



By Rabbi Yaakov Deutscher

Giving and Getting

“And these are the offspring of Yitzchok son of Avraham- Avraham begot Yitzchok.” (Bereishis 25:19)

There is a well known *medrash* cited by Rashi which explains why the *pasuk* here reiterates that Avraham fathered Yitzchok. In order to disprove the scoffers who would insist that Avimelech was the true father of Yitzchok, and not Avraham, Hashem miraculously made Yitzchok’s features undeniably similar to Avraham. Thus, even the biggest cynics wouldn’t dare spread rumors regarding Yitzchok’s pedigree. This is why the *pasuk* states again, “Avraham begot Yitzchok.” The unmistakable similarity between father and son crushed any notion that Avraham was not the father of Yitzchok.

There are many people that are of the belief that events taking place in this world are governed by *teva*, nature. We, however, are steadfast in our belief that this idea is incorrect. It is Hashem who governs the world from both a micro and a macro level, and it is He who provides a constant flow of remarkable hidden miracles, day-in and day-out. One may question: why does Hashem govern the world so inconspicuously? Wouldn’t it be more logical to be able to see firsthand the amazing wonders performed by Hashem? This would ensure complete recognition that He is the Master of the Universe. The answer in simple terms is that Hashem gives us the choice to recognize Him, and to ultimately serve Him. Making the decision to serve Hashem on our own enables us to earn reward in the World to Come.

Based on this introduction, we can see why Hashem only creates open miracles when deemed absolutely necessary, such as the miracles of the ten plagues and the splitting of the Red Sea. If so, why did Hashem choose here to miraculously make Avraham and Yitzchok appear identical? He could have simply made Sarah expectant either long before or long after the incident with Avimelech. This would leave little room for skepticism over who fathered Yitzchok?

Rav Moshe Wolfson, *shlita*, points out the following: Rashi in *parshas Vayeira (Bereishis 21:1)* explains that

because Avraham prayed on Avimelech’s behalf to be cured, he (Avraham) was blessed and merited to have a child even before Avimelech was cured. That’s why there is juxtaposition between the *parsha* of Avraham praying for Avimelech and of Sarah giving birth to Yitzchok. For in the previous section it is said: “Avraham prayed... and they were relieved...” Then it says “And Hashem had [already] remembered Sarah”- implying that Hashem had filled Sarah’s need before He healed Avimelech. We learn from here if someone prays for mercy on behalf of another when he himself needs a similar thing, he is answered first (*Bava Kamma 92a*). Hashem felt that it was vital to demonstrate through Avraham the importance of caring for someone else’s hardships. He therefore purposely arranged for the episode with Avimelech and the impregnation of Sarah to coincide with one another. Once Avraham showed kindness and prayed for Avimelech, Hashem immediately allowed for Sarah to conceive. Even though Hashem knew that He would have to deviate from His normal governing practices and create an open miracle to disprove any scoffers, He nevertheless viewed this lesson as one of utmost significance.

Now we can understand why the mentioning of Yitzchok’s lineage is brought in this week’s *parsha*, even though it would seem more appropriate to be written in *parshas Vayeira*, the *parsha* that discusses his birth. After learning from his father about praying for other’s in pain and the reward that ensues, Yitzchok knew that the best way to get Hashem to heed his prayers was to *daven* for someone else who was in a similar predicament. This would ensure that his prayers would be answered first. Yitzchok therefore chose to pray on behalf of his wife Rivkah, as the *pasuk* says, “Yitzchok entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren.” Yitzchok didn’t *daven* for himself rather he *davened* for his wife instead! The *pasuk* then says, “Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him [Yitzchok], and his wife Rivkah conceived.” Hashem responded to Yitzchok’s prayers first because of the selflessness he showed by praying for his wife instead of himself.



Question Corner – By the Kollel Rabbis

The Torah tells us that Yaakov bought the birthright from Esav with the stew he had prepared for his father Yitzchok. If Yaakov was still living at home then the stew presumably belonged to Yitzchok. How then was Yaakov able to buy the birthright with something that did not belong to him?

Kollel News

1. This Shabbos at the Kollel: Parshas Toldos Shabbos Mevarchim

Thursday, November 24:
No Gemarah Yoma Shiur Tonight

9:00 - 10:00 p.m.:
Rabbi Frand's Weekly Parsha Shiur
9:00-10:00 p.m.: Kollel Erev

10:00 p.m.: *Maariv*
Friday, November 25:

8:25-8:50 a.m.:
Rabbi Prupas's Chumash Shiur

4:20 p.m.: Candle Lighting
4:38 p.m.: *Shkiya*/Sunset

Shabbos, November 26:
8:15 a.m.: Shacharis
Chaburas Chacham Lev

8:47/ 9:23 a.m.: Latest Krias Shema
3:58 p.m.: Mincha

4:38 p.m.: *Shkiya*/Sunset
5:33 p.m.: Maariv

5:50 p.m.: 72 Minutes
6:30 p.m.: Masmid Program

This week's Masmid Program is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Evan and Ayala Aidman in honor of Aryeh Moshe completing Sefer Shmuel Aleph.

2. Special Opportunity for American Express Holders - Donate 25\$ Without it Costing you a Penny!!!! THIS MOTZAEI SHABBOS

Do you carry an Amex card? American Express is running a promotion, Small Business Saturday on November 26th for which they will credit your account with \$25 spent at a small business. As in the past, you can take advantage of this and donate \$25 to the Philadelphia Community Kollel without it costing you anything! You can call the Kollel office today and give us your credit card information and we will do the entry for you. Thank you for your support.

3. Philadelphia Community Kollel's Eleventh Annual Dinner

Please join us in "Uniting Through Torah" at the Philadelphia Community Kollel's Eleventh Annual Dinner to be held Sunday, January 8th, 2011 at the Lower Merion Synagogue. We feel privileged to honor a diverse array of community members who share the Kollel's ideal of real commitment to learning and teaching Torah.

Guests of Honor **Chavrusa of the Year Award**
Dr. Leon and Tova Rabbi Yaakov Deutscher
& Wertheimer Jonathan & Jed Zaslow

Please join us in paying tribute to our worthy honorees and to the Kollel's impact on our community by attending the upcoming dinner and by placing an ad in the dinner journal. Contact the Kollel at 610-668-9557 for an Ad and RSVP blank. May your support of Torah

learning give you the blessings of Torah.

4. Masmid Program The Masmid Program this Motzaei Shabbos, November 26th will be at 6:30 pm. **This week's Masmid Program is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Evan and Ayala Aidman in honor of Aryeh Moshe completing Sefer Shmuel Aleph.**
Mazel Tov to Tzvi Yitzchok Prupas on winning the prize at the Thanksgiving Masmid Program.

5. 8:00 Shachris this Sunday Because of Rosh Chodesh, Shachris will be at 8:00 am this Sunday. Breakfast this Sunday is sponsored by Rabbi and Mrs. Yirmiyohu and Liba Bauminger in honor of Rosh Chodesh!

6. Women's Rosh Chodesh Kislev Shiur THIS Monday You are invited to join us in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev to hear **Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld** speak on the topic: "**Holding a Candle to the Sun**" Unique insights to the lighting of the Menorah **THIS Monday evening, November 28, 2011 at 8:15 p.m.** At the home of Dr. Kineret Shakow: 409 Sycamore Avenue Merion Station, PA 19066

7. The CCHF presents: Rise and Shine *Wisdom, Inspiration, and Tips for rising above the challenges of your family, home, and life.* **December 17, 2011 8:15pm** At the Kollel **FOR WOMEN ONLY**

Community New

Bnos of Bala Cynwyd will iy"H meet this Shabbos, Parshas Toldos, November 26th, from 2:45pm - 3:45pm at LMS. Craft Program has begun for those who've registered! Also, Bnos Pre-Chanukah Carnival on Dec. 4, \$3 for current members, \$10 for non-members - spin art, moonbounce, prizes and more! If your daughter attends Bnos, please pay your yearly \$36 membership. Contact Meira Friedman for more info (610-617-9529).

Torah Youth will not meet this Shabbos.

Grades K-8th. If you would like to help sponsor a Shabbos or want more information contact Rabbi Ari Silver at 610-6686-6833 or SilverDollar@verizon.net

Mazel Tov To:

***Rabbi and Rebbetzin Levene** upon the recent bar mitzvah of their grandsons, Yerachmiel Friedman and Chaim Lauer!

***Dr. and Mrs. Jonathan and Ilana Gotfried** on the birth of a boy!

If you would like to receive Menucha Vesimcha by weekly email or to sponsor an issue of Menucha Vesimcha in someone's honor / memory, please contact the editor at: menuchavesimcha@verizon.net

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