

Parsha Knowledge

TORAH THOUGHTS, STORIES, AND INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

פֶּרֶשֶׁת וַאֲרָא

ג' שבט תשפ"ד

Year 3 Issue 14

Parsha Sponsor: The Benzecry Family

וַאֲרָא...

"I appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov..." (Shemos 6:3)

In this week's Parsha Hashem speaks to Moshe saying, *"Va'eira el Avraham el Yitzchak ve'el Yaakov"* – And I appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. Rashi says: *va'eira el ha'avos*, I appeared to the forefathers. Now Rashi is there to edify and illuminate. Everyone knows Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were the *avos* (forefathers). What is Rashi trying to teach us here? The pasuk explicitly cited who Hashem appeared to - it enumerates Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. So, what is Rashi contributing when he says I appeared to the *avos*? We know exactly who Hashem appeared to from the pasuk itself!

I would like to share with you something incredible that I heard from my father, Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita: The Chasam Sofer says something amazing. He says that *avos* in this context does not mean forefathers. *Avos* comes from the word *avah* which means to want, to desire, to yearn for. Rashi is telling us that the reason why Hashem appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov was because they had sincerity. It was because they wanted. It was because they yearned. It was because they desired. The *mesirus nefesh*, devotion, and passion they had for Hashem was unparalleled. There is something that they had that we could also tap into and that is *avah*. They had a tremendous desire to know and connect to

Hashem. They didn't want to go through life observing mitzvos just because it is popular, and it is the right thing to do. It's because they feel this visceral, deep connection - they want to do a mitzvah. That's why Hashem appeared to them. Says the Chasam Sofer, anyone who yearns, anyone who wants, anyone who desires, anyone who's genuine and sincerely wants a relationship with Hashem that's *va'eira*. Hashem will appear to him! What an amazing thing!

The Netziv, Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin zt"l, lived a few hundred years ago. He was one of the most famous rabbis of his generation. He related that when he was a child, he never paid attention in class. He would always sit around and do nothing. One day he came home from yeshiva, and he heard his parents talking. His father was explaining how he'd spoken to the teacher and together they'd concluded that young Naftoli Tzvi would never amount to anything in terms of scholarship. So, his father explained, he was arranging to enroll him – the young Netziv as an apprentice shoemaker as soon as he became Bar Mitzvah.

The Netziv was so shocked by this conversation that he ran to his parents and exclaimed: 'I'm sorry I've been so negligent with my studies. Please give me one more chance to prove that I'm a good student.' From that day onward, he applied himself to the study of the Torah with tremendous vigor and dedication and Hashem granted him tremendous success. With that he became one of the greatest Rabbis! *Avah* – the Netziv had a real sincere desire to change and a desire to grow. When he decided to change Hashem appeared to him! Hashem helped him!

Have a Great Shabbos!

By Aryeh F.

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