

בעזרת ש"ת

# ***The Way of Emunah***

Collected Thoughts  
on the Weekly Parshah

From

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**Chayei Sarah**

Rabbi Rosenbaum's weekly shiurim in  
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## Chayei Sarah



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וַיְהִי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעָה שָׁנִים וּגּו' (כג, א)

And the life of Sarah was 100 years and 20 years and seven years... (23:1)

### She Always Felt Good:

Rashi states that the reason the word “years” was written after every digit is to tell us that every digit is to be expounded upon individually. When she was one 100 years old, she was like a 20-year-old regarding sin. Just as a 20-year-old has not sinned, because she is not liable to

punishment, so too when she was 100 years old, she was without sin. And when she was 20, she was like a seven-year-old in regards to beauty. Rashi then says: “The years of the life of Sarah: All of them were equally good.”

The Yesod Ha'avodah of Slonim zy"l (quoted in Sefer

Kisvei Ramam) explains Rashi's words by saying: **"It was always good for her."** Since she completely believed and trusted that everything Hashem does is for her benefit, she always felt good with whatever He caused to happen to her.

## **One Who Trusts in Hashem is Surrounded by Chesed:**

A certain individual once came to Rav Shlomo of Zhvil zy"va and tearfully told him that he worked in a factory where an announcement had recently been made that since there was an overload of work, everyone would have to work on Shabbos. Repeated pleas to the factory owner that he was *shomer Shabbos* and could not work on the holy day did not help. The

owner simply told him that if he did not want to work on Saturday, he should find another place to work. This worker told the Rebbe that his entire livelihood depended on this work, and if he had to leave this job, he would not have bread to eat.

Rav Shlomo said to him, "Tell me, how many people are there in the world?"

The man replied, "Several billion."

The Rebbe asked him, "Who is the one who provides for all of them? The Ribono Shel Olam! Do you believe that?"

He answered, "Yes, of course I believe that Hashem provides for all of His creations!"

Rabbi Shlomke continued to ask him, "And does everyone work in the same factory that

you work in?”

He answered, “No.”

The Rebbe said, “So you see that in order to make a living, you don’t have to work in this particular factory. Rather, there are many ways that Hashem can provide for you. Therefore, my advice is that you do what is incumbent on you, that you go to the factory owner and tell him that you will not work on Shabbos, and if he fires you, just trust in Hashem to provide for you.”

The man was very inspired by the Rebbe’s words. He went to his boss and said, “There’s nothing to talk about. I don’t work on Shabbos!”

The owner of the factory asked, “Yesterday, you were begging me to allow you to continue to work here but to take

off on Shabbos. How did you become so much braver today?”

He told him that he had gone to the Rebbe of Zhvil, who had explained that Hashem provides for every living creature, and one must trust in Him. And if one does so, he will be taken care of.

The owner then declared, “Aha, I am talking to a Jew who has faith! I will allow you to take off on Saturdays!”

### **Learning Emunah from the Tavernkeeper:**

It is related that the Baal Shem Tov Hakadosh zy”a once heard a Heavenly announcement telling him to travel to a village near Senitin, where he would learn a lesson about *emunah* and *bitachon* from the local

tavernkeeper. He immediately set out with his disciples to that village. When they arrived at the tavern, the tavernkeeper joyfully came out to meet them, invited them to spend the night as his guests, and set out a large repast for them.

The next morning after Shacharis, the *balhabos* prepared breakfast for them. Suddenly, a policeman entered with a large stick, approached the table, and struck it three times. With a frown on his face but without saying a word, he walked away. The *talmidim* were frightened by the policeman, but the tavernkeeper was calm, as if nothing had happened. The *talmidim* thought that perhaps the policeman was just drunk, and since the *balhabos* knew him, he wasn't afraid of him. However, the same thing

happened during lunch. The policeman again entered, hit the table three times, and left in anger.

The Besht asked the tavernkeeper to explain, and he said, "This is the policeman appointed by the village's *portitz*. His custom is that on the day when the rent is due, the policeman is sent three times to hit the table as a warning. If by the end of the day the rent is not brought to him, the *poritz* will come and take me and my household to prison."

The Baal Shem Tov heard his words, and said, "From the look on your face, it's clear that you're not worried. It seems that you already have the money for the rent. If so, why wait until evening? Why don't you go right away and pay him?"

The man replied. "I don't have a single gold coin in my hand. But I trust in Hashem that He will send me the money, just like He always does. So there's no reason to be afraid."

The policeman then came in again and struck the table angrily with his stick three times. The *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov were very surprised that the man still was not shaken or afraid. The Besht told them to recite *Birchas Hamazon*. The man then took off his weekday clothes, put on his Sabbath clothes, and left the house.

The Besht and his disciples walked behind him to see if Hashem would protect him. They saw him walking on the road leading to the *poritz's* palace, and suddenly they saw a carriage approaching from afar. A man emerged from the carriage

and spoke to the tavernkeeper. They argued for a little while until the man got back into the carriage, and the tavernkeeper continued on his way. After a short time, the carriage returned, and the man got out and talked to him again. This time, he gave the tavernkeeper a bundle of money. He took the money and went to the *poritz's* house.

The owner of the carriage arrived at the tavern and got out, and the Besht asked him what he had talked to the tavernkeeper about. He replied, "I also am a tavernkeeper. I own a tavern in a village not far from here. For several years now, I have been buying homemade whiskey from this man. I always pay him twenty *prutos* per liter. I have already tried several times to buy from others, and I have had no success.

“Since I saw that I had to buy from him, I hurried to get here early in the season so that he wouldn’t be bought out by others before I got here. When I met him, he demanded twice the usual amount. I did not agree at first. However, when I got back in the carriage, I was afraid that if I did not agree, he might sell it to others. So, I ran after him and gave him the amount he requested.”

The Besht turned to his students and said, “Hashem commanded us to come here to learn the power of *bitachon* of a simple Jew.”

### Seeing Only the Good:

My grandfather, Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Kretchnif zy”a (Sefer Toras Chaim V’Emunah) writes that the simple explanation of

Rashi’s statement that all of Sarah’s years were equally good is that she would always say, “*Kol mah d’avid rachaman l’tav avid*. Whatever Hashem does is good.” Additionally, this is a hint to the request we recite in the tefillah of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk zy”a that is traditionally recited before davening: “And put in our hearts for everyone to see the good qualities of their friends and not their deficiencies.” Accordingly, Rashi is saying that all of Sarah’s years were good in the sense that she always saw only the good in others.

### Emunah Peshutah as an Inheritance:

The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 58:1) states: “The days of Sarah were...This is as is



stated (Tehillim 36:18): ‘Hashem knows the days of *temimim* (simple people) and their portions shall be eternal.’ Just like they are complete, their portions are complete.”

Rav Meshulim Zushe of Chernobyl zy”a (Sefer Tzur Tzadik) explains that the main avodah of a person in this world is to work on having *emunah peshutah*, simple belief in Hashem, and to reach a level of *temimus*, serving Hashem unquestioningly. This is as Rashi states on the verse (Devarim 18:13): “*Tamim tihyeh im Hashem Elokecha*.” You shall be simple before Hashem. You should walk with him with *temimus* and not worry about the future.

He writes: “**One must review these words of Rashi many times.** This type of *emunah* is

desired by Hashem more than anything else.”

Chazal say (Nedarim 32A) that Avrohom recognized Hashem as the creator and ruler of the world when he was three years old. This means that he recognized this fact through his own deduction and investigation. At this point, he reached a level of recognizing Hashem based on his own intellect. Later, he rose to the level of believing in Him based on *emunah peshutah* and *temimus*, which was much more desired and beloved by Hashem. Regarding this, the *pasuk* states (Bereishis 15:7): “And he believed in Hashem and it was considered for him as righteousness.” Once Avrohom surpassed the level of believing in Hashem based on his own intellect and attained the level of *emunah peshutah*, Hashem

considered him to be truly righteous.

So too, when Klal Yisroel was about to receive the Torah, they first needed to reach a level of *emunah peshutah*. This is seen from the *pasuk* (Devarim 32:7): “*Am naval v’lo chacham*”, which Targum Onkelos translates to mean “a nation that accepted the Torah without wisdom. In other words, Klal Yisroel accepted the Torah with *temimus* – without using their own wisdom. In this way, we merited receiving the Torah.

It is not possible to pass on *emunah* that is reached through one’s own intellect and reasoning to the next generation. Since a person reaches this level through his own thought process and investigations, it is personal to himself and cannot be given over to one’s children. However,

*emunah peshutah* becomes instilled into a person’s nature and, therefore, can be passed down as an inheritance to one’s children. This is stated in the *pasuk* (Tehillim 19:10): “Fear of Hashem is pure, it lasts forever.” If one’s *yiras Hashem* is pure, meaning that it is a result of *emunah peshutah*, it is passed on to future generations and lasts eternally.

This explains the *pasuk* that is quoted by the Medrash: “Hashem knows the days of *temimim*.” This refers to *tzadikim* who follow Hashem with *temimus*. Their legacy will be passed down to future generations and will last forever. Their descendants will follow their ways and they too will serve Hashem with *emunah peshutah*.

וַתָּמָת שָׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע וְגו' וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם לִסְפֹּד לְשָׂרָה וּלְבַכָּתָהּ (כג, ב)

And Sarah died in Kiryas Arbah... and Avrohom came to eulogize Sarah and to cry for her. (23:2)

## Yitzchok Avinu Didn't Know About the Death:

Rabenu Bechaya asks why it says that only Avrohom eulogized and cried for Sarah. Why doesn't it mention that Yitzchok did the same, as he certainly also eulogized and cried for his mother?

To answer this question, Rabenu Bechaya suggests that it is possible that Yitzchok was unaware that his mother had died. Since she died as a result of hearing about the *akeidah*, it is possible that he was not told about her death.

He adds that it seems that Yitzchok was not present at all for his mother's death or burial, as he is not mentioned at all in

relation to those events. In fact, after the *akeidah* it only says that Avrohom returned to Eliezer and Yishmoel. It does not say that Yitzchok returned. This may be because Yitzchok stayed on Har Hamoriah for the next three years, until he turned 40-years-old and married Rivkah. Therefore, he was unaware of the events that took place regarding Sarah's death and burial.

We can learn an important lesson from this about how much one must be careful to avoid causing pain to a fellow Jew, as we see that Yitzchok was not informed about his mother's death so as not to cause him pain. He would have felt very bad if he had known that his

mother died as a result of something that had to do with him, so he was not informed about it. This teaches us that one must always try to never cause anguish to anyone.

### Lying to Revive a Jew's Spirit:

A young granddaughter of Rav Aharon of Chernobyl *zy"ra* once became very sick. Her mother immediately traveled to her father, Rav Aharon, to ask him to daven for her. She entered his room and began weeping as she asked for a *bracha* for her daughter.

Rav Aharon told her, "You have no reason to worry. You can go home now. She is already healed."

She was very happy to hear

this and set off for home right away. However, when she arrived in her city, she saw her family coming back from the *levaya*.

At the end of the *shiva*, she went back to her father and asked, "You knew the truth, so why did you deceive me?"

He answered, "**It is permitted to say a lie in order to revive the spirit of a Jew.**"

### Relating Good Tidings:

Rashi says that the story of Sarah's death is placed next to the story of Akeidas Yitzchok because when Sarah was informed that her son had almost been killed, her soul flew out of her body and she died. Rav Shimshon Pinkus *zt"l* (Sefer Tiferes Shimshon) writes that

this teaches us how careful one must be with every word he says.

The messenger who came to Sarah had good intentions. He wanted to inform her that her son was still alive. However, he started off by telling her about how he was about to be slaughtered and waited until the end to tell her that he was saved. Before she heard that her son had been saved, she got so shaken up that her *neshama* left her, and she died. Had he first told her that Yitzchok was alive, and then told her the sequence of events that occurred before he was saved, she would have been overjoyed and she would never have been in danger. But since he wasn't careful with how he phrased his words, he went from being a messenger of good news to becoming the cause of Sarah's death.

We should learn from this how careful we must be with our words. To give an example: Imagine if a man meets his friend and says, "Didn't your son go on a trip with his class today? I heard that the bus got into an accident... but all the boys were fine." For that one second after he mentioned the accident but before he said that all the boys were uninjured, he caused the father to worry. He may not have collapsed on the spot or had a heart attack, but he definitely did feel a pang of fear in his heart. This could have been avoided had the message been given in a more tactful way.

And if a piece of bad or scary news can have such a major effect on a person, it is certain that good news can lift a person's spirits greatly, even if it seems not all that important. For

example, if someone is a bit late coming home and he calls his family to let them know he's okay, he is lessening their worry and bringing them joy.

In this vein, we find that one who relays good news is called an “*ish tov*”, a good man, as Dovid Hamelech said (2 Shmuel 18:27): ““This is a good man, and he comes with good news.”

## One Who Gives Good News Receives a Spark from Eliyahu Hanavi:

Sefer Me'ohr Einayim

אֲדֹנִי שְׁמָעֵנִי אֶרֶץ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ מָה הוּא וְגו' (כג, טו)

My lord, listen to me; a land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is it between me and you? (23:15)

**Each One Loved  
Something Else:**

(Parshas Vayeitzei) writes that **one who relays good news is instilled with a “nitzutz” (Divine spark) of Eliyahu Hanavi**, as he is the “*mevasser tov*”, the one who relates all good news. He says that, therefore, if one has good news to say, he should run to say it because his Neshama feels that the spark of Eliyahu Hanavi wishes to come to him and it is eagerly waiting for it. **And once one possesses this spark of Eliyahu Hanavi, he can serve Hashem on a much higher level and he will find it much easier to connect to Him.**

ahuvim kamonu. (Between two beloved friends like us).”

Rashi states: “Bein shnei The Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz

zy”a (Likutei Imrei Chaim) asks why Efron called Avrohom his beloved friend when he had just met him. He answers that when Efron said that they were both “ahuvim”, he meant that they both loved something – but they loved two different things. He loved money, whereas Avrohom loved mitzvos.

וַיִּבְרַךְ הַגְּמָלִים וְגו' אֶל בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם לָעֵת עֶרֶב לָעֵת צֵאת הַשָּׂאֵבֶת (כד, יא)

And he made the camels kneel... beside the well of water, at evening time, at the time they draw water. (24:11)

## Praying to Sweeten Decrees:

Sefer Od Yosef Chai explains that when Eliezer arrived in Aram Naharim, he was faced with two conflicting “times”. It was “evening time”, which symbolizes *middas hadin*, and it was also “the time of drawing water”, which symbolizes *middas hachesed*. Since Eliezer

He was saying that for a man who loves money, 400 shekels is not a lot, as “one who loves money is never satisfied with (any amount of ) money” (Koheles 5:9). And for a man who loves mitzvos, money is not important. Therefore, he said that since they both didn’t place much value on the money, “What is it between me and you?”

was afraid of the *middas hadin*, he davened to Hashem and said, “Please cause to happen (*hakrei*) to me today and perform *chesed*.” The word “*hakrei*” connotes “*kerirus*”, cooling down. Thus, he was davening to cool down and sweeten the *middas hadin* and turn it into *middas hachesed* that is symbolized by the time of drawing water.

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' וְגו' אֲדֹנֵי אַבְרָהָם הִקְרָה נָא לִפְנֵי הַיּוֹם וַעֲשֵׂה חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנֵי  
אַבְרָהָם (כד, יב)

And he said, "Hashem, G-d of my master Avrohom, please cause to happen to me today, and perform kindness with my master, Avrohom." (24:12)

## Avrohom Avinu Knew he Needed Chasdei Hashem:

The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 60:2) states: "And do *chesed* with my master Avrohom: Everyone needs *chesed*. Even Avrohom – for whom *chesed* swept around the world in his merit – needed *chesed*..."

The Sefas Emes (5632) explains in the name of his grandfather, the Chidushei Harim zy"l, that the reason Eliezer didn't daven for Hashem to help him in the merit of his master, Avrohom, was because Avrohom taught everyone in his household that even a man like him needed Hashem's *chesed*. The Sefas Emes adds that even a person's good deeds and merits

are not really his own, as one has no power or ability to do anything without Hashem's help. Thus, even one's merits are a *chesed* from Hashem.

Thus, when the Medrash says that *chesed* swept around the world because of Avrohom, it doesn't mean that *chesed* was created because of his merits, as the only real source of *chesed* is Hashem. Rather, it means that Avrohom became a pipeline through which Hashem sent *chesed* down to this world.

**The Neshamos of  
Tzadikim are  
Reincarnated in those  
Who Follow Their Ways:**



Sefarim Hakedoshim tells us that when a *tzadik* excels in a specific mitzvah, and he wants to continue his good deeds even after his passing, his *neshama* returns to this world to help others who are engaged in this mitzvah. Accordingly, since Avrohom excelled in the *middah* of *chesed*, his *neshama* returns to this world as a *gilgal* within those who do *chesed*, in order to

help them perform their acts of kindness.

This is hinted to in the words: “*V’oseh chesed im adoni, Avrohom*”, which can be translated to mean: “Those who do *chesed* are with Avrohom.” **They are with Avrohom in the sense that his *neshama* is reincarnated within them to help them do *chesed*.**

וַתַּמְהֵר וַתַּעַר כֶּדֶה אֶל הַשִּׁקָּת וַתִּרְץ עוֹד אֶל הַבְּאֵר וּגו' וַתִּשָּׂאב לָכֵל גַּמְלִיּוֹ  
(כד, כ)

And she hastened, and she emptied her pitcher into the trough, and she ran again to the well... and she drew for all his camels. (24:2)

## Don't Give the Drink to an Animal:

Why does the *pasuk* tell us that she first emptied the pitcher before she drew more water for the camels?

Sefer Agra D'Kallah explains by citing the words of the Sefer

Hachasidim (Siman 888) that if one makes a *bracha* on a cup of water and, after he drinks, some water is left in the cup, he should not give it to a gentile or an animal. Since Hashem's name was recited over this water, it would be inappropriate to give it to an animal.

Eliezer certainly made a *bracha* on the water before drinking. Therefore, Rivkah knew that she couldn't give it to the donkeys. For this reason, she emptied the vessel and drew new water for the camels.

### **Spilling the Water for Eliezer's Honor:**

The Shlah Hakadosh writes that we can learn a lesson from Rivkah about how much one must respect all people.

After Eliezer and his men drank from the pitcher, a little bit of water remained. Rivkah didn't know what to do with it because if she gave it to the camels, it would be insulting to the men, as it would seem like she was giving equal value to them and the camels. If she would spill it out, it would also be an insult, as

it would seem like she was saying that water left in a pitcher they drank from is garbage. Therefore, she ran towards the well and dropped the pitcher, making it look like she spilled the rest of the water accidentally and had to draw more. This left the men with their honor and avoided insulting them.

### **Taking Care With Kovod Habriyus:**

Harav Avrohom Genichovsky *zt"l*, Rosh Yeshivas Tchebin, was known for the tremendous care he took to honor all people and to never cause anyone even a bit of embarrassment. He once accompanied a bochur who had an appointment with a psychiatrist. In the waiting room, he met a Yid that he knew. It goes without saying that the man

didn't want anyone to see him there. Without missing a beat, Rav Avrohom ran over to the man and tearfully said to him, "Please don't tell anyone that you saw me coming here for my appointment..."

וְה' בֵּרַךְ אֶת אֲדֹנָי מְאֹד וַיִּגְדַּל וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ צֹאן וּבָקָר וּגְו' (כד, לה)

And Hashem blessed my master very much and he became great, and He gave him sheep and cattle... (24:35)

## Hashem Blessed Him With the Middah of Anavah:

The Bais Avrohom of Slonim zy" a translates the *pasuk* as saying that "Hashem blessed Avrohom *with me'od*." He explains this to mean that He blessed him with the *middah* of "*me'od me'od havei shafal ruach* (Avos 4:4)." Be very, very lowly of spirit. "And he became great" in the merit of this humility.

It then says that "Avrohom gave everything that was to him (*lo*) to Yitzchok." The Bais Avrohom notes that it doesn't

say that he gave everything he had to Yitzchok. Rather, it says he gave "everything that was to him" to Yitzchok. He translates this to mean that he gave his "*lo*" – his nothingness – to Yitzchok, meaning that he passed his trait of humility along to him.

He goes on to quote an explanation from the Kozhnitzer Rebbe zy" a on the *pasuk* in Tehillim (138:6) "For Hashem is high but He sees the lowly, and He chastises the haughty from afar." Hashem is very lofty, and only those who consider themselves lowly are able to

connect to him and “see” Him. One who is haughty, however, cannot see Him for up close. He can only view Him from a distance.

וַיֵּצֵחֶק בָּא וּגו' בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב (כד, סב)

And Yitzchok came... from B'er Lachai Ro'i, and he dwelt in the land of the south.  
(24:62)

## Recognizing Hashem's Guidance Creates Simcha:

Rav Henoch of Alexander zy”a (Sefer Chashbah L'Tova) explains this *pasuk* by saying that it is known that a person who recognizes that Hashem is always overseeing whatever he does will naturally be happy.

Thus, the *pasuk* is saying: “V'Yitzchok bah.” Happiness comes to a person. (The word “Yitzchok” represents happiness and laughter as is seen from Bereishis 21:6.) Where does this happiness come from? From “Be'er Lachai Ro'i.” A person

attains this joy when he recognizes that Hashem is watching him. (The word “ro'i” indicates “watching”.) Even if a person “dwell in the land of the *negev*”, i.e., a dry and desolate place, and he possesses nothing, Hashem is still always overseeing him.

When one knows this, he will be happy.









בס"ד

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אשריר בעולם הזה וטוב לך לעולם הבא