Death spreading its wings over him. He raised his eyes heavenward and called out: "Master of the World, now I should die, a moment before liberation?! If you wished to take my life, You had hundreds of opportunities to do so during the last five years!"

And in this state, full of grievances against Heaven, he lost consciousness.

When he awoke he looked around and saw that all the inmates were dead. The rolls had been poisoned! But it was decreed that he would live, so Hashem made sure that his rolls would be taken from him. Even when he refused to hand them over, he was beaten up so that he would survive!