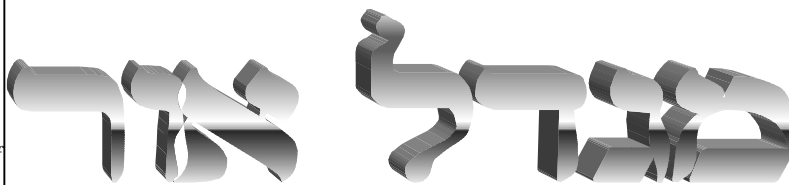


**Mazel Tov!!**  
**Raizy and Yeruchem**  
**Diskind**  
*May you build a Bayis Ne'eman  
B'Yisrael and remain a source of  
nachas to your family, friends,  
and the Ribono Shel Olam.*

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*A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah*

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**ציון חיים בן מאיר וחנה ע"ה**  
**Sion Chaim Ahlzadeh**  
**יארציט'ח' כסלו**  
**By his children and  
grandchildren.**

## **Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:15 - הדלקת נרות  
4:33 - שקיעה  
8:40 - זק"ש מ"א  
9:16 - זק"ש גר"א  
10:05 - סוף זמן תפילה  
4:33 - שקיעה  
5:15 - צאת הכוכבים  
5:45 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Eisav said, "Behold, I am on my way to die, of what use is the birthright to me?"

R' Ben Tzion Shafier of "The Shmuz" gives a fascinating insight into the age-old question of whether the glass is "half-full" or "half-empty," which is buttressed by this verse.

R' Shafier notes that when a pessimist sees a glass filled halfway with water, he knows that eventually the glass will be entirely empty. Therefore, he doesn't see it as half-empty, he sees it as completely empty because what he has now will be gone at some point so what's so great about having it now? The pessimist goes through life enjoying nothing.

The optimist, on the other hand, knows that eventually the glass may be refilled, so he sees it as completely full. He relishes the present and looks forward to more good in the future. The optimist goes through life enjoying everything, and troubles don't bother him so much because he knows they will pass.

Eisav showed himself to be a pessimist. He was looking towards the day of death as the ignoble end, the ultimate "empty glass." No matter what he had, he could not see the value or find joy in it because he saw an empty future.

Yaakov, however, and his children, have the ability to see the good, to enjoy what we have, and to know that HaShem can always give us even more bracha. We can be optimistic and we can be happy.

Based on "The Shmuz" by R' B. Shafier  
www.theshmuz.com

## **Thought of the week:**

**Having children makes one no more a parent than having a piano makes you a pianist.**

**"ואלה תולדת יצחק בן אברהם, אברהם הוליד את יצחק." (בראשית כה:יט)**

**"These are the descendants of Yitzchak, son of Avraham, Avraham bore Yitzchak."**

This parsha begins with a curious posuk. First, we are told that Yitzchak was the son of Avraham, and that Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak. Isn't that obvious? Rashi explains that they looked alike so the "comedians" of the day would not be able to say that Avimelech was actually Yitzchak's father. However, it's still unusual, and it gets more intriguing.

When the Torah lists the descendants of Yishmael just prior to this verse, it launches into the list of names right away. In this case, before mentioning the names of Yaakov and Eisav, the Torah digresses to say that Yitzchak and Rivka were childless for twenty years, that they prayed, and then that she had a difficult pregnancy. It documents her prenatal visit to the yeshiva of Shaim to understand what was happening inside her. Finally it tells us of their birth and the attributes they possessed. Why does the first posuk say, "These are the descendants" if it is not ready to tell us who the descendants are?

We may gain an insight from some answers to our first question. Why does the Torah have to say that Avraham bore Yitzchak if it just said Yitzchak was his son? The Kli Yakar says that the verb tense used does not mean "gave birth," but "caused to give birth." The Torah tells us that Yitzchak was answered when he prayed because his prayers, as the prayers of a righteous man the son of a righteous man, were more efficacious than Rivka's. In essence, Avraham's merit *caused* Yitzchak to give birth.

The Ohr HaChaim takes this a step further and says that originally Yitzchak's soul was incapable of bearing children but through the Akeida, at the hand of Avraham, it was enhanced with the ability to give birth. In other words, Avraham caused Yitzchak to be able to have children. He then mentions one more key factor.

He says that the descendants of Yitzchak were more exalted than the descendants of Avraham because Yitzchak was the righteous son of a righteous father. As great as he was, Avraham was still Avraham son of Terach, the idolater. And though Chazal tell us Terach repented at the end of his life, says the Ohr HaChaim, at the time of Avraham's birth, and on until close to his death, Terach was considered a rasha, a wicked person, and the evil actions of the father "darken the light of the spirit of the son." Thus, Avraham's righteousness made Yitzchak's progeny greater than his own.

What we see is that the actions of parents have a tremendous effect on the child. Spiritual genetics are at work, and from the words of the Ohr HaChaim, it is clear that one continues to have a spiritual effect on his child throughout his life, either positively or negatively.

Now we understand why the listing of Yitzchak's children had to begin with the story of their parents. It was the experiences they went through, the tearful prayers they offered up, and the guidance and wisdom that they sought, which became a part of who their children were.

As parents, we have responsibilities to ensure we are treading the path of righteousness for we will affect our children's lives no matter what we do. As children, we must acknowledge all our parents have done for us and recognize that who we are, in large part, we owe to them. And, if sadly, one did not merit to have righteous parents, it is up to him to be like Avraham and ensure that his children have the advantage he missed, to be the righteous child of a righteous parent.

*A fellow once came to R' Yaakov Kaminetsky z"l with a chinuch question.*

*"My son just turned two years old," he said. "My wife and I were wondering when we should begin teaching him Torah and Mitzvos. At what age does chinuch begin"*

*"Ah," sighed R' Yaakov, "You're about three years too late. Chinuch must begin well before the child is even born."*