



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Toldos

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

וַיֵּשׁב וַיִּשְׁקֶלְלוּ וַיְרַח אֶת־רֵיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רַחֵם
 רַיִם בְּנֵי קְרִיַם שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכְוּהָ...

And he went up and kissed him. And he smelled his clothes and he blessed him, saying, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of the fields that Hashem has blessed..."

MANY OF THE *meforshim* on the Chumash wonder: who is Yitzchak addressing when he says, "Re'eh", "See"? While the Ibn Ezra answers that Yitzchak is speaking to himself, (in wonderment, the Chasam Sofer clarifies), and the Seforno answers that he is speaking to Yaakov, the Mei HaShiloach takes a third route. The tzaddik explains that with the word "Re'eh", Yitzchak is beseeching to Hashem in prayer. Yitzchak was begging Hashem: "Re'eh Rei'ach b'ni", let the sweet-smelling holiness of my son not remain a secret. Rather, let his glory be seen by everyone, perceptible to all." Far beyond any other identifying characteristic such as age, background, occupation, temperament, or physical location, it is the scent of Gan Eden that accompanied Yaakov Avinu which sits at the innermost core of the Jewish soul. Unfortunately, this scent is not always perceived; not by others, and, increasingly, not even by ourselves! This *tefillah* of Yitzchak is becoming more relevant

DEAREST CHILD,
 YOU MEAN
 THE WORLD TO ME.

- Hashem

by the hour; "Re'eh reich b'ni", may Hashem grant each and every Jew the ability to recognize the holiness within himself and his fellow Jews as well as enable the world to perceive the heavenly truth and grace of the Torah! 🕎

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🕎 Rivka conceives after twenty childless years and, after some confusion, discovers she is expecting twins.
- 🕎 Eisav and Yaakov are born (first Eisav, then Yaakov). Eisav becomes a hunter and Yaakov devotes himself to Torah study. Yitzchak favors Eisav; Rivka loves Yaakov. A famished Eisav sells his birthright to Yaakov for a pot of red lentils.
- 🕎 In the land of the Pelishtim, Yitzchak presents Rivka as his sister for fear that he will be killed. He reopens the wells dug by Avraham and digs wells of his own. The Pelishtim quarrel with him over the first two wells, the third is enjoyed in peace.
- 🕎 Eisav marries two Chitti women. Yitzchak desires to bless Eisav before he dies. Rivka disguises Yaakov and he poses as Eisav, receiving the *berachos* in his place. Eisav returns to find that the blessings have been given away and weeps. Yitzchak blesses him with supremacy over Yaakov when his younger brother will falter.
- 🕎 Yaakov escapes Eisav's wrath and flees to Charan where he searches for a wife in the family of his uncle, Lavan. Eisav marries a third wife - Machalas, daughter of Yishmael.

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

וַיִּשָׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחֲפֹר אֶת־בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בַיָּמֵי אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיו וַיִּסְתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים
אֲחֵרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם...

Yitzchak dug anew the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Avraham and which the Pelishtim had stopped up after Avraham's death...

IN THIS WEEK'S parsha, Yitzchak finds that the Pelishtim have covered over the wells that were dug by the servants of his father, Avraham. Yitzchak uncovers these wells and digs two additional wells which he names "Eisek" and "Sitnah" because of the disputes surrounding them, before digging a third and final well, named "Rechovos" in reference to the ample space he had finally been granted. The holy Sefas Emes teaches us that this seemingly mundane episode hints to an incredibly foundational process in avodas Hashem.

It is well known that Avraham Avinu was the paradigm of *Middas HaChessed*, the divine trait of boundless kindness and unfettered love. The tzaddik teaches that the wells dug by Avraham represent the manifestation of this trait in the heart of a Jew, a point in life when the flowing waters of ahavas Hashem that abide in the hidden recesses of the heart are accessed and stream to the forefront of one's heart and mind. But eventually, the inevitable happens - the Pelishtim, a reference to the forces of the yetzer hara, close up these wells, usurping these holy feelings for improper expression.

The rectification of this blockage is found in Yitzchak Avinu. Yitzchak embodies the *middah* of *Gevurah*, the source of *yiras Shomayim*. In recording that Yitzchak uncovered the sealed wells of Avraham, Hashem is teaching us that the way to circumvent the usurpation of *ahavah* for improper usage is by enabling our *ahavas*

Hashem to become a foundation for *Yiras Shomayim*. This kind of *yirah* is referenced in the very first verse in the *parsha*, "**Avraham holid es Yitzchak**" - it is a *Yirah* (Yitzchak) that is fathered by and rooted in the *middah* of *ahava* (Avraham). When we engage with the *middah* of *ahava* sufficiently, building a relationship of such intense closeness and intimacy with Hashem that we are fearful to act in a way that will adversely affect that relationship, we are able to unplug the wells of this emotion - steering away from its misuse and using it and the *yiras Shomayim* it fosters as a protection against improper expression.

The Sefas Emes continues and explains that the sealing of the holy waters of *ahavas Hashem* is also referenced in the first two wells that Yitzchak dug - "Eisek" and "Sitnah"; the hate-filled battle waged by the yetzer hara during the six days of the week. Because of the mundanity and distraction of the week, it is increasingly difficult to access the holy waters of *ahava* and *yirah mitoch ahava*. The days of the week are days of battle during which it is all too easy for the Pelishtim of our lives to block the living waters of *ahavas Hashem* that roil deep within the Jewish heart. However, Yitzchak names his final well "Rechovos", a reference to Shabbos Kodesh. Shabbos reveals the innermost core of creation, digging past all of the earthliness to reveal the spring of spirituality beneath the surface. On Shabbos, a Jew has the special capacity to attain this aspect of "**Avraham holid es Yitzchak**", the *yiras Shomayim* that is a result of intense *ahavas Hashem*. *Thank You Hashem for Shabbos Kodesh!* 🕎



When the yetzer hara usurps the living waters of ahavas Hashem for improper purposes, the remedy is to channel that ahavah into yirah - the fear of severing our relationship with the Master of the world.

Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

WE HAVE LEARNED that the very essence of Shabbos - even in its simplest iteration - is bound with the level of **Neshamah**. The *Mekubalim* teach that the tip of the *Yud* and the four letters of Hashem's name correspond to the Ten Sefiros, ten elemental spiritual energies through which Hashem creates and interacts with His creation. The **tip of the Yud** alludes to *Kesser-Desire*, the **Yud** itself alludes to *Chochmah*-Organic Intellect, the first **Heh** alludes to *Binah*-Analytical Cognition, the **Vav** alludes to the six emotional traits from *Chessed-Yesod*, and the final **Heh** alludes to *Malchus*-Manifestation. While the energy of *Chochmah*, contained within the small spot of ink with which the letter *Yud* is formed, is the earliest initial seeds of an idea, the energy of *Binah* is that of expansion, the unfolding and analyzation of that initial brainstorm. The tzaddikim teach that these five levels also correspond to the five levels of the soul. The **tip of the Yud** alludes to *Yechidah*, the **Yud** alludes to *Chaya*, the first **Heh** alludes to *Neshama*, the **Vav** to *Ruach*, and the final **Heh** to *Nefesh*. It emerges that the level of *Binah* corresponds to the level of **Neshama**, the spirit of Shabbos Kodesh. The Chernovitzer explains that this is why the recitation of "*Kel baruch gedol dei'ah*" in the *birchos keriyas shema* of the weekday is replaced on Shabbos with "*Kel adon*". While both follow the *aleph-beis*, in the *beracha* of "*Kel baruch*", each word begins with the subsequent letter of the *aleph-beis*. This alludes to the level of *Chochmah* - the summarization of spiritual lights in a closed and hidden form. However, in the *beracha* of "*Kel Adon*", each new letter of the *aleph-beis* is followed by an entire phrase. This reflects the expansive energy of **Binah-Neshamah** with which **Shabbos Kodesh** is imbued. 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer "Sidduro Shel Shabbos" by R' Chaim of Chernowitz zy"a (1760-1816)

Profiles of Tzaddikim

Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

Rebbe Elimelech Weiselbaum of Lizhensk zy" a

REB ELIMELECH WAS born in Galicia in 1717 (5477). It was the Rebbe's brother, the Rebbe Reb Zusha of Anipoli, who first introduced Reb Elimelech to Chassidus. Immediately drawn to these penetrating teachings, Reb Elimelech, together with Reb Zusha, traveled to Mezhiboz to seek guidance from the Maggid of Mezritch. It was there that Reb Elimelech devotedly served his Rebbe and gleaned from his teachings.

While the Maggid had many great disciples, there was no collectively appointed centralized leader who filled the tzaddik's place upon his passing. Rather, each of the Maggid's students traveled to different cities and towns throughout Galicia, establishing their own courts and illuminating seekers of a passionate Yiddishkeit with the teachings of their Rebbe and the Baal Shem Tov. Still, Reb Elimelech was considered by most of the Maggid's students and followers as his successor. It was in his Beis Midrash that the spiritual role of "The Tzaddik" was broadened and further defined. This is evidenced by the fact that the tzaddik's primary work, the *sefer* Noam Elimelech, is replete with references to this leader's remarkable *avodah*. Indeed, *sefer* Noam Elimelech is often referred to as the "*Sefer shel Tzaddikim*".

Settling in the town of Lizhensk, Reb Elimelech began to spread the teachings of his Rebbe and the Baal Shem Tov to all the spiritual seekers in the area. It was during this period that the influence of Chassidus and the path of the Baal Shem Tov began to gain traction throughout Poland. Although faced with opposition, Reb Elimelech and his followers would continue their sacred work, enriching the minds and hearts of the Jewish People with the light of Chassidus.

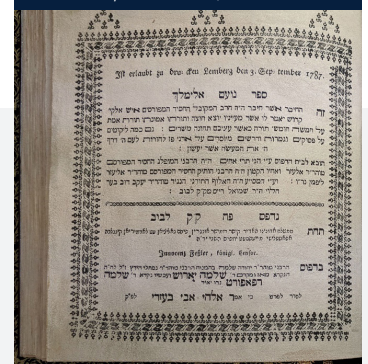
Many incredible individuals who would eventually establish Chassidic courts of their own traveled to Lizhensk to study with Reb Elimelech. A few of these tzaddikim include the Apter Rav, the Chozeh of Lublin, the Maor Va'Shemesh, the Kozhnutzer Maggid, and Reb Menachem Mendel of Riminov.

The Rebbe penned a number of works, most notably the *sefer Noam Elimelech* mentioned above, by whose title he is often referred, as well as *Tzetel Katan* and *Hanhagos HaAdam*.

Zechuso Yogen Aleinu!

This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press). 🕎

A first edition of *sefer* Noam Elimelech, printed in Lvov, 1788



Chassidus 101

Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

ONE OF THE terms that appears frequently in the *seforim hakedoshim* is the concept of *emunah peshuta*, simple faith. While on the surface this phrase connotes one's ability to place his faith wholly in Hashem, the tzaddikim reveal a deeper meaning.

We are taught, "The beginning of wisdom is fear of Hashem." The tzaddikim explain that the fear referenced in this *pasuk* is a lower level of fear, a fear which is developed through one's intellectual capabilities and understanding of the existence of God. While this is a lofty level, this is not the ultimate goal. More than merely developing *emunah* based on our own understanding, *emunah peshuta* requires that we forego our finite intellectual grasp and the pedestal upon which it is often placed in order to recognize - without any complex thoughts or sophisticated intentions - that Hashem is constantly orchestrating every aspect of creation.

The Mei HaShiloach writes that reaching this level requires humility, the ability to take a step back and refocus our perspective. It requires the ability to recognize that "*Ein od milvado*", there is nothing but Hashem, and that beyond what we can see, every experience and encounter is Divinely planned.

The tzaddik sees this hinted in the *pasuk*, "*Im bechukosai teileichu*," "If you walk in my ways." The word "*chok*" is commonly understood to refer to mitzvos which are beyond reason. The Mei Hashiloach therefore explains that in the words "*Im bechukosai*", the Torah is asking that

we impress these *chukim* upon our hearts; that we simply recognize - beyond our reasoning and logic - that there is a Creator of the world and He is constantly

watching over us. This is what enables us "*teileichu*", to walk, to constantly progress in our avodas Hashem. Without putting in the effort to develop this fundamental quality, our experience of Yiddishkeit can become stagnant and lackluster. It is only when we can perceive Hashem's guiding hand and His constant vigilance over us that we can truly grow, realizing our potential to the fullest.

While faith in Hashem is always praiseworthy, attaining the ability to tap into *emunah* even while experiencing situations that are beyond our understanding will tremendously reinforce our recognition of Hashem's presence in our lives. This is why the concept of *emunah peshuta* is mentioned countless times throughout the writings of the tzaddikim. In order to continue growing and constantly develop our own unique relationship with Hashem, we must shed the pride that so often clouds our vision, foregoing our own simple understanding and opening up to the super-rational reality of the Creator. Each step taken towards developing this understanding will propel us to the greatest of heights, enabling us to experience incredible closeness with our Father in heaven. 🕎

This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press)

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

RAV AVRAHAM YIZTCHAK HaKohen Kook zy"ta was well-known for his love for all Jews, even those far removed from Torah and mitzvos. When asked why he expressed such profuse love for Jews distant from the ideals of Torah, he would respond, "Better I should err on the side of baseless love, than I should err on the side of baseless hatred."

There are many stories about Rav Kook's *ahavas Yisrael* which extended even to those who were intensely antagonistic to his ways and beliefs.

One time, Rav Kook was publicly humiliated by a group of *kanoyim* who drenched him with sewer water as he walked the streets of Yerushalayim. The entire city was in an uproar over this insolent act. How could anyone do such a thing?

When they heard about the shameful episode, the legal counsel of the British Mandate advised Rav Kook to press charges against the hooligans, promising that they would be promptly deported from the country. They were astounded by the Chief Rabbi's response.

"I have no interest in court cases." Rav Kook exclaimed. "Despite what they did to me, I love them. I am ready to kiss them, so great is my love! My heart burns with love for every Jew."

Let's spend a few moments this Shabbos pondering those words, "Better I should err on the side of baseless love, than I should err on the side of baseless hatred." May we do our part to increase unity among our holy nation by looking past the external behavior and actions of our brethren to find the shining spark of holiness within. 🕎

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
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