

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

410-486-2666

www.chabadshul.org



November 21, 2020

Toldot

5 Kislev, 5781

A Double Gift



Isaac blesses his son Jacob: "... And may G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fat of the earth..." The famed commentator Rashi explains the implication of the words "And may G-d give you": "The Al-mighty will give, and give again."

What was missing in G-d's initial giving, that could be perfected and completed by a second giving? Man is finite, limited; should he give even a magnificent and generous gift to another, it can still be improved upon by additional giving. But even the initial "gift" of the omnipotent and perfect Creator would be perfect. What could be added by "giving again"?

An analogy from the education of a pupil by his teacher might clarify the problem:

A teacher may reach two different levels of achievement with his pupil. He may successfully impart his knowledge to the pupil so that it is completely absorbed and becomes the pupil's own knowledge — but the pupil may still not be able to creatively develop the line of thought further on his own. There is a second, higher level of instruction in which the teacher so perfectly guides the pupil, that he develops the ability to exercise his own intellectual creativity on the subject, and further extends and expands — in his own unique contribution — the knowledge received.

The Mishna records an example of these two levels among the pupils of Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai. One of Rabbi Yochanan's pupils was Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurkanus and another was Rabbi Eliezer ben Aroch. "If all the wise men of Israel (including Eliezer ben Aroch) were on one end of a scale and Eliezer ben Hurkanus on the other, he would outweigh them all," states the Mishna. But then it declares, "If all the wise men of Israel were on one end of a scale, even together with Eliezer ben Hurkanus, and Eliezer ben Aroch was on the other end, he would outweigh them all!"

Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurkanus was like "... a cemented well that loses not even a drop." His reception and absorption of wisdom was superior even to that of Rabbi Eliezer ben Aroch. But Rabbi Eliezer ben Aroch was "... as a well-spring gushing with ever-increasing force," indicating an ability to expand, add and innovate. His creative genius was greater than that of Eliezer ben Hurkanus.

The implication of G-d's "double blessing" that Isaac imparted to Jacob is now clear: not only would the Divine blessing itself be full and perfect, but it would also have the additional effect of enabling Jacob to extend and expand the blessing himself.

(by Yitschak Meir Kagan from <http://www.chabad.org/>)

Not Taking "No" For An Answer When It Comes To Praying To The Almighty For Our Needs

In this week's parsha, the Torah says that Yitzchak was forty years old when he married Rivka. Rivka Imeinu was barren — as was the case with Sarah Imeinu and as was the case with Rochel Imeinu (which is the subject of a discussion in Tractate Yevomos 64a). Yitzchak prayed to Hashem that his wife should be able to have children. The-expression the Torah uses to express the nature of Yitzchak's prayer is "Va'Ye'etar Yitzchak I'Hashem..." [Yitzchak entreated Hashem] [Bereishis 25:21]. Rashi explains this to be "hirba v'hiftzir b'tefillah" [he importuned much through prayer]. This means, not only did Yitzchak daven for Rivka, 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 [Brochos 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 Yitzchak 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, what is the appropriate approach for him to use in order to convince you to lend your car? It is certainly not 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? Can I please borrow your car? Can I 'pretty please' 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.

(continued on the other side)

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. It is not polite. A person does not do that. 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 Yitzchak did. Rivkah was barren for many years. They got married when Yitzchak was forty. Rivka did not give birth to Yaakov and Eisav until Yitzchak was sixty! Yitzchak davened and davened and davened. This is what Rashi is teaching us with the words “hirba v’hiftzir b’tefilla”. 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 it 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. He is never unable to do something. The Ribono shel Olam is not saying “no” because He is not capable of granting the request. The reason the Almighty wants us sometimes to daven over and 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 (mis’aveh) the prayers of the righteous. Our tendency is that if we have everything, we forget the Ribono shel Olam. 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 daven 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. On the contrary, it is just the opposite by the Master of the Universe: Kaveh el Hashem, chazak v’امتz libecha, v’kaveh el Hashem [pray to G-d; strengthen your heart; and then – if necessary – keep praying further].

(by Rabbi Yissocher Frand from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Yahrzeits This Week:

Eli Gutman	11 Kislev - Thursday night / Friday	for father	Yehoshua ben Yitzchock
Jeffrey London	11 Kislev - Thursday night / Friday	for father	Yaakov ben Yoseph
Lawrence London	11 Kislev - Thursday night / Friday	for father	Yaakov ben Yoseph

SHUL DIRECTORY

Rabbi: Shmuel Kaplan . rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com
Treasurer: Michael Frank . . . shul.chabad@gmail.com
Security: Jay Bernstein . . jaybernsteinesq@gmail.com
Kiddush: Reuven Frank rfrank82@gmail.com
Bulletin: Howard Kaplon hkaplon@towson.edu
Website: Shoshana Zakar sue.zakar@gmail.com

Gabbaim:
 Yehudah Buchwalter . . . judahbuchwalter@verizon.net
 Allan Genut agenut@gmail.com
 Ephraim Siff
Mikvah Mei Menachem 410-415-5113
Aleph Learning Institute . Mrs. Rochel Kaplan, Director
www.alephlearninginstitute.org / email: alephjli@gmail.com

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 11/20 — 4 Kislev
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 4:29 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Shabbat, 11/21 — 5 Kislev
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z’man Kriat Shema — 9:22 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 3:45 p.m.
 Minchah — 4:15 p.m.
 Ma’ariv — 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, 11/22 — 6 Kislev
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Monday, 11/23 — 7 Kislev
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 11/24 — 8 Kislev
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/25 — 9 Kislev
 Shacharit — 7:00a.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Thursday — Thanksgiving Day, 11/26 — 10 Kislev
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Friday, 11/27 — 11 Kislev
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 4:26 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma’ariv — 4:30 p.m.