

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON CHAYEI SARA - 5758

B'S'D'

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DRASHA CHAYEI SORA TAKE MY MONEY, PLEASE!

The stories of Sefer Braishis are the guideposts of morality for the Jewish nation. They teach us ethics and guide our character. Sometimes we can even apply their lessons to teach us even the simple and practical ways of the world. This week we can even learn a little business acumen from our forefather, Avraham. In this week's portion, Avraham sets out to find a burial site for his wife, Sora. He approaches the children of Ches and asks to meet Ephron, who sanctimoniously offers any plot of land and benevolently offers it for nothing. Avraham does not jump at the offer, but immediately declares that he is ready to pay top dollar: in fact, even before Ephron uses the words, "behold I have given it to you," Avraham responds, "I have given you the money! Take it from me! And now allow me to bury my dead." Then, in a quick turnabout, Ephron announces an exorbitant price which Avraham, without bargaining or negotiating, pays immediately.

The entire transaction is strange. Despite Ephron's generous overtures, it seems that Avraham is throwing the money at him in an effort to consummate the deal. And the minute a price is mentioned, exorbitant as it may be, Avraham pays it without further question. All it seems is that he wanted to close the deal and leave. Why?

Rabbi Yaakov Horowitz, the Bostoner Rebbe of Lawrence, NY once told me this wonderful anecdote: The Ponovezer Rav, Rabbi Yosef Kahanemen zt"l, was one of the foremost builders of Torah in the post-war era. He was also a remarkable fund-raiser. Once he was welcomed into the home of a wealthy individual who was more interested in discussing Torah with him than giving money to the Ponovezer Yeshiva. Every time the Rav would talk about the donating for the construction of the new building, the man would begin to expound on a different Torah topic. Finally, Rav Kahaneman told him the following story: A woman in Poland had a daughter who was well past her prime. The matchmaker suggested that she alter her passport and claim she was much younger than her true age. He explained that he knew a Polish passport official, who, for the right price, could make her any age she would like. The official met the woman and then looked at the girl. "Oh, this is not a major problem. I am sure that there must have been an error in processing the original document. Of course, we can rectify this most egregious error. In fact, for a small service fee of 500 zloty I can take seven years off the date on her birth certificate, and we can have her at 21 years old!" Despite the steep service charge, the mother heartily agreed and quickly took the money from her purse. Feeling that there were many more zloty from where the first 500 came from the officer held up his hand. "You know what," he smiled devilishly, "maybe there was a bigger error than we actually had thought! Actually, for 700 zloty I could make her 20 years old!" Reluctantly, the mother agreed and went to her purse for more zloty. At that point, the officer began to get quite greedy. "You know, he said, for an additional 300 zloty, I could even have her at 18!" The mother became very nervous. Quickly she handed over the 700 zloty and yelled, "No, thank you. 20 years old is fine!" She grabbed her daughter. "Quick," she shouted, "let's get out of here! Soon we will be left with no more zloty and no more years!" The Rav's message struck its mark. The man stopped his Torah-filled filibuster and handed over a sizable check.

Avraham knew his negotiating partner well. He understood that the longer Ephron would wait, the more time Sora would lie in state, and the more expensive the transaction would become. As soon as he heard the false graciousness of Ephron, Avraham immediately told him that he would pay

full price - on one condition. Take the money and give me the plot. He understood when it was time to do what had to be done and move on. He was not interested in prolonging negotiations that would only leave him without money and perhaps without land. Often it is worthwhile to take a hit and leave, because the pain of the moment is far less than the agony of insincerity.

Dedicated to our son Roy Zeev Abraham in honor of his Bar Mitzvah. May he continue the cherished tradition that has been handed down to us by our parents, parents' parents' all the way back to the patriarchs. By Mr. and Mrs. David Abraham (C) 1997 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Yeshiva of South Shore <http://www.yoss.org/> - [Ateres@pppmail.nysr.net](mailto:Ateres@pppmail.nysr.net) 516-328-2490 Fax 516-328-2553 Drasha web site: <http://www.torah.org/learning/drasha> Get Drasha Unplugged and in Print! Parsha Parables

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"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Chayei Sarah

Because Avraham Had a Hard Day, Efron Should Suffer?

Rabbeinu Yona [Avot 5:3] discusses the 10 tests with which G-d tested Avraham. Most Rishonim learn that the tenth and final test was the Akeidas Yitzchak at the end of last week's parsha. However Rabbeinu Yona learns that the tenth and final test was the trouble Avraham had in purchasing a grave for his wife Sarah. Avraham came back from the Akeida, only to find his wife deceased. Now Avraham must look for a grave. After having thought that he was the legitimate heir of Eretz Yisrael, rather than just burying her, he has to get into a dialogue with Efron and has to purchase a burial plot at an exorbitant price. This, says Rabbeinu Yona, was the tenth and final test referred to by the Mishneh in Avot. This Rabbeinu Yona is very difficult to understand. Granted it was upsetting and granted it was trying to have this aggravation with the burial, but that this should be counted even greater than the test of the Akeida - the willingness to sacrifice one's own son - is difficult to understand. Rav Dessler, in the latest volume of Michtav M'Eliahu, explains that this was the hardest test because it demonstrates two of the greatest aspects of Avraham's personality.

There were two factors that came into play here. The confluence of these two factors turned the buying of the burial plot into a super human experience. First of all, let us picture for ourselves, under normal circumstances, dealing with this person named Efron. What type of person is Efron? How would we relate to an Efron? Rav Dessler doesn't say this, but what I would suggest is the following: Think of a \_typical\_ used car salesman. He epitomizes the worst type of merchant one has to negotiate with. He is willing to sell the Brooklyn Bridge. He tries to jack up the price, to steer customers to more expensive models, anything to take advantage. The customer knows that the salesman is trying to 'rip him off'.

How do we deal with people who are trying to rip us off? The immediate response is - he is trying to rip ME off, I am going to rip HIM off. Our whole conduct with such an individual is not one of respect (menschlich). He's not being 'menschlich' with me - why should I be 'menschlich' with him? This is a prime example of telling ourselves that we don't have to act like a prince, because we are not dealing with a prince. We are dealing with someone who is perhaps just above a thief. How does one act with such a person? That is the type of person who Avraham is dealing with here. Let us examine another aspect of the situation: How do we act when we are under stress? We all have different gradations of stress. I was recently in the supermarket. There was a person who was bagging my groceries. I made what I thought was a minimal request of not overloading the bag to the extent that it could give a person a hernia. I asked this in what I thought was the nicest fashion. The fellow barked at me! I asked him "What is my iniquity and what is my sin? [Bereshis 31:36] Why did you talk to me like that?" "I had a hard day!", he told me. When someone has a hard day, the general feeling is that this is a carte blanche to treat the rest of the world like dogs. Let us take something more severe than a "hard day". What about the experience of losing one's luggage. After a long drawn out airplane flight, after watching the luggage carousel go around and

around until one has memorized each piece of luggage, one has had enough!

He goes upstairs to the ticket agent and he has NO patience for the agent.

Do we think to act with manners at such a time? No, because we have an excuse - we've lost our luggage! Let us go a little further. What if someone has a relative in the hospital? Picture a person in the hospital under a lot of pressure. He is scared, he is worried. What happens when some nurse or some doctor or someone in the cafeteria gives him a hard time? The reaction is "I have no patience and I have the right to have no patience because my relative is in the hospital." All these emotions are perfectly legitimate in our eyes. Now let us go back to Avraham Avinu. He just came back from the Akeidah. Imagine how a person feels after he narrowly escaped the experience of slaughtering his own son. Imagine the drain of emotion. Imagine his mental state after being literally on the brink and coming back. This is the hardest of days. Then, this person who is drained of emotion, comes back to find the wife of his youth dead. And now the emotionally drained widower, coming off the hardest of days, has to deal and buy a grave. And who does he have to deal with - Efron, worse than the used car dealer! How does Avraham Avinu act? "And Avraham prostrates himself..." [Bereshis 23:12] He acts with Derech Eretz and with honor, treating Efron like the most honorable of people. He offers no excuse "I've had a bad day! My wife just died! I am stressed out." Avraham remembers at all times that Efron is a mensch, he is a human being. That demands that Avraham treat him like the Image of G-d that he is. As Rav Dessler writes, "Just because I am in pain, the other person does not have to suffer." Because one has a hard day at the office, does not mean one's children or one's spouse must suffer. This takes enormous self-control. It takes a person who is totally in control of himself and it takes a person who treats each and every human being, Jew or non-Jew, with dignity. This incident of burying Sarah represented the ultimate test in relationships between one man and his fellow man - to act with one's fellow man appropriately, even when one has every excuse in the world to act differently. Even under these circumstances - be a mensch. Treating people with Derech Eretz, as they deserve to be treated, while under such personal stresses, was the ultimate challenge and the ultimate test. In this area, Rav Dessler writes, we are sorely lacking. Over the years, it has become a matter of pride that it is not necessary to act with Derech Eretz. Chutzpah has triumphed. It is 'considered a mitzvah' to talk to people without the proper manners and respect. How far we have fallen! There is a famous story about the "Nun of Monsey". A Catholic Sister in Monsey, New York once remarked that people on the street of that largely Orthodox neighborhood did not bother greeting her. There are even some who mumble derogatory remarks under their breath but loud enough that she can hear them. She did remark, however, that there was one exception - a small man with a gray beard. He would greet her with a "Good Morning" everyday. His name was Rav Yakov Kaminetsky. [One of the greatest Torah sages of his time.] There is no such 'heter' of "because I am suffering, I can cause suffering to my fellow man". The confluence of these two factors: (1) being under the greatest of stress and (2) being confronted with a person who is less than a prince, - and yet showing Derech Eretz - was to Rabbenu Yonah the ultimate test that Avraham Avinu successfully completed.

Sources and Personalities Rabbeinu Yona ben Avraham of Gerona -- (1200-1263) author of Shaarei Teshuva (Gates of Repentance) Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler (1892-1954) -- Gateshead, England; Bnai Brak (Ponevezh Yeshiva); known as one of the world's great masters of Mussar Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky (1891-1986) Spent his final years in Monsey after retiring as Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath Yeshiva (Brooklyn). Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by David Hoffman; Balt. dhoffman@clark.net RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21215

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5758 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

Take a wife for my son for Yitzchak (24:4)

#### SHIDUCHIM IN HALACHAH

It is a mitzvah to arrange a shiduch(1) [colloq: a match] between a man and a woman for the object of matrimony(2). It is permitted to arrange a shiduch on Shabbos(3), and if necessary, it is even permitted to discuss financial arrangements on Shabbos(4). Arranging a match between non-observant Jews is not technically a mitzvah, but it is permitted to do so provided that the shadchan will be paid for his services(5). Even a professional shadchan, however, is advised by the poskim not to get involved in arranging a marriage between non-Jews(6).

THE SHADCHAN'S FEE: As with any other business transaction, a shadchan must be paid a fee for arranging a shiduch(7). It makes no difference if the shadchan was engaged by one of the parties or if he volunteered his services - in either case he must be paid for his services(8). Even a non-professional shadchan must be paid for his services(9). The shadchan may petition a beis din to force the parties to pay his fee(10).

The amount to be paid is divided equally between the two sides, even if the shadchan spent more time with one of them(11). At the shadchan's discretion, he may charge only one of the parties involved half of the going rate. He may not, however, charge more than half to one side, even if the other side is poor or for some reason refuses to pay(12). The shadchan may forego payment altogether, in which case there is no compelling reason to pay him(13).

Although the obligation to pay is the bride's and groom's, it has become customary for the parents to pay(14). If the parents fail to pay, there is no obligation for the bride and groom to pay the shadchan(15).

The amount to be paid to the shadchan is based on the customary fee in the area where the shiduch was made(16). Once the standard fee is agreed upon, the shadchan may not ask for additional compensation to cover special expenses that he may have incurred in arranging the shiduch.

Our custom is to pay the shadchan immediately after the shiduch is completed(17). Even if the shiduch is broken later, the shadchan does not have to return his fee(18) as long as he did not give erroneous information which led to the termination of the shiduch(19).

A shadchan who does not complete the match - even though he invested a great deal of time and effort - need not be paid(20).

The poskim debate the division of payments in a situation where more than one shadchan is involved, or when the match began with one shadchan and ended with another. Whenever there is a dispute, a rav should be consulted since there are many details involved and no two cases are alike.

A shadchan whose fee is outstanding should not be a witness to the marriage ceremony(21).

INFORMATION: It is prohibited for either party in a prospective match to give false information or to withhold pertinent information about themselves. In certain cases, withholding or falsifying information could result in the invalidation of a marriage(22). Even a couple who has been married many years may be considered to be living in sin if pertinent information was withheld at the time of their marriage.

The poskim give some examples of information that may not be withheld in a prospective match [and which - if withheld - may invalidate a marriage]: A serious physical or mental illness(23), infertility(24), correct financial status(25), lack of religious observance(26), previous martial status(27), previous illicit relationships(28), conversion(29), adoption(30).

One is not required to divulge a deficiency which most people do not consider to be an impediment, such as a minor illness(31), a physical weakness or a minor blemish in one's lineage(32). Similarly, it is not required to divulge a transgression in the distant past for which the sinner has repented(33).

Since it is often difficult to gauge and judge minor drawback versus major deficiencies, a rav must always be consulted.

An individual who is asked for [or is aware of(34)] information about a shiduch must divulge what he knows regarding a "major deficiency", as detailed above. One who deliberately withholds such information transgresses the prohibition of lifnei eiver lo sitein michshol(35).

Detrimental information about a shiduch may only be conveyed with the proper intention - for the benefit of one of the parties, not as revenge or in spite of any individual. Even then, the

information may only be relayed when(36): The condition is serious; The condition has not been exaggerated; There is a reasonable chance that the information will be accepted and acted upon. If it is likely to be ignored, it is prohibited to be relayed. One who is unsure if a particular point of information is a major deficiency or if the above conditions have been met should consult a rav before divulging or withholding any information.

FOOTNOTES: 1 The word shiduch is Aramaic for "peaceful" or "tranquil" (see Targum Shoftim 3:11), referring to the peacefulness which a woman senses when she finds her match and establishes her home (Ran, Shabbos 12a). Others maintain that the word shiduch means "to bind or tie" together (Aruch). 2 Shulchan ha-Eizer 3:1, based on the Medrash (Rabbah, Tzav 8:1) that Hashem himself arranges matches. See also Chikrei Lev C.M. 135. 3 O.C. 306:6. 4 Ketzos ha-Shulchan 107:8. See Kaf ha-Chayim 306:50 that whenever possible it is best to delay discussing finances until after Shabbos. 5 Teshuvos Meishiv Davar 2:32; Teshuvos M'harash Brisk 1:82. 6 Be'er Heitev Y.D. 2:15 and Darkei Teshuvah 154:6 quoting Chavos Yair 185. 7 Rama C.M. 87:39 and 185:10. 8 Be'ur ha-Gra, ibid. 9 Teshuvos M'harash Engel 3:15. 10 Rama, ibid. 11 Erech Shai E.H. 50. 12 Beis Yitzchak E.H. 115; Halichos Yisrael 20. 13 Reb Akiva Eiger C.M. 185; Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 50:16 - rejecting the mistaken notion that a shadchan must always be paid. 14 Avnei Nezer C.M. 36. 15 Erech Shai C.M. 185. 16 Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 50:16. In many places today, there is no clear custom as to the amount a shadchan receives. If a dispute arises, a rav needs to be consulted. 17 Aruch ha-Shulchan E.H. 50:42; Beis Yitzchak 1:115; Halichos Yisrael 4; Pischei Choshen, sechirus, pg. 337. When a shadchan does not get paid on time, the Biblical prohibition of delayed payment (lo salin) applies - see Halichos Yisrael 1-2. 18 Aruch ha-Shulchan, ibid. But in an area where the shadchan is customarily paid after the wedding, and the couple never gets married, the shadchan does not have to be paid. 19 Levushei Mordechai C.M. 15, quoted in Pischei Choshen, ibid. See Halichos Yisrael 11 whether the shadchan gets paid if the shiduch fell apart because of mistaken information of which the shadchan was unaware. 20 Beis Yosef C.M. 185. 21 Otzar ha-Poskim 42:45-15; Harav Y. Kamenetsky (oral ruling, quoted in Apiryon I'Shlomo, pg. 40). B'dieved, though, the kiddushin is valid. 22 Sefer Chasidim 507. 23 E.H. 39:5; Igros Moshe E.H. 4:73 -2. 24 Otzar ha-Poskim 39:7. See Kehilos Yaakov, Yevamos 38 and ruling of Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Nishmas Avraham, vol. 5, pg. 118). 25 Teshuvos Chasam Sofer E.H. 72 quoted in Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 38:14. 26 Chofetz Chayim Hilchos Rechilus, Klal 9, tziyur 3:6, 11. 27 Noda B'yehudah 2:50, quoted in Pischei Teshuvah E.H. 39:4. 28 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:118; Minchas Yitzchak 3:116. See, however, M'harsham 7:152. 29 Minchas Yitzchak 7:90; Tzitz Eliezer (quoted in Nishmas Avraham E.H. pg. 252). 30 Minchas Yitzchak 5:44. 31 Such as an ulcer - Harav Y. Zilberstein (Emek Halachah - Asyah, pg. 160). 32 Chavos Yair 120. See Teshuvos Knei Bosem 1:121 and Nishmas Avraham E.H. pg. 26 for an elaboration. See also Titein Emes I'Yaakov, pg. 85 who quotes a dispute between contemporary poskim as to whether it is permitted to slightly adjust the age of bride or groom, such as from age 20 to age 19, etc. 33 Minchas Yitzchak 6:139. Such information, therefore, may not be repeated by others when they are asked for information - ibid. 34 Tzitz Eliezer 16:4. 35 Chofetz Chayim, ibid 9:1; tziyur 2:3. See also Pischei Teshuvah O.C. 156 and Chelkas Yaakov 3:136. See also Practical Medical Halachah, 3rd edition, pg. 166, quoting an oral ruling by Harav M. Feinstein that a disability which may impact negatively on an individual's functioning as a spouse or as a parent must be revealed. 36 Chofetz Chayim, ibid. 9:2.

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## OU Torah Insights for Shabbat Parshat Chayei Sarah 5758

Toward the end of Parshas Chayei Sarah, the Torah tells us that "Yitzchak went out lasuach—to meditate—in the field before evening." Chazal comment that Yitzchak went to the fields in order to pray ("Sichah," our Sages say, "refers only to prayer"), and thus was instituted Tefillah Minchah, the afternoon prayer that all Jews are obliged to recite daily. But why did Yitzchak turn to the fields in order to pray? ask the commentaries. Didn't he have a house in which to pray? Tosafos answers

that the field in which Yitzchak prayed was no ordinary field. It was on Mount Moriah, first designated as a place of prayer by Adam Harishon and later consecrated by Yitzchak at the Akeidah, where he perceived the Shechinah. Centuries later it became the site of the Beit Hamikdash. No ordinary field was this field, no ordinary prayer was this prayer. The Talmud advises us to be especially vigilant about praying Tefillah Minchah, for G-d is especially attentive to our prayers in the afternoon. Eliyahu's plea to Hashem was answered only in the afternoon. Why is Tefillah Minchah so important and what makes it so effective? The Tur links Minchah's prominence to its timing. Its comes at a time when people are most apt to be preoccupied with their daily work and business affairs. In order to pray, one has to pause and concentrate on his dependence upon the Creator, who is the source of all blessing. This abrupt suspension of daily activity is far from easy to do. It is much easier to pray in the morning before one starts out for work. We wake up refreshed, happy in the thought that we have been granted yet another day of life. We are in the proper mood for prayer and offer thanksgiving for our very existence on earth. This is the meaning of the pasuk in Eichah, "Chadashim lavekarim rabbah emunatecha." Our faith in Hashem is greatest at the renewal of life every morning. Likewise, at night, with a productive day behind us, it is easy to take a few moments to thank G-d for the blessings of the day. In the afternoon, the situation is much different. We are, like Yitzchak, in the fields, in the middle of our work with its attendant 101 problems, frustrations, and aggravations. Then, in the midst of it all, we are called upon to pray—to interrupt the pursuit of our livelihood, to suspend our seeming dependence on the strength of our hands. We instead turn to Hashem in prayer. Tefillah Minchah testifies to man's humility in the presence of G-d. This offering of worship and devotion also accounts for the prayers name. Some assume that the word minchah means afternoon. This isn't so. The word, used often in the Torah, means a gift, an offering. Indeed, a prayer recited in the afternoon is a precious gift, readily accepted by G-d. This is the legacy of Yitzchak Avinu—in the field. Whether you are in your office, at your shop, on the road, or at home, stop and take a break of inspiration. Pray Minchah with kavannah and then be confident that Hashem will hearken to your tefillah.

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YESHIVAT HAR ETZION ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VBM PARASHAT CHAYEI SARAH SICHA OF HARAV AHARON LICHTENSTEIN SHLIT"A "You Satisfy the Desires of All Living Creatures" Summarized by Betzalel Posy DEDICATED BY SUSAN AND JACQUES GORLIN IN COMMEMORATION OF THE SECOND YAHRZEIT OF BORIS GORLIN, BORUCH BEN ASHER ZELIG A"H, 28 MAR CHESVAN.

What was the nature of the test devised by Avraham's servant (identified by Chazal with Eliezer) to find a wife for Yitzchak? Eliezer, aware that he was making a historic choice, wanted to assure that she possessed more than just volunteerism, more than just the ability to see to her family's needs. But how was her empathy for beasts of burden to show Eliezer that she was inculcated with both the virtue and dignity needed to sow the seeds of Am Hashem? How did her offering to feed the camels signify the character traits that meant God had chosen her ("Otah hochachta") as the next mother of Israel? The dual nature of the test contains the key to its interpretation. Avraham's initial requirement that Yitzchak's wife be of his family was based on the assumption of the singular nature that was innate and specific to people who had a common bond, much like a family structure. People who feel a connection and solidarity with each other are obviously willing to sacrifice in order to achieve the greatest possible unity. This connection comes from a sharing of ideals and mutual goals, an active participation in each other's well-being. However, Eliezer also had to vet the candidate for another important, even essential, character trait that Avraham wanted in his daughter-in-law, so that she could pass it along to the rest of the Am Segula. This characteristic was the ability and need to empathize with all of society at large, both in joy and distress. One's natural reaction to suffering

anywhere, by anyone, should be deep; the Jew's reaction should run even deeper, even though we maintain our separateness in many ways. The pain to the heart, no matter what heart, should be manifest in us; upon seeing the weary traveler, we should drop what we are doing and rush to his aid: "And I will also give drink to your camels." The gemara tells us that one who recites "Tehilla Le- David" (Psalm 145, which we preface with the verses "Ashrei yoshvei veitekha..." and "Ashrei ha-am she-kakha lo...") thrice daily is assured a place in the World-to-Come. This mizmor reflects the theme we are discussing. We begin by expressing our appreciation of the Jews' privilege of standing before God. We speak of our personal gratitude in the same breath as our collective gratitude for a long list of favors that God grants us. But we also declare: "Pote'ach et yadekha u-masbia le-chol chai ratzon!" - "You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of all living creatures." We then assert that God is close to all those, chosen or not, who cry out to Him in truth. Today, we Jews spend much, if not all, of our time and resources fighting our own battles and solving our own particular problems. But we cannot forget that even as we live at home, holy and separate, we are part of all mankind; travesty and tragedy, from Rwanda to Bosnia, must pain us, especially when we do not have the well to satisfy their thirst. If we internalize this, then we can truly identify with the last verse of "Ashrei": "Tehillat Hashem yedaber PI, vi-varech KOL BASAR shem kodsho le-olam va'ed" - "MY mouth will speak the praise of God, and ALL FLESH will bless His holy name forever." (Originally delivered at Seuda Shelisheit, Shabbat Parashat Chayei Sarah 5757.)

B"H The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion Chayei Sarah

The Life of Sarah The central theme of each Torah portion is indicated by its name. The name of this week's portion, Chayei Sarah, the "Life of Sarah," seems to defy this rule. The entire portion speaks of events that transpired after Sarah's demise, a theme in stark contrast to the "life of Sarah." The opening section of Chayei Sarah relates how Avraham purchased a burial place for his wife; the second section recounts the events surrounding the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah -- at which time "Yitzchak found consolation for the loss of his mother." So too, the closing portion of Chayei Sarah describes how Avraham took another wife, and recounts Yishmael's progeny -- something in total opposition to Sarah, who declared, "send away this handmaiden and her child." How then can we possibly say that the "life of Sarah" is the portion's central theme? The Gemara states: "Our father Ya'akov did not die -- as his progeny lives on, he too lives on." He who is truly timeless aspect of human existence is that which derives from living at one with G-d -- He who is truly timeless and eternal. Since Ya'akov lived in this manner, his true life includes his continuing effect, even after his soul left his body. This effect was perceived not only in his soul's continued unity with G-d -- an eternity of the soul -- but more importantly, that in this world as well, he continued to live through his children -- who pursued the eternal lifestyle of their father Ya'akov. The same is true with regard to Sarah. The quality of Sarah's life, the true "life of Sarah," can best be measured after her passing, by dint of the legacy she passed on to her progeny. Avraham and Sarah differed in that Avraham fathered not only Yitzchak but also Yishmael, thus becoming not only the father of the Jewish people but also of other nations, while Sarah was the mother of Yitzchak exclusively, thereby connecting her specifically with the Jewish nation. Sarah was thus better able to discern the unique quality of the Jewish people, who descended solely through Yitzchak. This dominant theme in Sarah's life is the central motif of the portion Chayei Sarah. Avraham buried Sarah in the Meoras HaMachpeilah, the burial place of Adam and Chavah, parents of all humanity. As such, the Meoras HaMachpeilah was seemingly connected to all of mankind, not only to the Jewish people. Nonetheless, Avraham purchased it for the exclusive use of the Jews, thereby emphasizing Sarah's theme -- the special quality of the Jewish people. The Torah then goes on to relate that this quality was apparent even in relation to those who were of kindred spirit with Avraham: for our sages relate that when Avraham's faithful student and servant, Eliezer, told Avraham of his desire that his daughter marry Yitzchak, he was told it was out of the question -- Yitzchak was to marry someone from Avraham's family. The conclusion of the portion then informs us of an even greater dimension to this special quality found in the Jews -- that they far outdistanced even Avraham's other progeny. After the Torah relates "Avraham married another woman whose name was Keturah," and mentions the children born to them, it goes on to state: "Avraham gave all that he owned to Yitzchak, and, to the children of the concubine, Avraham gave gifts and sent them away." Similarly, Yishmael's offspring are alluded to as descending from "Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave" -- of decidedly lesser rank than Yitzchak. Herein lies the connection of this Torah portion to the "life of Sarah": it stresses her life's work -- emphasizing the special quality inherent within the Jewish people. Based on Likutei Sichos, Vol. XV, pp. 145 -150

"Entering Into the Days" In the Torah portion Chayei Sarah, the Torah states: "Avraham was old, ba bayamim, advancing in days." The Torah seems to imply that it was at this stage of Avraham's life that he became old. However, in a statement made about Avraham and Sarah about 41 years earlier, the Torah already says that "Avraham and Sarah were old, ba bayamim, advancing in days." The literal translation of ba bayamim is not "advancing in days," but "entering into the days." It thus does not so much describe the person's age as it does his way of life.

For a person's days and the events that transpire therein have a permanent effect on the individual -- he "enters" his essence and soul into everything that happens to him. We may accordingly say that the repetition of the statement "Avraham was old, ba bayamim, advancing in days," was not intended to highlight the Patriarch's advanced age but the aspect of ba bayamim. It is human nature that the older a person becomes, the less he tends to be affected by the events that swirl around him, either because he has become more mature and settled, or because he has already lived so many years that he is not so easily fazed by events; life holds fewer and fewer "surprises." The Torah therefore informs us that, although many years earlier, Avraham was already considered "old", many years later, he was still ba bayamim -- the events of the intervening 41 years had a profound effect on his life. He "entered" into those days. Especially so, since in this span of time, his son Yitzchak was born, and his wife Sarah died. With this interpretation of ba bayamim, we will better understand the comment of the Zohar on the verse "Avraham was old, ba bayamim, advancing in days," that all of Avraham's days were complete in his service to G-d; he did not fail to serve G-d for even one day of his life. In light of the earlier explanation of ba bayamim, we understand that the Zohar's interpretation is not merely mystical, but also thoroughly grounded in the simple context of the verse: not a day in Avraham's life passed without something meaningful happening. Rather, each day was infused with spiritual content -- ba bayamim; he "entered into" his days, engaging in the particular spiritual service necessary on any given day. Thus, according to the simple meaning of the verse, ba bayamim relates how the events of Avraham's life affected him -- each day and event resulted in change. The Zohar, the inner aspect of the Torah, comes to inform us about the inner meaning of Avraham's life, how Avraham had an impact on his days, not only physically but in the spiritual sense as well. In light of this explanation, we can better understand the opening verse of the portion Chayei Sarah, which states: "The life of Sarah was 100 years, and 20 years, and seven years -- the years of the life of Sarah." Generally, when the Torah recounts how long a person lived, the expression used is "His days were..." or "His years were..." Why does the Torah use here the expression "The life of Sarah was ..."? As our Sages inform us, the verse recounting Sarah's days informs us that all of Sarah's days were filled with Divine service in the best possible manner -- "All her years were equally good." But how can this be, when her 127 years encompassed such extremes -- living in the Promised Land, and being forced to spend time in the homes of Pharaoh and Avimelech? Nevertheless, with regard to the life of Sarah, i.e., regarding the spirituality, holiness and Divine service that truly made up her life, it can genuinely be said that they were all equally good. For Sarah's true existence was spiritual. These true moments of her life were "all equally good." Based on Likutei Sichos, Chayei Sarah 5751

Ohr Somayach TORAH WEEKLY Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Chayei Sarah <http://www.ohr.org.il> Insights

CUPS OF KINDNESS "Let it be that the maiden to whom I shall say 'Tilt your pitcher so I may drink,' and who replies 'Drink and I will even water your camels,' her will You have designated for Your servant Yitzchak" (24:14) A poor man once asked the Brisker Rav whether he could fulfill his obligation to drink four cups of wine on Pesach by drinking four cups of milk instead. The Brisker Rav told him to stick to wine, and instructed his wife to give the poor man a large sum of money from the communal tzedaka fund so that he could buy both wine and meat for the festival. After the poor man had gone, the rebbetzin asked her husband why he had given him money to buy meat as well as wine. After all, the question had only been about the wine. The Brisker Rav replied that if this man was intending to drink four cups of milk on the Seder Night, he certainly wasn't planning to eat meat either for lack of funds. What distinguished Rivka's kindness was that she was able to understand not just what Eliezer said to her, but what his real needs were. True kindness lies in understanding the needs of others even when they don't express them.

WHO'S SORRY NOW? "And Avraham came to eulogize Sarah" (23:2) Both parents were crying their eyes out. "Rabbi - it's our son. He wants to marry a non-Jewish girl. We've never been that religious, but I always thought that he would at least marry someone Jewish." More tears. Finally the rabbi said. "In Russia, during the reign of the Czar, it was forbidden to have alcohol without a license. To avoid the duty, some clever rogues decided to smuggle whisky from over the border. They came up with a ruse to fool the border guards. The border ran through the middle of a particular Jewish shtetl (village). The graveyard happened to be on the Russian side of the border. Thus it was not uncommon for funerals to cross the border. The smugglers borrowed a hearse and a coffin, and filled it with Scotch whisky. As they approached the border, they assumed long faces and the dark demeanor of those whose profession is escorting the dead to their rest. So convincing was their acting that the guards let them pass without a second look. Emboldened by their easy success, they decided to try it again. Again, they succeeded without a hitch. But now, they started to get over-confident. On the next trip, the guards pounced and discovered their haul. They were led away in chains. Facing a capital offense, they started

to cry bitter tears. The chief smuggler asked the guard: 'But how did you know that we weren't real?' Said the guard 'As you came towards the border post, you were all smiling and laughing. No one laughs at a funeral. If you'd cried then, you wouldn't be crying now!' " "That, unfortunately," said the rabbi to the distraught parents," is the present situation. If you'd cried then, you wouldn't be crying now! You're twenty years too late. What do you expect me to do now?" When Avraham came to eulogize Sarah, he focused on the Akeida - the binding of Yitzchak - as exemplifying Sarah's qualities. For Sarah had educated a son who was prepared to give up his very life to serve Hashem, and there can be no greater testimony to the qualities of a parent than the qualities of the child. This should serve as a powerful reminder to parents that our children's spiritual aspirations are inevitably a reflection of our own. We cannot blame our children if they continue in the path that we have shown them.

**THE EYES OF TRUTH** "And the servant (Eliezer) said to him (Avraham): 'Perhaps the woman will not wish to follow me to this land; shall I take your son back to the land from which you departed?'" (24:5) "Why can't I see G-d? Why don't I feel He's there? I really envy you being religious, but I just don't feel it!" What makes a person feel close to G-d?

The eyes are the windows of the soul. If you want to "see" G-d in your life, you have to have clean windows. All the character flaws that a person has are like grime on those windows. Anger, jealousy, lust, status seeking, all smear the windows of the soul so that it cannot see. The Midrash on this verse says "'And the servant said to him...'" - this refers to the phrase 'A trader with scales of deceit in his hand, who loves to cheat.' The 'trader' is Eliezer, who sat and weighed - 'with scales of deceit in his hand' - whether his own daughter was fitting to be Yitzchak's wife or not.'" When Eliezer suggested the match, Avraham told him: "You are cursed, my son is blessed. The cursed cannot connect with the blessed." What was so wrong with Eliezer considering his daughter as a marriage partner for Yitzchak, that the Midrash calls him "a trader with scales of deceit in his hand?" Eliezer didn't lie to, or cheat Avraham. He was merely wondering whether his daughter might be suitable. Which father would not at least consider if his daughter would be a worthy spouse for the world's most eligible bachelor, the father-to-be of the Jewish people? Also, when Avraham rejected Eliezer's proposal, Eliezer accepted Avraham's decision with total equanimity. It must be then that the mere fact that Eliezer had room to consider this possibility showed a minute trace of deceit. For if it were not so, he would have known without a second thought the truth - that the blessed and the cursed cannot combine. This is the nature of deceit: A deceitful person deceives not only others, but himself as well. The doubting heart, its inability to recognize the truth, comes from our own defects. They deceive us and lie about the truth of existence. If we will only clear the windows of our soul, our eyes will see the truth shining like a beacon.

**A GOOD HEART** "Let it be that the maiden to whom I shall say 'Tilt your pitcher so I may drink,' and who replies 'Drink and I will even water your camels,' her will You have designated for Your servant Yitzchak." (24:14) In his prayer that he should select the correct wife for Yitzchak, Eliezer chose to rely on the prospective spouse showing only one character trait - kindness. How could Eliezer rely on kindness alone? Surely a wife to be fit for Yitzchak would also need to be outstanding in other areas of character perfection. For example, purity of heart, faith and fear of Hashem. In the Ethics of the Fathers, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai says to his disciples, "Go out and see which is the good way to which a man should cling." Rabbi Eliezer says "A good eye." Rabbi Yehoshua says "A good friend." Rabbi Yossi says "A good neighbor." Rabbi Shimon says "One who foresees the results of an action." Rabbi Elazar says "A good heart." Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai then says to them, "I prefer the words of Elazar ben Arach to your words, because your words are included in his words." A good heart includes all other good characteristics. Avraham Avinu was the first of the Avos. As he was the father of Yitzchak and the grandfather of Yaakov, he "contained" the other two patriarchs. Avraham's most outstanding quality was chesed, kindness. Kindness

contains the other qualities.

Sources: o The Eyes Of Truth - Chidushei Halev; o Who's Sorry Now? - HaDrash V'HaYun, Rabbi Shalom Schwadron, Rabbi Pesach Krohn; o A Good Heart - Avos 2:9, Rabbi M. Rofman in Zichron Meir, Lekach Tov o Compiled by Rabbi Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1997 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved. This publication may be distributed to another person intact without prior permission. We also encourage you to include this material in other publications, such as synagogue newsletters. However, we ask that you contact us beforehand for permission, and then send us a sample issue.

The Weekly Daf #197 Berachos 51-57 Week of 17-23 Cheshvan 5758 / 17-23 November 1997 (Parshas Chayei Sarah) By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

"Labriyut" "Tzum Gezund!" "Labriyut!" These are the traditional blessings given in Yiddish or Hebrew to one who sneezes. But in Talmudic times the term was "marpei," which has the same connotation of wishing the sneezer good health. What if someone sneezes in the Beis Midrash while you are learning Torah? Should you interrupt your study to wish him good health? In the Beis Midrash of Rabbi Gamliel, we are told, they did not wish the sneezer "marpei," in order not to interrupt their Torah study. On the basis of this, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 246:17) rules that we should not interrupt our study in order to offer the blessing of good health. Is this standard relevant only to previous generations who never lifted their heads out of their holy books to say anything unrelated to Torah, or is it also applicable in our times when we interrupt our learning for other matters as well? The position of the Prisha is that since today we interrupt our studies for other matters we may also do so to wish the sneezer well. The Turei Zahav, however, takes issue with this approach. He cites what he assumes is the basis for this distinction between eras. Back in the second perek (16a) we learned that a chassan is exempt from the recital of the Shema on his wedding night because his mental preoccupation with the consummation of his marriage prevents him from maintaining the proper concentration required for this mitzvah. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 70:3), however, rules that this exemption for the chassan no longer applies, since no one really concentrates so intently when reciting the Shema in our times. If this halachic precedent is indeed the basis for the approach of the Prisha, it is a highly questionable extension, argues the Turei Zahav. By reflecting on the low level of concentration which is universal in our day we arrive at the positive result of a chassan also reciting the Shema. But what right, he asks, do we have to utilize our lower level of Torah study to sanction an interruption for blessing the sneezer, which will have the negative effect of encouraging people in the Beis Midrash to interrupt their study for all sorts of idle discussion? Despite this challenge the Aruch Hashulchan (246:33) cites only the lenient opinion of the Prisha. Berachos 53a

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Har Nof Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld

Berachos 51 HALACHAH: COVERING ONE'S HEAD FOR BLESSINGS OPINIONS: The Gemara mentions ten things which a Kos Shel Berachah requires. One of those ten things is "Ituf" (lit. "wrapping"). In explaining what "Ituf" is, the Gemara says that Rav Papa would wrap himself (in a Talis, Rashi), and Rav Asi would wrap a turban around his head. According to the Rishonim (see TOSFOS DH Ein Lanu and ROSH 7:35) that say that one should be careful to practice all of the things that are discussed in the Gemara, how do we fulfill the concept of "Ituf?" (a) RABEINU YERUCHAM, cited in the Beis Yosef (OC 183) says that one must "place a head covering on his head because it is forbidden to recite a blessing with an uncovered head." (b) The BEIS YOSEF asks that this cannot be what "Ituf" means, because if so, it applies to \*all\* blessings, and not just Kos Shel Berachah. Why did the Gemara mention it specifically with regard to Kos Shel Berachah? The Beis Yosef therefore explains that "Ituf" refers to a respectable covering that is placed on top of the regular head covering, which people who stand other blessings, one needs only the regular head covering (such as the Kipah that we wear today), while for Birkas ha'Mazon on a cup of wine, one should wear the more respectable head covering (such as a hat) over the regular one. The PERISHAH (OC 183:15) refers to the Beis Yosef earlier in Orach Chaim (OC 8) who writes that the reason for this head covering is that it serves as an expression of "modesty [while one stands before Hashem], and it inspires him to humble himself, and it brings him to the fear of Hashem," because by putting on a respectable head covering, one performs a concrete action that shows that he is standing before the Holy One. HALACHAH: THE MISHNAH BERURAH (OC 183:11) cites the MAGEN AVRAHAM who says, citing the BACH that a G-d-fearing person should wear a hat when he recites Birkas ha'Mazon, and that some also have the practice to put on their jacket (like Rav Papa's "Ituf").

Berachos 52b THE BLESSING ON FIRE QUESTION: In the Mishnah, Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel argue concerning the text of the blessing on fire. Beis Shamai says that the text is, "Bara Ma'or ha'Esh," and Beis Hillel says that the text is, "Borei Me'orei ha'Esh." The Gemara explains that everyone agrees that one may say "Bara" or "Borei." The argument is whether one should say "Ma'or" or "Me'orei." If everyone agrees that one may say "Bara" or "Borei," why were the two differing terminologies used in the Mishnah? ANSWER: The VILNA GA'ON (in SHENOS ELIYAHU) explains that there are two types of fire for which we thank Hashem. First, there is the \*concept\* of fire, which Hashem created after the first Shabbos of Creation. Second, there is the physical fire that we can have in front of us. The original concept of fire that Hashem created is simply singular, colorless energy. On the other hand, the fire that we see before us can be described in terms of the different colors that it radiates. Beis Shamai says that the blessing we say on Motza'ei Shabbos is a blessing on the original concept of fire. Therefore, Beis Shamai maintains that the text of the blessing should be "Bara" (in the past tense, since Hashem created the concept of fire only once in the history of the world) and "Ma'or" (a \*single\* fire, because the concept of fire as "light" is singular). Beis Hillel says that the blessing that we recite is even on the actual physical fire that we hold before us, which appears as different colors and which we can create whenever we want. Therefore, the text of the blessing according to Beis Hillel is "Borei" (He \*created\* the original fire and He \*creates\* every new flame) "Me'orei" (the different colors that appear in the

physical flames). That is what the Gemara means when it says that the argument does not revolve around the definition of "Bara" and "Borei," but that it revolves around which fire we are thanking Hashem for on Motza'ei Shabbos.

Berachos 53 WHEN MAY ONE ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BEIS SHAMAI QUESTION: The Gemara says that a certain student acted stringently in accordance with the opinion of Beis Shamai and was rewarded with a golden wallet. However, the Gemara on 11a says that when Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel argue it is prohibited to practice like Beis Shamai (who holds that at night, one is obligated to lie down when saying Shema), even though Beis Hillel agrees that one \*may\* lie down and say Shema. Why should one not be allowed to be stringent like Beis Shamai there, like one is allowed to be in our case? ANSWERS: (a) Rav Akiva Eiger in his commentary on the Mishnayos (1:3) cites the TESHUVOS REMA (#91) who says that Beis Hillel's opinion is that it is \*worse\* to lie down to say Shema at night (even though one still fulfills his obligation to say Shema) than to say it while sitting up. Here, however, Beis Hillel does not hold that it is worse to go back to the place at which one ate in order to say Birkas ha'Mazon. Therefore, here it is permissible to act in accordance with Beis Shamai and go back to where one ate. (b) Rav Akiva Eiger himself uses the ruling of the ROSH (8:5) to answer this question. In the case on 11a, Beis Hillel holds that it is not any \*better\* to say Shema lying down than sitting up. All he said was that one still fulfills his obligation even if he is lying down. Here, however, although Beis Hillel does not require one to go back in order to say Birkas ha'Mazon, the Rosh explains that they certainly agree it is \*preferable\* to go back. That is why, here, it is permissible to be stringent like Beis Shamai. (See Insight 11:2). (The VILNA GA'ON in Shenos Eliyahu (1:3) gives the same answer as Rav Akiva Eiger.)

TANA'IM WITH STRANGE NAMES The Gemara cites a Beraisa that discusses rubbing oil on the hands before Birkas ha'Mazon, which mentions three Tana'im with strange names: Rabbi Zilai, Rabbi Zivai, and Rabbi Zuhamai. The MAHARATZ CHYUS (Bava Metzta 25a) writes that it was not a coincidence that Rabbi Zuhamai was discussing Zuhamah (the bad smell on the hands which oil removes). Rather, since the only time this Tana is mentioned in all of Shas is with regard to Zuhamah, he is referred to by a name that reflects the statement which he made. RAV REUVEN MARGOLIOS (in l'Cheker Shemos v'Kinuyim b'Talmud 1:25) explains that there are many names in the Talmud that come about by similar circumstances. He points out that in our Gemara, the names of Rabbi Zilai and Rabbi Zivai are also nicknames based on what each Tana taught. Rav \*Zilai\* taught that one must pour oil on his hands before he recites Birkas ha'Mazon. "Zilai" stems from the word "l'Hazil" which means "to pour" (see, for example, Bamidbar 24:7). Rabbi \*Zivai\* was named such because his statement concerned the obligation to smear oil on one's hands, a practice which gives the skin a \*shine\* -- "Ziv."

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mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Shiur HaRav Soloveichik on Chayei Sarah chsara.97 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik on Parshas Chayei Sarah (Shiur date 11/20/73)

The Gemara (Berachos 26b) says that Avraham established Tefilas Shacharis and refers to his prayer as an Amidah, (standing erect). The Gemara says that Yitzchak established Tefilas Mincha and refers to his prayer as Siach (a conversation). The Rav asked why does the Gemara distinguish between the terms used by each of the patriarchs to indicate prayer? Why didn't the Torah use the word Amidah to describe Yitzchak's prayer?

The Gemara says (Berachos 30b) that one who missed a prayer should add an additional Shemoneh Esray to compensate. The Gemara asks how long must he wait in between them before reciting the second one for makeup. The Gemara provides 2 opinions, from Rav Huna and Rav Chisda, as to the waiting period. One says that he must wait as long as it takes Shetischonen Daato while the other says as long as it takes Shetischolel Daato. Both words derive from prayer, the former derives from the same root as Vaeschanan El Hashem and the latter from the same root as Vayechal Moshe. Since both words mean to pray, what is the difference between these opinions?

The Rav noted that there is a difference between Moshe's prayer as Vayechal and his prayer as Vaeschanan. In Parshas Ki Tisa Moshe was allowed to continue his prayer of Vayechal without interruption from Hashem. Indeed, not only did Moshe pray, he demanded that Hashem should forgive the Jewish People. The Midrash describes that Moshe grabbed, Kvyachol, the coat of Hashem and refused to let go until the people were forgiven. Vayechal means an unbounded prayer where demands can be made.

In Parshas Vaeschanan on the other hand, Moshe prays to Hashem as a poor person who begs for a favor. In this case Hashem told him to cease his prayer, as he has prayed enough. The prayer of Vaeschanan must not be lengthy and one can request a favor but cannot demand anything.

We can now understand why the Gemara quotes the 2 opinions as to the length of time needed to wait between Tefilos. There is a difference in the amount of time one must wait in order to prepare for a prayer of Vayechal and for a prayer of Vaeschanan. When one prays as Vayechal Moshe, he is praying on behalf of the congregation. Such a prayer is unbounded and unrestricted. Vaeschanan was a personal prayer by Moshe, which has a more restrictive format.

The Rav explained that the 2 opinions in the Gemara regarding how long one must wait before repeating Shemoneh Esray disagree as to the kind of prayer that one must prepare himself for. According to 1 opinion he must wait long enough to compose his thoughts so he can pray like a poor person seeking a favor, like Vaeschanan. Such a prayer is limited and does not require extremely long preparation. The second opinion holds that one must long enough to prepare for a prayer of Vayechal. Such a prayer is unlimited in length and tone, a prayer like that of Moshe when he spent 40 days and 40 nights praying to Hashem that he should forgive the Jewish People. Such a Tefila takes a longer time to prepare for.

The Rav explained that there are 2 aspects to Tefila:

1) Avodah Shblev - the obligation upon man to pray each day. [This aspect is captured by the Rambam in Hilchos Tefila.]

2) Zeakah B'es Tzarah - a cry for help in time of crisis and need, based on Vharayosem B'chatzotzros. [This aspect is captured by the Rambam in Hilchos Taanis.]

The Avodah Shblev aspect of Tefila limits man to pray 3 times a day. Why can't man pray all day if he wishes? Because the daily prayer is of the Vaeschanan type, a limited prayer 3 times a day. An individual is limited in how far he can push his case. The Zeakah aspect allows man to add an additional prayer, Neilah, on a fast day (see the Ramabam in Hilchos Taanis chapter 1). This extra prayer indicates that in time of crisis there is no restriction to how much prayer is allowed. We are obligated to blow the trumpets when the community is in peril, and to pray without limitation or restriction. This is the prayer of Vayechal.

Based on the above, we can distinguish between the Amidah of Avraham and the Siach of Yitzchak. Avraham's attribute is kindness towards all, Chesed, which is externally focused towards the larger community. Since his prayer was for the Klal, it is described as Amidah, where Avraham stood tall and straight before Hashem and presented his prayer. Yitzchak's attribute is Gevurah, Tzimtzum, hidden inner strength. His prayer was directed inward for himself (though Yitzchak was certainly praying for the greater community as well). This inward focused prayer is the prayer of the poor man, Tefila L'ani Ki Yaatof. The words Ki Yaatof mean that the poor man wraps himself in his prayer shawl. It also means to bend over, as the poor person is often stooped over. The prayer of Siach is the supplication of downtrodden man as he approaches Hashem with great trepidation.

Sometimes man must pray to Hashem from the standpoint of Tefila L'ani Ki Yaatof Vlifnay Hashem Yishpoch Sicho. This is a limited prayer that is subject to Hashem telling him Rav Lach, Al Tosef, like Hashem told Moshe in Vaeschanan.

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