

two hundreds in a row, I'm getting a real drum set!" shouted Arthur.

"When I finish piano lessons, I'm getting the latest computer!" exclaimed Johnny. And so it went. Each child announced his goal and the prize that awaited him upon accomplishment.

Finally Billy swaggered up to the front of the class. "If I write my uncle, I'm gonna get a scooter." He quickly continued, "but that's nothing! 'Cause when my daddy dies, I'm getting a Harley-Davidson motorcycle!"

Passions overrule sanity. They even overtake years of love and commitment. When one is enraged, he can turn against his best friend, his closest ally, and even his own parents! Esav, who spent his first 63 years in undying adulation of his father, changed his focus in a burst of emotion. Now, instead of worrying about his father's fare, he awaited the day of his farewell. All in anticipation of the revenge he would take on Ya'akov.

When passions perverse our priorities, and obsessions skew our vision, friends become foes and alliance becomes defiance. In the quest for paranoiac revenge, everyone is an enemy, even your own parents. But mostly your own self. (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)

### Keys to Salvation

In the olden days when people were taken captive, they were sometimes put in pits in the ground, from which they could not escape. In some respects, we are in a similar situation. We're locked in this World like in a pit, and nobody can approach us to help or to harm us other than the Master of the World.

When we are stuck in a situation, the best weapon we possess is prayer. Our prayers are an acknowledgement that only Hashem holds our Keys to Salvation. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

### Mission Accomplished

Reb Zushe had a burning desire to fulfill the *misvah* of *sisit* with a woolen garment, the preferable way. Woolen fabric, however, was way beyond the means of a pauper like him. What to do? Reb Zushe began saving his kopeks. Year after year, he scrimped and saved. He always lived frugally, but now, he deprived himself of everything possible, so as to save money for his coveted pair of *sisit*.

After many years, Reb Zushe finally had the required amount. In great excitement, he summoned his *shamash*, gave him the money, and sent him to the market to purchase the fabric. Reb Zushe then had him ask the tailor if he could make the *sisit* in Reb Zushe's house instead of in his shop, so that Reb Zushe could supervise the holy task. The tailor agreed and carefully laid out the material on the *sadik's* table. Reb Zushe, trembling with excitement, watched as the tailor folded the material once, and then another time. He then took his scissors and proceeded to cut a hole in the corner for the head. Slowly he unfolded the material – and then turned white! By mistake, he had made two holes instead of one!

The tailor was mortified! What had he done?! The garment was ruined, totally worthless...Reb Zushe was horrified! All his years of scrimping and saving for nothing!

The tailor, shaking like a leaf, hardly dared to look at Reb Zushe's face. What would he do to him? But Reb Zushe was silent, lost in thought. After what seemed like an eternity, Reb Zushe said kindly, "Thank you for helping me fulfill my *misvah*; you can go home now."

"What?" exclaimed the tailor. "I helped you fulfill the *misvah*? I ruined it for you!"

"Let me explain," said the *saddik* gently. "For years I thought I was struggling to fulfill the *misvah* of *sisit*. Now I see that all the effort was really to fulfill the *misvah* of controlling my anger. Thank you for helping me."

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִי"ה

בס"ד

## Congregation Magen Abraham

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SHABBAT TOLEDOT ☆ עֵצַת תּוֹלְדוֹת

Haftarah: Malachi 1:1-2:7

**NOVEMBER 5-6 2 KISLEV 5782**

Shaharit: 6:30, 6:45, 8:00, 8:10, 9:15 am

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 5:15 pm Upper Midrash Morning Shema by: 9:29 am

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 5:20 pm Main Shul Shabbat Class: 4:05 pm

Candlelighting: 5:30 pm

Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 5:05 pm

Evening Shema after: 6:28 pm

Shabbat Ends: 6:27 pm (R"Y 6:59 pm)

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Sunday Minhah: 4:25 pm

This bulletin is dedicated by Charlie & Lauren Dadoun  
in memory of Haim Shimon ben Aida לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים שְׁמֵעוֹן בֶּן אֵידָה

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Eli Levy by his children  
לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת אֵלִיהוּ בֶּן סַנְבּוֹל

**Remember to move your clocks back one hour on Saturday night.**

**Mabrook to Jack & Raquel Alboucai on the birth of a baby girl. Mabrook to the grandparents, Albert & Sally Alboucai.**

**Condolences to Allan Heiney on the passing of his wife, Maureen. Condolences to her sister, Debbie Matalon.**

**Condolences to Eddie Levy on the passing of his father, Eli Levy.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

”וַיִּנְאֶהָב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִיד בְּפִיו”

“Yitzhak loved Esav for trapping was in his mouth.” (Bereshheet 25:28)

I recently saw a great editorial that I would like to share with you. Durin World War II, a community activist in New York expended enormous effort to send matzahs to non-religious Jewish soldiers in the American army. After Pesah, he was devastated to learn that some of them ate bread along with the matzahs. He came to Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel and poured out his heart.

The Rabbi assured him that his efforts were not in vain. “Every bite of matzah meant that they ate one less bite of *hametz*,” the Rabbi explained.

On a similar note, a *shomer Shabbat* doctor once posed a question to Harav Dovid Feinstein zt”l. If an emergency call involving life endangerment came in on Shabbat,

should he take the call himself or allow his irreligious partner to do so? The Rabbi answered that he should have his partner do so – and gave an illuminating explanation. During the time that the irreligious doctor would be dealing with the emergency call, he would be doing something permissible, thus saving him during those few minutes from being *mehalel Shabbat*.

We often have an all-or-nothing approach to both our own service of Hashem, and especially that of others. As these anecdotes illustrate, this is a grave error. Not only is every *misvah* a tremendous accomplishment, every wrongdoing that is avoided is an achievement in and of itself, even if the individual continues to commit other misdeeds.

We have no inkling of the greatness of the *Abot*, nor can we possibly fathom their ways. But we can – and must – learn crucial and practical lessons from the teachings of the various commentaries that help explain these *parashiyot*.

The Torah informs us that “Yitzhak loved Esav for trapping was in his mouth, but Ribkah loved Ya’akob.” Our Sages (*Beresheet Rabbah*) teach that this means that Esav knew how to ensnare and deceive his father, and used his mouth to do so. Through asking such questions as, “How do we tithe salt and straw?” he gave the impression of being meticulous in keeping *misvot*, while in reality he lived a very different type of life.

It would seem perplexing that Esav, who was engaged in perpetual acts of evil, was able to deceive Yitzhak *Abinu*, the paradigm of *abodat Hashem*.

The *Ben Ish Hai* says that in reality Yitzhak was well aware of what Esav was all about. Yet precisely because he sought to deceive him, Yitzhak chose to show him love. For as long as Esav thought he was fooling his father, he refrained from publicly committing sins. Despite all the evil acts that Esav was performing in secret, Yitzhak wanted to at least prevent Esav from committing public sins.

“Rebbi used to say, ‘Be as scrupulous in performing a “minor” *misvah* as in a “major” one, for you do not know the reward given for the respective *misvot*’” (*Abot* 2:1).

Think big. There is no such thing as a small *misvah*, and every misdeed not committed is a significant achievement.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

## Don't Take No for an Answer

In this week's *perashah*, the Torah says that Yitzhak was forty years old when he married Ribkah. Ribkah *Imenu* was barren, and Yitzhak prayed to Hashem that his wife should be able to have children. The expression the Torah uses to express the nature of Yitzhak's prayer is “*Va'ye'etar Yitzhak l'Hashem...*” [Yitzhak entreated Hashem]. *Rashi* explains this to be “*hirba v'hiftzir b'tefillah*” [he importuned much through prayer]. This means, not only did Yitzhak pray for Ribkah, but he was persistent in his davening. *L'haftzir* means to persist and to do something over and over again.

Rav Shimshon Pincus, z"l, notes that the *Talmud* in fact comments (*Berachot* 32b) “If a person sees that his prayers are not being accepted, he should repeat them, as it is written ‘Hope to Hashem, strengthen yourself and He will give you courage, and hope to Hashem’” (*Tehillim* 27:14). This in fact is what Yitzhak did here.

However, we must ask, why is it like that? For example, if someone asks to borrow your car and for whatever reason you decline to lend your car, it is certainly not advisable to return ten minutes later and ask once again “Can I borrow your car?” It is not advisable to go back even the next day and say “Can I borrow your car?” Being a nudge is not the way to get somebody to lend you his car, after he has already refused to lend it to you.

When someone turns you down, perhaps you might ask a second time but not “*hiftzir*” – not asking over and over again. It is not wise or polite. Yet, that *pasuk* teaches regarding the Master of the World “*Kaveh el Hashem*” (express hope to G-d through

prayer) and if you are not answered then the solution is “*v'Kaveh el Hashem*” (once again pray to the Almighty). This is what Yitzhak did. He prayed and prayed. This is what *Rashi* is teaching us with the words “*hirba v'hiftzir b'tefillah*”. So why is there such a difference between the way we should ask G-d and the way we should ask man?

The answer is very simple and very fundamental. When we ask someone to lend us his car or do some kind of favor for us and he declines, the whole issue is that we want the car or the money or the favor – some specific item that the other person does not want to give to us or will not do for us. Period. We received our answer. Either he cannot or he does not want to satisfy the request and there is no point arguing about it.

Obviously, the *Ribono shel Olam* can do anything. The *Ribono shel Olam* is not saying “no” because He is not capable of granting the request. The reason He wants us sometimes to pray over and over again is because He wants the relationship. He wants us to ask (sometimes multiple times) because He wants us to have a *shaychus* with Him.

The *Talmud* says that the *Ribono shel Olam* desires (*mit'aveh*) the prayers of the righteous. Our tendency is that if we have everything, we forget Hashem. When things are going well, He is not so much a part of our lives. When things are not going well, we all become a little more “religious” and we all pray a little more. This is what He wants – He wants that we should involve Him in our lives.

By human beings, if you receive a “no” once, and certainly, if you receive a “no” twice, the prudent course is to stay away. It is just the opposite by the Master of the Universe: *Kaveh el Hashem, chazak v'ametz libecha, v'kaveh el Hashem* (pray to G-d; strengthen your heart; and then, if necessary, keep praying further). (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

## Death Wish

Esav. We know him as the hunter, the ruthless marauder, murderer of Nimrod and stalker of Ya'akob. And yet, he had some saving grace. He is even considered a paradigm of virtuous character at least in one aspect of his life - honoring parents. The Torah tells us that Esav respected his father and served him faithfully. In fact, the *Midrash* and *Zohar* talk favorably about the power of Esav's *kibud ab*, honor of his father. They even deem it greater than that of his brother Ya'akob's. Even when Esav found out that his brother, Ya'akob beat him to the blessings, he did not yell at his father, in the method of modern filial impugnation, “How did you let him do that?!” All he did was “cry out an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me too, Father!’”

Yitzhak finds some remaining blessing to bestow upon his older son, but the grudge does not evaporate. What troubles me is not the anger of defeat or the desire for revenge, rather the way Esav expressed it. “Now Esav harbored hatred toward Ya'akob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esav thought, ‘May the days of mourning for my father draw near, then I will kill my brother Yaakob.’” How did the love for a father turn into the eager anticipation of his death?

The seventh grade class of the posh Harrington Boy's School was teeming with excitement. The winter had begun, and they were rapidly approaching the beginning of the holiday season. The children had been talking about their wishes and expectations for holiday presents and were telling the class what they were going to get.

Johnny had been promised that if he finished his piano lessons, he'd get a new computer. Arthur had asked for a real drum set and was promised it on the condition he gets grades of 100 on two consecutive math tests.

Billy had not been so lucky. He had begged his dad for a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, to which his father replied, “Over my dead body!” He settled. If he would write a weekly letter to his uncle in Wichita, he would get a motorized scooter.

The day came and all the kids shared their expectations with their peers. “When I get