

## Fill Your Own Cup 5786

### Fall Series – Session Five – Re-Digging the Wells

#### 1) Genesis Chapter 26: 1- 6, 12-23

There was a famine in the land—aside from the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham—and Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerar.

God had appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land which I point out to you.

Reside in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; I will assign all these lands to you and to your heirs, fulfilling the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your heirs as numerous as the stars of heaven, and assign to your heirs all these lands, so that all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your heirs— inasmuch as Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge: My commandments, My laws, and My teachings.”

So Isaac stayed in Gerar...

Isaac sowed in that land and reaped a hundredfold the same year. God blessed him, and the man grew richer and richer until he was very wealthy: he acquired flocks and herds, and a large household, so that the Philistines envied him.

And the Philistines stopped up all the wells which his father’s servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham, filling them with earth.

And Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you have become far too big for us.”

So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the wadi of Gerar, where he settled.

**Isaac dug anew the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham and which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham’s death; and he gave them the same names that his father had given them.**

But when Isaac’s servants, digging in the wadi, found there a well of spring water,

the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water is ours.” He named that well Esek, because they contended with him.

And when they dug another well, they disputed over that one also; so he named it Sitnah.

He moved from there and dug yet another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he called it Rehoboth, saying, “Now at last God has granted us ample space to increase in the land.”

#### בראשית כו:

וַיְהִי רָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ מִלְכָּד הָרָעָב הָרָאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל-אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ-פְּלִשְׁתִּים גֶּרָר:

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יִצְחָק מִצְרַיִם שְׁכֹן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלֶיךָ:

גֹּיִר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְאֶבְרַכְךָ כִּי-לֹא וְלֹנֶרְעָה אֶתֵּן אֶת-כָּל-הָאֲרָצַת הָאֵל וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת-הַשְּׂבִיעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ:

וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת-זֶרְעֶךָ כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶת כָּל-הָאֲרָצַת הָאֵל וְהִתְפַּרְכוּ בְּזֶרְעֶךָ כָּל גּוֹי הָאֲרָץ:

לְעֵקֶב אֲשֶׁר-שָׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּקוֹלִי וַיִּשְׁמַר מִשְׁמַרְתִּי מִצְוֹתַי חֻקֹּתַי וְתוֹרֹתַי:

וַיָּשָׁב יִצְחָק בְּגֶרָר:

וַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק בְּאֶרֶץ הַהִוא וַיִּמְצָא בִשְׁנָה הַהִוא מֵאָה שְׁעָרִים וַיִּבְרַכְהוּ יְהוָה:

וַיִּגְדַּל הָאִישׁ וַיֵּלֶךְ הָלוֹךְ וַיִּגְדַּל עַד כִּי-גָדַל מְאֹד: וַיִּהְיֶה-לוֹ מִקְנֵה-צֹאן וּמִקְנֵה בָקָר וְעֶבְדָּה רַבָּה וַיִּקְנֶאוּ אֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים:

וְכָל-הַבְּאֵרֹת אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ עֲבָדָיו אֲבִיו בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו סָתְמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּמְלְאוּם עָפָר:

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ אֶל-יִצְחָק לֵךְ מֵעִמָּנוּ כִּי-עֲצַמְתָּ מִמָּנוּ מְאֹד:

וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם יִצְחָק וַיִּסֵּן בְּנִסְחַל-גֶּרָר וַיָּשָׁב שָׁם:

וַיָּשָׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחְפֹּר אֶת-בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיו וַיִּסְתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶן שְׁמוֹת כַּשֵּׁמֶת אֲשֶׁר-קָרָא לָהֶן אָבִיו:

וַיַּחְפְּרוּ עֲבָדֵי-יִצְחָק בְּנִסְחַל וַיִּמְצְאוּ-שָׁם בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים:

וַיָּרִיבוּ רֹעֵי גֶרָר עִם-רֹעֵי יִצְחָק לֵאמֹר לָנוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם-הַבְּאֵר עֵשֶׂק כִּי הִתְעַשְׁקוּ עִמּוֹ:

וַיַּחְפְּרוּ בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וַיָּרִיבוּ גַם-עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ שִׁטְנָה:

וַיַּעֲתֵק מִשָּׁם וַיַּחְפֹּר בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וְלֹא רָבוּ עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ רְחוֹבוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי-עָתָה הִרְחִיב יְהוָה לָנוּ וַפְּרִינוּ בְּאֶרֶץ:

## 2) The Differences Between Avraham and Yitzchak, Rav Amnon Bazak

<https://www.etzion.org.il/en/tanakh/torah/sefer-bereishit/parashat-toldot/toldot-2-differences-between-avraham-and-yitzchak>

Yitzchak is often portrayed as an exact parallel to Avraham. This idea seems to be reflected in the following excerpt from the Midrash ha-Gadol (Bereishit 26:1):

"Note that all that happened to Avraham, happened [also] to Yitzchak. Avraham had to leave his place, and [likewise] Yitzchak had to leave. The identity of Avraham's wife was questioned, and likewise the identity of Yitzchak's wife. The Philistines were jealous of Avraham, and likewise of Yitzchak. Avraham eventually had a son, and Yitzchak also eventually had children. Avraham had a righteous son and a wicked son, and likewise Yitzchak. In Avraham's time there was a famine, and likewise in the time of Yitzchak, as it is written: 'There was a famine in the land.'"

On the basis of these similarities, many have concluded that Yitzchak had nothing new to offer the world. His greatness lay chiefly in his ability to preserve and secure the way of his father, Avraham. In this shiur, I shall posit quite the opposite: every point of comparison between Avraham and Yitzchak serves only to accentuate the differences between them. These differences demonstrate that Yitzchak repaired and completed the actions of his father, and as a result attained certain ends that Avraham himself had not merited to attain...

Avraham our forefather paved the way. His ceaseless moving – from the first "Lekh lekha," sending him to Israel, to the last, sending him to Moriah - created a completely new path in the world. But – as in any new road – there is room for repair and completion of deficiencies, without which no new beginning could ever exist. This is the job of the continuer of the way – Yitzchak. With determination and conscientiousness, Yitzchak strengthens the connection with the promised land and deals with the corrupt inhabitants of the land. With great faith he addresses his wife's barrenness and also manages to influence even the evil ways of his son, Esav.

## 3) Sefat Emet, Toldot, 5636

"And all the wells that his father's servants had dug, etc., the Philistines stopped them up, etc., and Isaac returned and dug, etc." It is taught: "We only call three 'Patriarchs'—meaning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The question arises: if so, why not just follow the first and call only Abraham a Patriarch? **The reason is that every righteous person has merit through their ancestors, but the three Patriarchs—each one is worthy in his own right.** As it says in the Midrash on the verse "And I will remember My covenant with Jacob, etc.": each one is worthy on his own.

Corresponding to this, the verse teaches here that all the spiritual illuminations that his father attained were later blocked, and Isaac had to dig and clarify the straight path for himself. This is also what is meant by "There was a famine in the land besides the first famine, etc." The Midrash says there are ten famines in the world, meaning there are ten attributes corresponding to the ten utterances of creation, which the righteous must fulfill. As it says in Avot: "In order to give good reward to the righteous, etc." Abraham our father, peace be upon him, rectified the attribute of kindness and love and fixed the famine that was in his days. Afterwards, there was another famine, etc., and similarly with Jacob, etc.

## שפת אמת, תולדות, תרל"ו

וכל הבארות אשר חפרו עבדי אביו כו' שתמום פלשתים כו' וישב יצחק ויחפור כו'. דאיתא אין קורין אבות אלא לשלשה פי' אברהם יצחק ויעקב. וקשה ממ"נ א"כ ניזול בתר קמא ונקרא אב רק לאברהם. אבל טעם הענין כי כל צדיק יש לו בזכות אבותיו. אבל הג' אבות כ"א כדאי לעצמו. כדאיתא במדרש ע"פ וזכרתי את בריתי יעקב כו' כ"א כדאי לעצמו. מול זה מגיד הכתוב כאן כי כל ההארות אשר השיג אביו נסתמו אח"כ והוכרח יצחק לחפור ולברר הדרך הישר בעצמו. וזהו ג"כ מ"ש ויהי רעב בארץ מלבד הרעב הראשון כו' כדאיתא במד' י' רעבון בעולם. פי' שיש עשרה מידות נגד עשרה מאמרות שצריכין הצדיקים לקיים אותם. כדאיתא באבות כדי ליתן שכר טוב לצדיקים כו'. ואברהם אבינו ע"ה תיקן בחי' החסד ואהבה ותיקן הרעב שהי' בימיו. אח"כ ויהי רעב אחר כו'. וכן ביעקב כו'. והאמת כי אחר כל תיקון נעשה הסתר חדש. וזהו ג"כ מ"ש ולאום מלאום יאמץ. פי' כמ"ש חז"ל כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול ממנו. וכן הוא כל

The truth is that after every rectification, a new concealment arises. This is also what is meant by “One nation shall be stronger than the other”—as our sages said: “Whoever is greater than his fellow, his evil inclination is greater than his.” The more a person rectifies himself, the more the power of the evil inclination and the ‘other side’ increases against him. Through this, he gains more strength to overcome it and is elevated further. This process continues, level after level—understand this well. Similarly, if Abraham’s path had not been concealed, there would have been no need to seek a new path afterwards. Therefore, “there was a famine, etc.,” and Isaac had to seek for himself the path of awe and strength.

[And it is written: “Do not go down to Egypt,” because the deeds of the fathers benefit the children so that they do not have to do everything themselves. That is, Abraham went down to Egypt, and the Zohar explains that he had to enter and rectify all the dangerous places to nullify the famine that came from the ‘other side.’ Isaac was prepared for this, but was told, “Do not go down, etc.,” because the preparation was sufficient. Thus, it says, “choosing their ways, etc.,” meaning that since he is prepared to follow his fathers’ deeds, he does not need to do it in actuality—only Abraham, as the first rectifier, had to be tested with ten actual trials. Thus it says, “because Abraham listened to My voice, etc.” Therefore, there was no need to go down to Egypt in actuality, as explained above.]

**Similarly, in every individual, one must rectify all ten levels mentioned above.** Certainly, Abraham was truly God-fearing, as it says, “Now I know that you are God-fearing.” The fact that his trait was kindness and love means that through love he came to awe, and Isaac, through awe, came to love. But all the traits are included within each other. Thus it says, “Isaac, son of Abraham, etc.” And so Ramban writes: in worldly matters, love and awe contradict each other, for if one loves, awe does not apply. But in serving God, love and awe unite, for true love brings to awe, and true awe brings to love, as explained above.

מה שאדם מתקן עצמו ביותר ניתוסף כח היצר וס"א נגדו. ועי"ז הוא מוסיף כח לגבור נגדו. ומתעלה יותר. וזה נוהג מדריגה אחר מדריגה והבן. וכן לולי שהי' נסתר דרך אברהם לא הי' מחפשין דרך חדש אח"כ. לכן ויהי רעב כו' והוצרך יצחק לחפש לו דרך היראה והגבורה. [וכתיב אל תרד מצרימה. כי מעשה אבות עולה לבנים שלא יצטרכו לעשות הכל בפועל. פי' כי אברהם ירד למצרים ופי' בזה"ק שהוצרך להכניס עצמו לתקן כל מקומות המסוכנים כדי לבטל הרעב שבא מס"א ע"ש. ויצחק הי' מוכן לזה ונאמר לו אל תרד כו'. כי ההכנה לזה הי' די. וז"ש בוחר בדרכיהם כו' שכיון שמוכן למעשה אבותיו א"צ להראות בפועל ממש רק אברהם אבינו ע"ה שהי' המתקן הראשון הי' צריך להתנסות בעשרה נסיונות בפועל. וז"ש עקב אשר שמע אברהם בקולי כו'. לכן א"צ עוד לירד למצרים בפועל כנ"ל]. וכן יש בפרט בכל א' שצריך לתקן כל עשרה מדריגות הנ"ל. ובוודאי אברהם אבינו ע"ה הי' ירא שמים לאמיתו כמ"ש עתה ידעתי כי י"א אתה. ומה שמדתו הי' חסד ואהבה הוא שע"י האהבה בא להיראה ויצחק ע"י היראה בא לאהבה. אבל כל המדות כלולין זה בזה. וז"ש יצחק בן אברהם כו' וכ"כ הרמב"ן ז"ל כי בעניני עוה"ז אהבה ויראה סותרין זה לזה כי מזה שאוהב אותו לא שייך יראה. זולת בעבודת המקום מתיידין אהבה ויראה כו'. כי אהבה אמיתית היא שמביאה לידי יראה וכן יראה אמיתית היא שמביאה לידי אהבה כנ"ל: