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תורה תבלין

A Torah Taolin Publication

34 Mariner Way Monsey, NY 10952

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8:41 - זמן קריאת שמע/המ"א -

9:17 - זמן קריאת שמע/הגר"א -

10:06 - סוף זמן תפילה/להגר"א -

4:32 - שקיעת החמה שבת קודש -

5:22 - מוצש"ק צאת הכוכבים -

5:44 - צאה"כ / לבינו תם -

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מו"ד: שבת קודש
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17 חלקים

שבת קודש פרשת תולדות - כ"ט מרחשון תשע"ה

Shabbos Parshas Toldos - November 22, 2014

טוב התבלין

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד משמים בק"ק בית שמש

ואחרי כן יצא אחיו וידו אוחות בעקב עשו ויקרא שמו יעקב וגו' (כה-כו) - המשמעות ב'אחיות העקב'

תב רש"י, "ויקרא שמו יעקב - הקדוש ברוך הוא. דבר אחר, אביו קרא לו יעקב על שם אחיות העקב", ומבואר מדרבניו, שש משמעות ב'אחיות העקב', שהרי נקרא שמו של יעקב עליה, ויש להבין את משמעותה.

ויבואר, ע"פ מה שכתב ב**כ"ל יקר'** על הכתוב, "ואחרי כן יצא אחיו וידו אוחות בעקב עשו-כי יד ממשלתו לא יהיה לו מיד ביום היוולדו, כי אם בסוף בבואו בימים, כהוראת שם עקב המורה על הסוף, כך השלימות הנפשית נקנה ביותר בסוף ימי חלוו של האדם, כי 'סוף דבר הכול נשמע' (סוף מגילת קהלת) וזקני תלמידי חכמים מוסיפים חכמה (ע' בסוף מסכת קינים - 'רבי שמעון בן עקשיא אומר וכו', וזני תורה וכו' כל זמן שמזקינים דעתן מתיישבת עליה, שנאמר 'בישישים חכמה, ואורך ימים תבונה'"), אבל ביום היוולדו אין בו רושם כלל מן אותה שלימות הנפשית, וא"כ מוכרח הדבר לומר שאין שבר לצדיקים בעולם הזה, שהרי עיקר זמן קניית השלימות הוא בימי הזקנה בהיותו קרוב לשערי מוות, כי אז שכלו חולין ומתגבר, ואימתי יקבל שכרו, כי ימי הזקנה אינם מוכנים לקבלת השכר, כי כבר שכלו אצלו כל החמדות 'ותופר (-תתבטל) האבינו' (קהלת י"ב ה', וכתב רש"י "אבינוה - תאווה, כמו 'אלא אבינו' - 'תאבתי לישועתך'"), א"כ על כרחך אתה צריך לומר שיד השלימים אוחות בעקב עשו דהיינו סוף ממשלתו של עשו'.

וכן איתא במדרש (בראשית רבה ס"ג ט'), "הגמון אחד שאל לחד מן אילין דבית סלוני, אמר לו: מי תופס המלכות אחרינו, הביא נייר חלק וגטל קולמוס וכתב עליו 'ואחרי כן יצא אחיו וידו אוחות בעקב עשו'".

והוסיף **בשפתי כהן'** על הכתוב, "וזהו יושלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו" (ויש פרשת וישלח), אל תיקרי מלאכים אלא מלכים בלא אל"ף, 'לפניו' כלומר קודם לו, וכן הוא אומר 'ואלה המלכים אשר מלכו בארץ לפני מלך לפני לבני ישראל' (בראשית ל"ז ל"א), וכן אמר יעקב לעשו 'עבר נא אדוני לפני עבדו' (שם ל"ג י"ד), אתה יש לך אדונת בעולם הזה ואני בעברדות, עד אשר אבוא אל אדוני שעירה' (שם), עד שיעלו מושיעים בהר ציון לשפוט את הר עשו (ע' עובדיה א' כ"א), זהו 'שעירה', עד שם יש לך אדנות, זהו 'אל אדוני שעירה', ולכן יידו אוחות בעקב', לומר שאין לו שום אחיזה אלא לבסוף'.

וענינו זה נרמז בדברי הגמרא (שבת ע"ז), "מאי טעמא עיזי מסגן ברישא והדר אימי וכו', כברייתו של עולם, דברישא חשוכא והדר נהורא" (וסתם עיזים שחורות, סתם רחלות לבנות [נרש"ן]), ופירש **ב'חדושי חתם סופר'** (שם, ד"ה וגשה השעיר וכו'), "מאי טעמא עיזי' היינו עשו 'מסגן ברישא' ממעי אמו, 'והדר אימרי' זה יעקב שפורה" (ע' ירמיה נ' י"ז), וגם, 'עיזי' בני עשו 'מסגן ברישא' - 'היו צריה לראש' (נאכה א' ה') 'והדר' בעת הגאולה 'אימרי' ישראל כנ"ל, והשיב לו 'כברייתו של עולם, דברישא חשוכא והדר נהורא' וכו'".

מאת הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבעוביץ שליט"א ר"י שער השמים ירושלים עקב"ק

ויתרצצו הבנים בקרבה ותאמר אם כן למה זה אנכי ותלך לדרש את ה' וגו' (כה-כב) - כל דעביד רחמנא לטב עביד

פרש"י: ותאמר אם כן - גדול צער העבור: למה זה אנכי - מתאוה ומתפלת על הדין: ותלך לדרוש - לבית מדרשו של שם: לדרש את ה' - שיגיד לה מה תהא בסופה. הנה על פי ראייה שטחית נראה, כי כוונת רבקה בהליכתה לבית מדרשו של שם, היתה כדי לתנות על צערה, ולדרוש על מה ולמה סובלת היא מצער זה. אך לפי יש לתמוה, איך שייך כזאת, הרי רבקה אמנו מלבד גודל צדקותה וזתה גם לנבואה, כפי שאנו רואים (כו, יג) שאמרה ליעקב עלי קללתך בני, ומתרגם אנקלוס וז"ל: עלי אתאמר בנבואה דלא ייתון לוטיה עלך ברי, היינו שנתנבאה שלא יארע ליעקב מזה שום רעה, וכן רואים אנו בסוף פרשתן (כו, מב) שנתנבאה על נחמת עשיו בהדינת יעקב, כפי שמביא רש"י שם, ואם כן בודאי ידעה כי כל מה דעביד רחמנא לטב עביד, והאמינה שאם סיבב הקב"ה שתהיה לה צער, בהכרח שהיא לה לטובה, ואם כן לא שייך להעלות על הדעת כי צדיקתנו זו רצתה אדחת מרצון הבורא.

אך בדרך אפשר יש לומר, כי לא כוונה רבקה אמנו לדרוש על עצם הצער, אלא מכיון שידעה כי מדרך הטוב להטיב רצתה לדעת מהו הטוב המסתתר בצערה, וכל זה היתה כדי שתתרבה אצלה האהבה לכוראה המטיב עם בריותיו. ודבר זה נרמז בתיבות 'ותלך לדרוש את הויה', כי לא נאמר ותלך לדרוש על צערה, אלא לדרוש את הויה, והכוונה שרצתה לדעת מהו הרחמים הטמון בתוך צערה, כי כידוע שם הויה מורה על רחמים, וזה היתה תכלית הליכתה, ועל פי פירוש זה נוכל גם להבין מה שפירש רש"י בדי"ה לדרוש את ה', שיגיד לה מה תהא בסופה, ועל פי פשוטו של מקרא אין דבריו מובנים, שהרי על פי פשוטו רצתה לדעת סיבת צערה כהרה גם כן, ולא רק מה תהא בסופה? אך על פי האמור מובנים הדברים, כי מאדור שעדיין לא נתגלה תכלית הטוב הטמון בזה הצער, רצתה לדעת מה תהא בסופה, היינו מהו הטובה אשר תתגלה לאחר זמן. שהרי מאתו לא תצא הרעות, ואף אם נדמה לנו לעת עתה שהיא לדעה, הרי בסופו של דבר יתגלה לנו השתלשלות הטוב מזה הדבר. וזה מה שרצתה לדעת, מה תהא בסופה, איזה טובה תתגלה בעתיד מצער זה.

ונהנה רבקה אמנו ידעה בבירור כי מאתו לא תצא הרעות, ולא היתה זקוקה לצרף אמונתה הוכה ולכן העדיפה לתהות על הטוב המסתתר כדי לרבות אהבתה אל ה', אך לדורות מנסים אותנו על פי רוב בכמה וכמה נסיונות והסתרים, כדי לצרף אמונתנו. ולכן אף כשמתמודדים אנו בכמה וכמה קשיים, עלינו להחזיר האמונה בלבבינו, שכל מה דעביד רחמנא לטב עביד, ומאתו לא תצא הרעות, ושגם אלו הקשיים הם לטובתנו. ואם אכן יעמוד איתן באמונתו, יוכה לאחר זמן גלגול הטוב המסתתר באלו הקשיים, וכמובא באגרת הקודש להשכיחך בינה **לדה"ק בעל התניא זי"ע**.

ובאמת חיוב גמור הוא, דו"ל הגמרא (ברכות ס:) 'לעולם יאז אדם רגיל לומר כל דעביד רחמנא לטב עביד', ועיכ"כ מחייב להאמין בזה, עד שאמרו שם שמחייב לברך על הדעה כשם שמברך על הטובה, ודכוונה לקבלתה בשמחה. והיינו שתהיה אמונתו שהכל לטובה חזקה כ"כ, עד שמתמתה יוכה לשמחה, וזהו האות שאכן אמונתו חזקה.

נמשל: For many years, Esav fooled his father into thinking that he was righteous and attentive to *mitzvah* performance. He would ask halachic questions and maintain an image of a *Torah* scholar. But finally, when events led to Yaakov receiving the blessings instead of Esav, things now became clear to Yitzchok. He saw *Gehinnom* open underneath Esav;

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Keeping the Jewish Camp Holy (28) - "והיה מחניך קדוש"

The Modern Lavatory. In last week's issue, we began discussing the halachic laws involving a lavatory/bathroom, and concluded by mentioning that there might be certain applicable leniencies nowadays when, with modern plumbing, the waste is quickly washed away. Since this is relevant to many halachic cases we'll explain it in greater detail. The *Gemara* ⁽¹⁾ discusses a "Persian" toilet which was dug out in the ground like a slanted tunnel. The waste immediately moved away and because of this, it was not considered a "צית הכסא". One was even permitted to recite *Krias Shema* there as long as there was no lingering smell ⁽²⁾.

The **Chazon Ish ZT"l** ⁽³⁾ has a doubt about our lavatories today. On the one hand, they do seem to be quite similar to the Persian bathrooms. However, there is a slight difference. Here, the waste remains in the bowl till it is flushed away, while there, it immediately sloped away. **R' Moshe Feinstein ZT"l** ⁽⁴⁾ also concludes in doubt. Even though some are completely lenient, the conclusion of most *Poskim* (see **Shevet HaLevi 1:27**) is not to rely on this leniency alone, unless there is a great need. The reason why we wrote last week that one can rely on this not to wash his hands when just entering a modern lavatory, is because some hold

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

The *posuk* tells us that *Hashem* answered the *tefillah* of *Yitzchok* - 'וַיַּעֲנֵה לֹי'. Rashi explains the reason: "שאין דומה תפילת *Rivka* was the daughter of *Lavan Ha'arami* (trickster) and therefore, her *tefillos* were secondary to *Yitzchok's*. Isn't it ironic that after the difficult life Rivka endured in her father's home, becoming a *Tzadekes* and *Ba'alas Teshuva* on her own, her *tefillos* were not answered before *Yitzchok's*, who grew up in the home of the *Gadol Hador*?"

The *Seforim Hakedoshim* tell us that when a child davens and is in need of a *yeshua*, his father and grandfather are surely davening along with him. As a result, when Yitzchok was davening for a child, he wasn't davening alone - he had his father, *Avraham Avinu*, davening along with him that he and *Rivka* should bear a child. *Hashem* answered *Yitzchok's tefillah*, since two people, Avraham and Yitzchok, who were both *moser nefesh* for the *Ribono shel Olam*, were davening together for a *yeshuah*. Rivka was certainly on a high spiritual level, but her *tefillos* were not accompanied by anyone else's prayers.

We see from here that due to *Avraham's tefillah*, *Yitzchok* was able to have a child. Thus, the word "הוליד" rather than the more common "ולד" is fitting here, for instead of saying "*Avraham gave birth to Yitzchok*," the *posuk* denotes that Avraham made it possible (ל הפעיל) for Yitzchok to have a child later on. How amazing is it to recognize that when we daven to *Hashem* for *refiuos* and *yeshuos*, not only are we praying, but our *zaidas* and *elter-zaidas* (great-grandfathers) already in the next world are *melitzei yosher* and accompanying our *tefillos* as well! May *Hashem* answer all our *tefillos*.

A Wise Man would say:

"Laziness is nothing more than the habit of resting before you get tired."

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נתגבר ונתקדש לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם משה ב"ר אליעזר שלאסער ז"ל * תנצב"ה

he heard the harshness in his voice and the *chutzpah* in his words; he realized the evil of his older son who sold his birthright for a bowl of beans. Yitzchok was now convinced that Yaakov, the *Tzaddik*, was worthy of the blessings, and Esav, the wicked one, was not. "גם ברוך יהיה" - "*You will also be blessed*," was all he could offer Esav at that point!

הלכה למעשה

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

that even in an old-fashioned restroom, one is not required to wash his hands unless he actually does his needs there.

Washing Hands After Relieving Oneself. There is a clear obligation to wash one's hands after relieving oneself and to do it as quickly as possible ⁽⁵⁾. Most *Poskim* hold that pouring one time is enough, unlike the morning washing after sleep (*negel vasser*) that requires pouring three times on each hand ⁽⁶⁾. Also, one may wash directly from the faucet without using a cup. Some *Gedolim* had a custom to use a washing cup ⁽⁷⁾. If one is about to begin davening, it is highly preferable to wash with a cup because the independent obligation to wash before davening, should preferably be done like washing for bread, which is with a utensil ⁽⁸⁾. If one relieves himself not in a lavatory, and does not touch a usually covered part of the body, there is no obligation to wash his hands, but it is preferable to do so if he has water ⁽⁹⁾.

Washing Hands Inside the Lavatory. Ideally, the above-mentioned obligation to wash hands should be done outside the bathroom. If the only sink available is inside the bathroom, the *Minchas Yitzchok* ⁽¹⁰⁾ permits washing inside. R' Moshe says one should do so but not dry his hands till he leaves the bathroom ⁽¹¹⁾. If he can take a little water outside in a cup or in his cupped hands and wash outside, it is even better.

מחשבת הלב

(1) ברכות כו. (2) או"ח פגד (3) או"ח יוד (4) אג"מ אה"ע אקיד (5) או"ח ד"ה (6) מ"ב ד"ל: (7) עיין מנחת יצחק ה"צ (8) או"ח ד"ו (9) אור לציון ב' איד: (10) א"ס (11) אג"מ אה"ע איד

Mazel Tov to Yanky and Sara Eisenstein on the Aufruf and Marriage of their son Avrumi to Gitty Buchinger. May the young couple build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel

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מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויעתר יצחק לה' לנבא אשתו כי עקרה הוא ויעתר לו ה' ותהר רבקה אשתו וגו' (כה-כא)

Rosh Chodesh Kislev is the *yahrzeit* of **Chabad Shluchim Rabbi Gabi and Rivky Holtzberg HY”D**, who were murdered during the November 26, 2008 terror attacks at Nariman House in Mumbai, India. Everyone has heard amazing stories of the Holtzberg’s complete and utter self-sacrifice, day in and day out until their tragic murders. But even after their passing, their legend - and their blessing - lives on with the following story, told by their brother-in-law, Mordechai Kaler.

The Kalers were married in March 2005 (5765) and anticipated, as most young couples do, that fairly soon they would be expecting a child. However, it soon became apparent that their path to parenthood was not going as smooth as they had innocently imagined. After more than a year, they were diagnosed with “unexplained infertility.” To a young couple in their early twenties these words were quite scary. They traveled from doctor to doctor but were told the same thing after every visit, and every test led to more questions but never any answers. A few years passed and the pain of being childless became deeper and stronger. They tried fertility treatments but were unsuccessful and they finally decided that after such emotionally, physically and financially draining exercises in futility, they needed to take some time to recuperate before attempting anything else. With little choice, they began to come to terms with the brutal reality that they may never become parents.

Throughout this entire process there were always two people who knew exactly when, how and what to say to comfort them. Gabi and Rivky Holtzberg would speak to their brother and sister-in-law to offer encouragement at every turn. The Kalers always found it inspirational and uplifting to hear the amazing stories that would take place at the Chabad house in Mumbai. On 18 *Elul* 5768, Mordechai spoke to Gabi and informed him of their intention to take some time off from the fertility treatments. But Gabi was insistent. He spent close to an hour trying to convince the Kalers to do the exact opposite. He insisted they call *Bonei Olam*, an organization whose mission is to assist every Jewish couple overcome infertility and realize the dream of parenthood, and the Kalers finally relented. They told him they would call, and Gabi ended the call by blessing them with a *Gut Gebentched Yur*, assuring them that this coming year they will be blessed with a child.

As promised, the Kalers made the phone call to *Bonei Olam* and were quickly taken in. They will never forget the compassion with which the organization handled every aspect of their situation. They were set up with a great doctor and immediately began treatments again. The first few were unsuccessful and the doctor recommended a more invasive approach. The Kalers were despondent and hesitant to continue, but throughout the entire process, the Holtzbergs in Mumbai were constantly cheering them on and continuously advising them to carry on and never give up. And so, they pressed on.

The first of the invasive treatments was scheduled for November 26th, 2008. As they were driving to the appointment that afternoon, they received a call from a family member that something was happening in Mumbai and no one can get in touch with Gabi or Rivky. They debated whether to continue to the appointment or immediately turn around and head back, but after much deliberation, they decided to go to the appointment. It was not long after they left the doctor’s office when they heard of the terror attack in Mumbai and a day later, the horrifying news of Gabi and Rivky’s murder. They were devastated.

The turmoil and sadness that ensued is beyond description, but to put salt on the wound, when they returned home, they were notified that an additional round of treatment would be necessary. They almost gave up right then and there but after speaking with their case manager from *Bonei Olam*, he made them realize that it was Gabi and Rivky who pushed them this far and they cannot give up on account of what happened. As incredibly difficult as it was, they made another appointment for the final cycle of treatments. It took every ounce of faith and determination to go to the appointment.

And then, they got the call. “Congratulations! Your test came back positive! You are expecting!” It was absolutely unbelievable! Nine and a half months later, a baby girl was born - on 18 *Elul* 5769 - exactly one year to the day after Gabi Holtzberg had blessed them! May their holy and pure *neshamos* plead before the Almighty on behalf of all of *Klal Yisroel*.

משל למא הדבר דומה

ויהרר יצחק חרדה גדלה עד מאד ויאמר מי אפוא הוא הצד ציד ויבא לי ואכל מכל במרס תבוא ואברכהו גם ברוך יהיה (כו-ל)
משל: There was a well-known *Torah* personality living in Jerusalem, who would display some unusual tendencies and mannerisms while he davened. Although it was unclear if he was transgressing any *halachos*, a few people felt it was incorrect and wished to “come out” against this person in public. To this end, they approached **R’ Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ZT”L**, and asked him to sign a paper and be at the forefront of the opposition to this man and his prayers.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* listened to their complaint and said, “Do this. Pay careful attention to how this person conducts

himself when he *benches* (*Birchas Hamazon*), as well as with regard to how he performs other *mitzvos*.”

The petitioners did not understand and asked why this was important. R’ Shlomo Zalman answered, “We know the rule: ‘עבירה גוררת עבירה’ (one sin leads to another sin). Now, if it is true that this man is ‘sinning’ in the way he davens, then it must be that he is sinning in other areas of *mitzvah* performance as well. He will not be able to hide it. On the other hand, if he is righteous in all other areas, then obviously there is no real issue with the way he davens either!”

וירבו רעי גדר עם רעי יצחק לאמר לנו המים יקרא שם הבאר עשק כי התעשקו עמו (כו-כ)

The *Torah* devotes ample length discussing the three wells of *Yitzchok Avinu*, which were originally attributed to his father, *Avraham Avinu*, and after being sealed up by the *Pelishtim*, were later redug by his son, Yitzchok. The first letter of the name of each well - עשק, שטנה, רחובות - spell out the word “רשע” as well as the word “שער” (gate). The lesson to be derived from this is that when a Jew overcomes his *Yetzer Hara*, who urges him to sin and give in to his inner wickedness, he converts himself over from potentially being a “רשע” to entering a “שער” - a gateway to righteousness. As the *posuk* in *Tehillim* states: “זה השער לה” - “*This is the gate of Hashem through which only the Tzaddikim (righteous ones) may enter it.*”

Indeed, writes the **Slonimer Rebbe, R’ Avraham Weinberg ZT”L (Bais Avraham)**, the three wells represent the manner in which a Jew can progress in the service of *Hashem*. In the beginning the *Yetzer Hara* tries to overcome him and entice him with all kinds of arguments not to serve *Hashem*. Thus, the first well is called “עשק” - “*Contention,*” for the *Yetzer Hara* contends with him, in order to convince and restrain him from *Avodas Hashem*.

When a person rises to the test and overcomes these enticements, the *Yetzer Hara* does not give up, but rises again to oppose him and cause him to fail. This is done in order to weaken his hand in *Torah* and *mitzvos*. This is alluded to in the second well called “שטנה” - “*Opposition.*” But when he overcomes this challenge as well, then *Hashem* will shine upon him. “*And now Hashem has made room for us (רחובות) and we will be fruitful in the land.*”

Even though the wells that Avraham dug were closed up by the *Pelishtim*, the well of Yitzchok will always remain. Yitzchok’s wells were dug with extra exertions of his strength and whatever a Jew achieves in *Avodas Hashem* by exerting himself will remain forever like an iron wall.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ... דרגה יתירה * מסורת *

The obvious question on this *posuk* is, if we are discussing the children of Yitzchok, why does the *Torah* need to tell us that Avraham was Yitzchok’s father? Shouldn’t the *Torah* mention the children, rather than the father, of Yitzchok? **R’ Gamliel Rabinowitz Shlit’a** explains so beautifully that in order to be a successful parent, one must look back at the path his father paved, respect it and emulate it. He even puts it into the category of a *segulah*! If you want to have good children who follow in your path, then show your children how you, too, follow in the path your parents paved for you. Of course, every individual is unique and adds his own dimension to his *chinuch*, but a parent who demonstrates how he follows and respects the path of his ancestors, will enable his children to feel pride in their *mesorah*, and desire to further it. Although Yitzchok was a completely different personality and nature than his father Avraham, he still tried in every way possible to emulate *Avraham Avinu*.

The *middah* of Avraham is *Chessed* and Yitzchok is known for *Pachad*, literally translated as “fear.” What exactly was he afraid of? **Rabbi Frand Shlit’a** quotes in the name of **R’ Matisyahu Solomon Shlit’a** that Yitzchok was petrified of deviating from the *mesorah* he received from his father, even a miniscule amount! We see this from the fact that the *Torah* goes into great length about Yitzchok reopening the wells that Avraham had dug and renaming them the same names his father had. There aren’t too many stories about Yitzchok, but the *Torah* mentions the wells, says **Rabbeinu Bachaye ZT”L**, in order to teach us that to properly continue the chain of our *mesorah*, a Jew must respect, uphold and follow the path his father blazed before him.

וידר בו זקן יצחק ותכזהו עיניו מראות ויקרא את עשו בנו הגדול וכו' (כו-א)

The *Medrash* tells us: “*Before Avraham, old age is not found in the Torah, but of him it states: ‘Avraham was old.’ Before Yitzchok, suffering is not mentioned, but of him it says, ‘His eyes dimmed from sight.’ Before Yaakov, illness is not found, but of him it says, ‘Behold, your father is ill.’*” Indeed, the Patriarchs persuaded *Hashem*, for the sake of mankind, to give man “gifts” - old age, suffering and disease! We need to understand what moved them to ask for these three things.

R’ Zalman Sorotzkin ZT”L (Oznaim L’Torah) explains that Avraham’s kindness brought him to the highest spiritual degree; not only feeling a traveler’s physical suffering due to hunger and strain, but also his mental anguish when, among strangers, he does not receive the honor and respect he is used to at home. Avraham, on the other hand, honored everyone, even Arabs “*who worship the dust of their feet.*” Thus, Avraham recognized a unique problem: With everyone looking exactly the same, when fathers arrived somewhere with their sons, no one could tell whom to honor more. He, therefore, asked *Hashem* to crown fathers with old age.

Yitzchok, cultivated the fear of Divine retribution. On two occasions he shuddered with fear: when he was bound by the *Akeida* and feared lest the sacrifice be flawed, and again when Esav approached him for a blessing, and he saw *Gehinnom* open beneath him. It was he who feared to die without suffering, lest that invite a stricter punishment in the afterlife. Thus, he asked for suffering to purge his “sins.”

Yaakov saw that Avraham had produced a Yishmael, and Yitzchok, an Esav. Thus, he successfully devoted his whole life to educating his children in *Torah* and *mitzvos*. All the same, he feared that his sons might leave the correct path before his death. Knowing that children will always heed a father’s last request before death, he asked *Hashem* to inform mankind, through illness, that a person’s death is not far off, so that “*during two or three days of illness he can bring his children back to the right path.*” (*Medrash*)

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ואלה תולדות יצחק בן אברהם אברהם הוליד את יצחק (כו-יג)

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