

RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS VAYEIRA תשפז

AKAIDAH MOMENTS

Yitzchak possessed three unique qualities of "of being firsts" that Avraham never experienced. Yitzchak was the first person born as a Yid. Secondly, he was the first Yid who had his *Bris Milah* at eight days old. Being the first Yid born in the world deserved a special *simcha* and joy and that is why he was called Yitzchak which means happiness. However, being born Jewish has its incompletion as well. This we can see from the *Beracha* that our *Chachamim* established for us to recite every morning שלא עשני גוי. Commentators ask why thank Hashem for **not** giving you the identity of being born a *goy* when the *beracha* should rather state thank you Hashem for creating me a *Yehudi*. They answer that life is not about being born a Yid but rather **living up to** the name *Yisrael* which is a life's dedication of striving to live up to the standards of serving Hashem founded by our *Avos* and *Imahos*. This mission statement is alluded to in the acronym of **ישראל** which represent **א**ברהם **י**צחק **י**עקב **ש**רה **ר**בקה **ר**חל **ל**אה. Who could say that they have definitely achieved this goal? Therefore our *Chachamim* preferred to say thank you Hashem for not making me into a *goy* which is a certainty.

Avraham even though he wasn't born a Yid he was the first Yisrael, an accomplishment which he achieved with tremendous toil and *mesiras nefesh* passing all Ten Tests with which Hashem challenged him. His name was changed with an added ה adding up to 248 corresponding to the 248 limbs that he sanctified to Hashem through his dedicating them to daily *avodas* Hashem. By doing so it was deemed as if he gave birth to himself and instead of physically being born from Terach the idolater, he was born from himself as a *Yisrael* with all of its *madraigos*. This is why the Osherever Rebbe ztl says Avraham was called an *Av* because his transformation of his original self was so supernatural that it was considered as if he fathered himself a"k.

This is what Hashem meant when he told Avraham **לך לך** go to yourself and become as if you gave birth to yourself. By doing so you will purify yourself from all the **לבלוך** impure influences such as your father, birthplace, and country (the two above words share the same letters). The *gematria* of **לך** is **הולדה** giving birth the journey of self - creativity. This is the *madraiga* that you can attain by cleaving to me over your father.

In contrast to his father, Yitzchak was born from the towering giant of spirit Avraham. Unlike his father he did not have to go through Ten Tests in order to be reborn a Yid for he possessed a great head start. Yet in Yitzchak's name is hinted Ten Tests as Rashi brings the Chazal (17,21) that the acronym of יצחק is the letter *yud* which corresponds to the Ten Tests (of Avraham), the letter *tzadi* correlates to the age of Sarah when she gave birth to him 90, the *ches* of Yitzchak represents the eight day of *Milah* is which Yitzchak was eight days old, and the letter *kuf* symbolizes that Avraham was one hundred years old when Yitzchak was born.



Why then is the letter *yud* in Yitzchak related to Yitzchak when it was Avraham's Ten Tests and not at all associated with Yitzchak's **birth** as the other letters hint to? We suggest the answer is that Yitzchak had **two** births. One was from Avraham and the other from Hashem. The *tachlis* of the Ten Tests was the last and ultimate test, the *Akaida*. *Chazal* say that Yitzchak's *neshama* at the *Akaidah* departed from him and he experienced the first human *Techiyas Hamaisim* when Hashem returned his *neshama*. That is why we find that the second *beracha* of *Shemoneh Esrai* is Yitzchak's *beracha* which mentions *Techiyas Hamaisim* five times. *Chazal* also say that that the key to *Techiyas Hamaisim* is only in the hands of Hashem (Taanis 2). Therefore in essence Yitzchak was **born again** with Hashem as his "Father" at the *Akaidah*. With this explanation the letter *yud* of Yitzchak now also relates to his birth for it is referring to his *second* birth at the climax of the Ten Tests of *Avraham Avinu*. This is fact lists also the third "innovation" that Yitzchak achieved over Avraham *Techiyas Hamaisim.*

We suggest that this interpretation is alluded to in the promise of Hashem to Avraham כי **ב**יצחק יקרא לך זרע (Bereishis 21,12) *Chazal* ask why Hashem added an extra letter ב to Yitzchak? It would have been sufficient just to say כי יצחק יקרא לך זרע excluding Yishmael. We can say that the extra ב is to relate to us that there are two Yitzchaks, one born from Avraham and a second reborn through *Techiyas Hamaisim.* Hashem is telling Avraham that from Yitzchak number one or number two only Yitzchak will be called your זרע seed. One might have thought that since the first *neshama* of Yitzchak left him and Hashem gave him a new *neshama* (see Ohr Chaim 22,20) maybe he would lose his identity of being called Avraham's *zerah*. It was therefore that Hashem added the ב in order to clarify that nevertheless even the second Yitzchak is still considered to be the only *zera* of Avraham.

Why was this tenth test of Avraham called עקדה which only conveys the preparation to the sacrifice and not the actual *korban*? Sometimes one can find himself in a life threatening crisis and there seems to be no way that one can escape his unfortunate fate. Yet *Chazal* state Berachos 10

מקובלני מבית אבי אבא אפילו חרב חדה מונחת על צוארו של אדם אל ימנע עצמו מן הרחמים אתמר נמי רבי יוחנן ורבי (אליעזר) [אלעזר] דאמרי תרוייהו אפילו חרב חדה מונחת על צוארו של אדם אל ימנע עצמו מן הרחמים

That even if one finds himself in the scenario that a sharp sword is laying on one's neck and he is about to be killed, but nevertheless he should not give up from salvation but rather still ask for compassion from Hashem. Yitzchak was tied legs to hands with no way of avoidance and yet he was saved at the last second when the knife was already on his neck.

Recently we witnessed Hashem's tremendous display of *rachamim* with the plane episode from Dubai which suddenly turned into an imminent death sentence to all 174 passengers. As the plane nose - dived without a pilot, it was as if all their bodies were tied on an altar of sacrifice totally helpless to avert the *malach hamaves* who was staring at them right in their faces. Yet with a minimum of at least Ten miracles which Hashem sent and planned ahead of time, all were saved, the passengers

and the plane. For those 174 passengers they also experienced their personal *Akaidah*. Their relationship with Hashem hopefully will improve somewhat to at least be better than it was before experiencing the Hand of Hashem upon them. Would you say it is merely a coincidence that the **174** passengers is *gematriah* **עקד**? I definitely don't think so. Like Yitzchak they were given a second lease on life tantamount to *Techiyas Hameisim*.

Gut Shabbos
Rav Brazil