



# Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



## TIFERET UPDATES

### *This Week in Tiferet*

Tiferet returned from our annual three day **Tiyul to Eilat** on Tuesday. Our days there were filled with activities that were both inspirational and enjoyable. Our activities included hiking the beautiful mountains surrounding Eilat, swimming and tubing in its stunning water, boating, camel-riding, and even ice-skating. (Yes, in Eilat!) Our students heard Divrei Torah from Rabbi Rosner and our tour guide, Tzvi Sperber, about the significance of this region of Eretz Yisrael!

Most unusually, Tiferet students were given the opportunity to help the Marine Police Unit of Eilat in their important work of protecting the beach from sharks. (Ask your daughters for details☺)

An amazing time was had by all!

## תורת תפארת

### Silent Strength

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#### Parashat Toldot

Does the Torah play favorites? Regarding our three avos - Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov - there is a startling discrepancy between the amounts of space the Torah allots to each. Avraham occupies a significant piece of real estate in the first half of sefer Breishis. While certainly not an exhaustive list of his life's work, the Torah provides many stories and details that help us understand who Avraham was as a person and the lessons we can learn from him. Also, regarding Yaakov the Torah is relatively detailed in describing a number of episodes from throughout his life; so much so that we get a very colorful picture of who Yaakov was. However, regarding the life and experiences of Yitzchak we are given very few details. We do not hear much about his life and do not read that many stories that describe who he was as a person.

Further, this phenomenon seems to continue in Rabbinic literature, as well. The Rambam (hilchos avodah zarah 1:3) describes the function and accomplishments of our Avos. The Rambam explains, in great detail, how Avraham came to recognize Hashem. He explains how Avraham was persecuted for this belief and the lengths Avraham went to in his efforts to spread and publicize this belief in Hashem. Similarly, the Rambam spends many sentences explaining how Yaakov build a family dedicated to Hashem and how he designated the shevet of Levi to be the spiritual guides of his nation. However, once again Yitzchak just seems to be stuck in the middle. In less than two lines the Rambam mentions the life of Yitzchak. We are not given many, if any, real details of his life.

Why the disparity? Why doesn't the Torah tell us more about Yitzchak? Why does the Rambam make Yitzchak appear to simply be a link between the two more important avos?

Each of the Avos had a unique middah or path in avodas Hashem that defined them. We know that Avraham was the man of Chesed - kindness. Yitzchak was gevurah - strength. Yaakov was Emes - Truth and Torah. Perhaps, based on the middah that each one of our avos exemplified and the koach they created through their individual middah, we can better understand why Avraham and Yaakov seem to get more attention than Yitzchak.

Avraham's chesed could only be expressed in an outward focused approach. One does not do chesed privately. Rather chesed, almost by definition, is public. It is about reaching out beyond oneself in an effort to help others. In the same vein, Emes or Torah is only exemplified through its being shared with others. The Torah does not look kindly upon a Torah scholar who refuses to share his wisdom with others. A Talmid Chacham is enjoined to reach beyond oneself and share that Torah with as many students as possible (see Pirkei Avos 1:1).

Gevurah, however, is different. Gevurah, the middah of Yitzchak, is about an inner strength. It demands determination and an unwillingness to quit. It takes great strength to get back up again after falling. Perhaps Yitzchak's gevurah is best exemplified in our parsha when he



## "If at first you don't succeed..."

**Blima Fein (Tiferet 5772)**

Parshat Toldot talks about how Yitzchak went digging to find a well of water. "And the servants of Yitzchok dug in the valley and found there a well of fresh water". What is so significant about this Pasuk? Every word in the Torah has a lesson we can learn from, so what is the message here?

In his sefer Growth through Torah, Rabbi Zelig Pliskin quotes the Chofetz Chaim who explains that the Torah elaborates on the wells to teach us that you should never give up. Just like Yitzchak kept on trying to find the water and dug many wells, even when people were trying to convince him otherwise. Yitzchak kept digging in other places until he found what he was looking for.

The Chofetz Chaim said that this can apply to us spiritually and physically. So many people are in the process of rebuilding after the storm and are starting anew. Beginnings are always the toughest part. In my chavruta with Mrs. Schneider and Rachel Simon we learned in Sichot B'avodat Hashem that the sunset period is the scariest time. Why? Because you know dark is coming, it is the beginning. The sefer gave as an example when you start a new sefer and you flip through the pages and you realize there are so many pages. How am I really going to learn all of that? Or even when you get a little in to the sefer and it is taking a while to get to the end. In that moment, sometimes we may say, "I don't want to do it anymore; this is too challenging." But in that moment, we have to say, "No, I won't give up. The sunset period will pass," and soon enough you are making a siyum when finishing that sefer.

Presently people are rebuilding their lives. It all seems so challenging and overwhelming. However we must persevere and not give up because this rough patch will past. So too spiritually, seminary is a time where you go through ups and downs and we start to question and grow and it is truly an incredible, important experience. You learn new things and take on new halachot and try to become the best person you can become. However that comes with many challenges and at times you may feel like you want to give up. At that moment we must look at the parsha. Yitzchak did not give up and because he kept going he found what he was searching for. Don't give up, keep on going and soon you will find yourself at your destination. Life is about the journey.

This can relate to Torah learning or in any stage of life like returning to America after seminary. Times get tough but we have to encourage ourselves to be like Yitzchak and not give up. I always quote from Rabbi Landau this line because it is my favorite line, "Spirituality is like a roller coaster, there are ups and downs but if you stay on the ride you know you will be up again." This is the lesson from this pasuk, if at first you do not succeed try try again. I give you all a bracha that in challenging moments in your life whether it is physically or spiritually, you are able to find that coach (strength) inside you and to keep going and

**NEVER GIVE UP!**

Have a spiritual, inspirational, meaningful Shabbat!

## תורת תפארת (המשך)

repeatedly digs wells only to have them filled in again and again (Breishis 26:19-23). After every defeat, Yitzchak gets back up again and tries again until he finally succeeds. The Chafetz Chaim points out the incredible lesson we learn from this episode. Yitzchak refused to give up. After going through the effort to dig a well and ultimately finding water, one can only imagine the frustration at finding that the enemy has filled up the ground with dirt. But Yitzchak was a man of gevurah, strength, and he found the inner fortitude necessary to start over again and again. This, says the Chafetz Chaim, is what we learn from Yitzchak. Be it in an area of religious or mundane pursuits we too can find the determination to stick with something even after experiencing temporary setbacks.

Perhaps now we can understand why Yitzchak is not given the publicity of his father and son. Chesed and Torah demand publicity. They are only done well, and done right, in the view of others and with others. Gevurah, on the other hand, is not something public. It is not visible nor easily detected. It is about a private inner strength. Secluded in the heart and soul of a person, Gevurah symbolizes the intimate willpower and resolve to do whatever is necessary to complete the task at hand. It is between Man and Hashem and sequestered from public eyes. It demands no publicity as it is truly a private affair.