

Friday Night, Parshas Toldos, 5767

On Friday night, Mohorosh Shlit”a spoke inspiring words on the verse (*Bereishis*, Ch. 27): “And he said: See now, I am old, I do not know the day of my death. And now please take your weapons....and make for me delicious food such as I love....so that my soul may bless you before I die.”

Let’s try to understand why Yitzchak wished to bless Esav right before his death and not at some earlier point in his life. Also, why did Yitzchak command Esav to prepare delicious food for him before he blessed him? Apparently, Yitzchak wanted Esav to do something in order for the blessing to be able to rest on him. It is possible to say concerning all this that our holy Sages have made known to us the tremendous preciousness of the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v’Eim* (honoring ones parents) to the extent that they have said (*Kidushin* 30b) “their honor is compared to the honor of Hashem: And Hashem said: ‘If you honor your father and mother, it’s as if you are honoring me.’” Therefore, our holy Sages called the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v’Eim* (*Midrash Rabba Parshas Ki Saytsay*): “The most severe of all mitzvos”, for there is nothing more severe than degrading the honor of one’s father and mother as well as showing ingratitude to them despite all the acts of kindness they have done with their child since he was born – for they are the ones who brought him into the world and raised him, and it is only through their strength and merit that he is alive; and through them he has the chance to fulfill the Torah and mitzvos to merit the world to come.

Therefore, it is a tremendous obligation to honor them as much as possible. Our holy Sages have already said (*Kidushin* *ibid.*): “Honor them in their lifetime and honor them in their death.” For even after they have departed for life in the world to come, there is still a great mitzvah to honor them with every kind of honor, for instance, to learn Torah and give *tzedaka* for the elevation of their souls. It is explained in *Zohar Chadash* (Ruth) that all of the souls in the upper worlds are very jealous of someone who has left behind a son in this world who is involved in Torah and mitzvos as this causes a tremendous elevation and delight to the soul of his father and mother who are in the upper worlds. Therefore, happy is the one who merits to be very careful in fulfilling the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v’Eim*. And this will cause one’s parents every sort of pleasure and delight in this world and the next. And through this

mitzvah, the child will draw upon himself all of the blessings in the world. And he can be assured that his own children will always honor *him*. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

In light of these teachings about the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v'Eim* we can now try to answer the questions we asked above, namely, why did Yitzchak call for Esav specifically before his death and command him to bring him delicious food, as it is written: “See now, I am old, I do not know the day of my death.” Yitzchak *Avinu* wanted to be assured that Esav would be involved with good things even after his death for the sake of Yitzchak’s soul in the upper worlds. Therefore, the first thing he did was command him in the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v'Eim* and he said to him: “And now please take your weapons...” in order to hint to him that all of the good deeds that he does now as well as after his father’s death will be a source of delight for his father and an elevation for his soul in the upper worlds. Also, through the power of the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v'Eim* that he fulfills *now*, a blessing will rest upon Esav which are the words “And **now** please take your weapons and make for me delicious food.”

It is brought in the *Tikunei Zohar* (52b): “‘Make me delicious food such as I love’ – this allude to the positive commandments of the Torah that are done out of love.” For by Esav preparing a meal for his father Yitzchak, he thereby fulfills the positive commandment of *Kibud Av v'Eim* which is the most severe of all mitzvos. And this will give Esav the strength to continue to fulfill other mitzvos. And this is the verse: “So that my soul may bless you before I die”, by this Yitzchak was telling Esav, “Your performing the mitzvos causes blessing for my soul, and death will not be able to touch me”, as our holy Sages have said (*Bereishis Rabbah Parsha* 49:8): “Whoever has a son who toils in Torah it’s as if he hasn’t died.” Therefore, at the time Yitzchak was giving out the blessings, he said (*Bereishis*, Ch. 27) to Yaakov, thinking that he was Esav: “And may G-d give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the land and abundant grain and wine.” And our holy Sages have commented on this verse (*Bereishis Rabbah Parsha* 66:3): “‘The dew of the heaven’ is the written Torah and ‘the fatness of the land’ is the Mishnah; ‘an abundance of grain’ – this is Talmud; and ‘wine’ – this is *Agadata* (Midrash).” For Yitzchak blessed him that he should merit to learn the four parts of the holy Torah every day which correspond to the Four Worlds. And through this, he will draw down a great light upon his soul from all of the Four Worlds, as explained in the writings of the Ariz”l that the written Torah corresponds to our world, the world of Action; Mishnah

corresponds to the world of Formation; Talmud to the world of Creation; and *Agadata* which includes the Zohar and the secrets of the Torah to the world of Emanation. And through his learning the four parts of the Torah every day, he thereby fulfills the mitzvah of *Limud Torah* (learning Torah) and this causes great pleasure and delight to the soul of his father and mother in the upper worlds. Now we understand why Yitzchak summoned Esav specifically before his death and commanded him in these matters. It was because he wanted to show him the special importance and preciousness of the mitzvah of *Kibud Av v'Eim*. May Hashem help us to occupy ourselves in Torah and mitzvos all the days of our lives and we will give pleasure to Hashem and to all of the souls of those who are alive and those who have departed this world, until we merit to see the redemption and salvation of Israel swiftly in our days. *Amen v'amen*.

Seuda Shlishis, Parshas Toldos, 5767

At the third meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"a* spoke inspiring words regarding the flawless knife of a righteous *shochet* (ritual slaughterer), based on the words of Rebbe Nachman, in *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 278.

Rebbe Nachman says: “Know! It is possible to see the utensils of the Holy Temple on the flawless slaughter knife of a righteous *shochet*. This is what is written: When Yitzchak instructed Esav to inspect his knife and slaughter well (*Bereishis* 27), “Take your utensils, your sword and your bow”. This hints to the utensils of the Holy Temple, which are visible on a proper slaughter knife, as the *Midrash* (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65) explains, “Your utensils” alludes to the utensils of the Holy Temple that were brought to Babylon, as it is said (*Daniel* 1) “and he brought the *utensils* to the treasury of his god”. We see from here that “utensils” alludes to the utensils of the Holy Temple.

Rebbe Nachman also said at that time: In reference to Pinchas, the Torah writes “By his being zealous for My jealousy” (*Bamidbar* 25) – this is the aspect of the *tzaddik* who is jealous of no other *tzaddik*, neither in this world or the next, but only of G-d Himself”. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained the connection between these two statements of Rebbe Nachman. The flawless knife of a *shochet* is very closely related to the utensils used in the Holy Temple. This is because the work of the *shochet* is to elevate the *nefesh* (soul) of the animal being slaughtered, thereby causing a complete *tikkun* (rectification). Because when he slaughters the animal with Heavenly awe and with the proper intention, he elevates the *nefesh* that was reincarnated within that animal to its proper place. Therefore, it is necessary to say the blessing for slaughtering with great intention, because through this act, he elevates the *nefesh* from the level of an animal to that of a human (*Likutei Mohoran* I, lesson 37). In this process the *shochet* actually works in elevating all parts of creation to their proper source. Man eats a properly slaughtered animal – that eats the vegetation – that grows from the earth. The soul is then elevated through all four parts of creation – inanimate, vegetation, animal and human – to its source. And this was the main purpose of the service in the Holy Temple; because all who worked in the Holy Temple performing the sacrifices – which were living animals, slaughtered and brought upon the altar – elevated them to their source. Therefore, it is possible to see how the utensils of the Holy Temple looked on the knife of the slaughterer

because he is performing the same type of holy service as the *Kohanim* (priests) performed in the Temple.

Rebbe Nachman explains (*Likutei Mohoran* Part I, Lesson 37) that the livelihood of the Jewish Nation comes through the merit of a worthy *shochet*. This is why the ritual knife is called “*ma’acheles*” (slaughtering knife), because it “*ma’achil*” (sustains) livelihood to Israel. The opposite is also true, the main reason that there is a lack of livelihood in these generations, in due to the slaughterers not being worthy. These unclean and unfit meats are worthy to be cast to the dogs as it is written (*Shemos* 22), “any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; you shall cast to the dogs.” And concerning dogs, our holy sages said (*Shabbat* 155), “There is no creature poorer than a dog”. Therefore, an unfit *shochet* that provides unclean and unfit meat to Jews, G-d forbid, causes the portion of the dogs (i.e. poverty, lack of livelihood) to all those who eat their meat, G-d forbid. For this reason, we must be very careful from where we purchase our meat and not purchase it from just any *shochet*; rather from one that we are sure is a truly worthy one.

And this is the connection to the second statement of Rebbe Nachman. When Rebbe Nachman revealed the first lesson of how one can see the utensils of the Holy Temple on the knife of the righteous slaughterer, Reb Noson became so enthusiastic that his soul almost left his body! He said to Rebbe Nachman, “Rebbe, it seems to me that you don’t have anyone to be jealous of, not in this world nor the next”. Rebbe Nachman answered that this is alluded to in the verse (*Bamidbar* 25), “By his being zealous for My jealousy” – this is the aspect of the *tzaddik* who is jealous of no other *tzaddik*, neither in this world or the next, but only of G-d Himself”. This is the connection between the two statements of Rebbe Nachman.

Mohorosh continued that perhaps we can take this connection a step further. The greatness of the true *tzaddik* that is not jealous of any other *tzaddik*, not in this world or the next, is actually a revelation of the Divine presence that rested in the Holy Temple. He is not jealous of anyone because he possesses great wisdom, which gives him the spiritual qualities of the Holy Temple. As our sages of blessed memory said (*Berachos* 33), “One who possess knowledge, it is as if the Holy Temple was built in his days”. Our holy sages also said (*Pirkei Avos* 4) “Who is wise? He who learns from everyone. Who is mighty? He that subdues his passions? Who is wealthy? He who is happy with his lot? Who is honored? He that honors his fellow man. We find that the true *tzaddik*, who possesses all these traits – who learns from everyone, subdues his passions, is happy with his lot and honors his fellow man – isn’t jealous of anyone at all. Because he possesses all the

wisdom, courage, wealth and honor he has no reason to be jealous of others. The revelation of the Divine presence is revealed within him, literally, like it was revealed in the Holy Temple. Therefore, the *tzaddik* who sees the utensils of the Holy Temple by looking at the knife of a *shochet* certainly doesn't need to be jealous of any other *tzaddik* in this world or the next. Because the Divine presence is revealed through him like it was revealed in the Holy Temple and there is no notion of jealousy in him at all. Happy is the one who merits this high level.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas to our *parsha* in a most wonderful way. Rebbe Nachman's lesson about the righteous slaughterer is based on the verse in this week's *parsha* (*Bereishis* 27), "And take your utensils..." Yitzchak instructed Esav to take the knife and slaughter well. The *Midrash* says (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65, par. 13) that '**your utensils**' alludes to the utensils of the Holy Temple. Yitzchak *Avinu* cleaved to Hashem so greatly and reached a level of Divine inspiration being revealed to him like it was in the Holy Temple because he had actually placed himself upon the altar on Mount *Moriah* – the future location of the Holy Temple – to be slaughtered for the sanctification of Hashem's name. This is why the knife used for his slaughter at the *Akedah* (binding of Yitzchak) was called *ma'acheles*" (*Bereishis* 22) as our sages said (*Bereishis Rabbah* 56, par. 3), "All of the food that Jews eat in this world, is in the merit of the *ma'acheles*. The souls of Israel are sustained in each generation from the *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice) of Abraham and Yitzchak on Mount *Moriah* – which is the place of the Holy Temple.

And this is alluded to in the end of the verse "**and go forth to the field, and hunt game for me**". The *Baal HaTurim* remarks that we find the expression "**and go forth**" in two places; the first here and the second regarding the war against Amalek (*Shemos* 17). Amalek is forever attacking Israel by cooling them off from their *avodas Hashem* (Divine service) as it is written (*Devarim* 25) "who cooled you off on the way". He does this by infusing Israel with all kinds of doubts and confusions in order to keep them away from *emuna* (faith), G-d forbid, and therefore the *gematria* (numerical value) of Amalek (240) – is the same as *sofeik* (doubt). And Amalek is compared to a dog who comes to lick the blood of Israel (See *Midrash Tanchuma, Ki Tetzei*); because he has the intensity of dogs which is written of them (*Yeshayahu* 56), "dogs are greedy; they know not when they have enough". From them stem the characteristics of jealousy and hatred, because whoever doesn't have satisfaction always envies what others have and desires to have whatever they have.

Therefore, when Yitzchak instructed Esav to "**go forth** to the field, and hunt game for me"; he wanted him to slaughter properly in order to reveal the utensils of the

Holy Temple. At the same time he also hinted that he should direct his slaughtering to fulfill the second “**go forth**” of waging war against Amalek, because through the proper slaughtering, surely the name of Amalek will be obliterated from the world. At that time all of the jealousy and the hatred of the wicked will be nullified and the light of the Divine presence will be revealed to the entire world. May Hashem grant us the merit of eating from truly righteous slaughterers only and to draw down upon us all kinds of spiritual and material bounty. Until we merit to see the redemption and salvation of Israel soon and in our days. *Amen v’amen.*