



# Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



## TIFERET SHABBAT

### ***This Week in Tiferet***

Last week, our students toured the Carmel Region, first hiking the ancient “**Mei Kedem**” water tunnel in Park Alona. From there we traveled to Chaifa, where we learned about the confrontation between Eilyahu Hanavi and the Neviei Habaal on Har Carmel. The story came to life as we hiked up **Har Hacarmel**, and saw the actual site, as well as Eliyahu’s Cave in the mountain. It was a great opportunity to learn Torat Eretz Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael.

## תורת תפארת

### **Caution and Avoidance**

**Rav Azriel Rosner** ([arosner@tiferetcenter.com](mailto:arosner@tiferetcenter.com))

#### **Parashat Toldot**

In this week’s parasha, Yaakov masquerades as his brother, Esav, to secure the berachot that Yitzchak had been planning to give to Esav. When Yaakov enters his father’s tent with the food his father had requested, Yitzchak asks how he was able to return so quickly. Yaakov answers,

”כי הקרה ה' אלקיך לפני” (בראשית פרק כז פסוק כא)

”Because Hashem, your G-d, brought it before me”

Rashi explains that hearing this, Yitzchak suspected that it was indeed Yaakov, and not Esav, standing before him.

”אמר יצחק בלבו אין דרך עשו להיות שם שמים שגור בפיו וזה אמר כי הקרה ה' אלקיך לפני”  
”Yitzchak said to himself: It is not the way of Esav to have the name of G-d regular on his lips.”

This is puzzling though. Yitzchak thought that his son Esav was also righteous and worthy of a blessing. If so, why would Yitzchak have been surprised to hear Esav speaking G-d’s name? The Ramban explained that Yitzchak knew that Esav did not use G-d’s name regularly, but he justified his oldest son’s behavior. Yitzchak told himself that since Esav, the hunter, was afraid of saying G-d’s name in an unclean place, and thus had gotten used to not saying it. In fact, Yitzchak saw this as a positive attribute of Esav, that he had a strong mida of יראת שמים, afraid of saying G-d’s name inappropriately.

We know though that Yitzchak was optimistic in his evaluation of Esav. Yes, it is good to be cautious about holy matters – such as G-d’s name – and not to defile them by bringing them into an unclean environment. But Esav wasn’t being cautious, he was just avoiding saying G-d’s name completely. What Yitzchak took for Yira was really just a lack of piety.

How do we know when to draw the line though? How can we tell the difference between respect for something kadosh, and avoiding bringing kedusha into our lives?

I think the answer is also hinted to in this week’s parasha. Remember, Yitzchak was surprised

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## *Upcoming Tiferet Alumnae Events*

Shabbat, December 7<sup>th</sup> – Alumnae Shabbaton at Stern College with Rav Azriel Rosner

Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup> – Alumnae Program and Shabbaton in Tiferet

## **תורת תפארת (המשך)**

when Yaakov said G-d's name in Yitzchak's own tent, which would have been non-standard behavior for Esav. But Yitzchak's tent wasn't an unclean place, quite the opposite. Even if Esav had been cautious about G-d's name in the field, he should have still felt comfortable using it in Yitzchak's presence, in his tent.

Maybe that can be a lesson for our lives as well. There are certainly places where Yirat Shamayim makes sense, and when we should be cautious about uttering G-d's name when it might bring about a Chillul Hashem. But in our own homes, G-d's name should be constantly on our lips. Our homes, like Yitzchak's tent, are a makom kadosh – where we should be proud and excited to speak about G-d.

Shabbat Shalom!

## **Knowing When to Say Enough Chana Goldberg (5772, 5773)**

“Avraham Avinu brought the radical change of monotheism on the world. In order for a revolution to stand strong for the next generation, there needed to be a stabilizer, and that was Yitzchak Avinu. In Parshat Toldot, we learn that the Plishtim filled up Avraham Avinu's wells, and Yitzchak Avinu spent his time re-digging Avraham Avinu's hard work in order to continue what his father began.” (Rav Judah Mischel) It must have been difficult for Yitzchak Avinu to just be a continuation of his father, but this is exactly what the world needed from him at that time, and this was his job. In Parshat Toldot, we learn about Yitzchak Avinu's unique contribution on the world. He embodied Gevurah, and he used it to develop his relationship with G-d.

“Gevurah is the Sefirah that G-d used to contain, shape, and mold a world created through Chesed. When G-d said ‘Let there be a firmament,’ the world kept stretching and expanding, until G-d said, ‘Enough!’ and it came to a standstill. ‘Enough!’ is the Sefirah of Gevurah.” (The First Ten Days- Rabbi Yaacov Haber) How can we emulate Yitzchak Avinu's Gevurah, and develop it into our relationship with G-d? Since Gevurah is the source of natural law and world order, it is compared to Din - judgment. Judgment is an intense and harsh word, but where would we be without it in our lives? It brings boundaries and fences to our world, guarding ourselves from even coming near sin. Gevurah is therefore not supposed to be looked at in a negative light, but a positive one. Just like G-d places boundaries on the sea so that it won't drown the entire earth, G-d places boundaries on man so we won't lead a corrupt world.

Rabbi Moshe Shapiro says that Yitzchak Avinu being brought as a sacrifice on the altar is a direct reference to his sacrifice of his personal desires for G-d's will. When one is in the situation of personal desire vs. G-d's desire for him, it is very difficult to choose the right path. This is where we need to emulate Yitzchak Avinu's Gevurah and say to ourselves ‘Enough!’ just like G-d said to the world when it wouldn't stop expanding during creation. We must stop our personal desires before they get a chance to expand, taking over our minds, bodies, and souls. Gevurah is just what we need to lead a balanced, healthy, and Torah engrossed life. May we all learn from Yitzchak Avinu and develop Gevurah as a character trait, and use it to appreciate boundaries so we can continue to follow in G-d's will. (Adapted from Torah Tapestries by Rebbetzin Shira Smiles)