

Parsha Knowledge

STORIES & INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

פֶּרֶשֶׁת וַאֲרָא

כ"ה טבת תשפ"ה

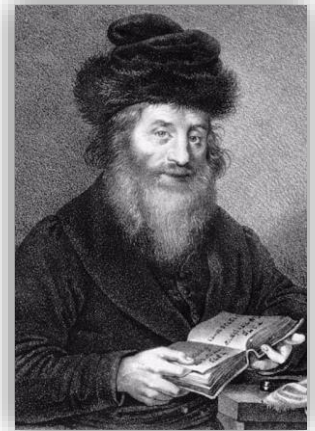
Year 4 Issue 13

Parsha Sponsor: The Kenigsberg Family

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“I appeared...” (Shemos 6:3)

In this week's Parsha, Hashem speaks to Moshe. The Pasuk says, “*Va'eira el Avraham el Yitzchak ve'el Yaakov*” – Hashem told Moshe that He appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. On this pasuk, Rashi says: *Va'eira El Ha'avos*, Hashem was telling Moshe that he appeared to the *Avos* – to the forefathers. There is a big question here. Rashi is there to edify and illuminate. Everyone knows Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were the *Avos* - everyone knows that Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were our forefathers. What is Rashi teaching us here? What is Rashi accomplishing when he says, “I appeared to the *Avos*?” We know that Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were the *Avos*!



The Chasam Sofer

I would like to share with you an incredible answer that I heard from my father, Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita: The Chasam Sofer says that in this context when Rashi says *Avos* it doesn't mean forefathers. *Avos* comes from the word *Avah* which means to want, to desire. Rashi is telling us that the reason why Hashem appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov was because *Avah* - they had a sincerity and desire. Hashem appeared to them not because they were the *avos* but because they were yearning for greatness. Hashem appeared to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov because they had a desire to become great – because they had a desire to know and connect to Him. That's something we can all tap into. If we have a desire to become great, we can accomplish so much. Hashem wants us to try. Hashem wants us to come close to him. All we must do is take that first step and Hashem will help us with the rest.

A wealthy man once walked into the Novardok Yeshiva. He approached the Rosh Yeshiva and said that he had a daughter in shidduchim, and he wanted the best bachur in the yeshiva to

marry her. The Rosh Yeshiva walked around the Beis Midrash together with him. He pointed to a certain bachur and said, "He is the biggest *masmid* (has the most diligence) in the Yeshiva." The Rosh Yeshiva then walked a little further, pointed to another bachur, and said, "he is the best *lamden* (learner) in the Yeshiva." The Rosh Yeshiva then pointed to another bachur and said, "He is the greatest *tzaddik* in the Yeshiva." The rich man began to grow a little impatient and said, "Rebbi that's so nice and beautiful but tell me. Who is the best bachur in the Yeshiva? Which boy would be good for my daughter?"

The Rosh Yeshiva thought for a moment and pointed to a bachur sitting in the corner of the Beis Medrash and said, "Him! He is by far the best bachur in the entire Yeshiva! He will be the best pick for your daughter." The man turned to the Rosh Yeshiva and said, "Rebbi, I'm a bit confused. You just pointed out the biggest *masmid*, the biggest *lamden*, and the biggest *tzaddik* in the Yeshiva. How is this bachur the best in the yeshiva? He's not the biggest *masmid*, *lamden*, or *tzaddik*, so what's so great about him? Why should I choose him to be my daughter's husband?"

With a twinkle in his eye, the Rosh Yeshiva replied, "This bachur is the biggest *mevakesh*. This bachur has the strongest desire to learn, grow, and understand Torah. This bachur wants to get closer to Hashem and improve himself more than anyone else in the Yeshiva. Not only that but I'm sure that because of this he will outperform those other three boys even though he's not as smart as them."



The Steipler Gaon

You may be wondering who this young man became. Even though he seemed to not be the greatest or smartest, this young man ended up outshining his peers who seemingly had more advantages over him. You won't believe who that young man became. That bachur became none other than the Steipler Gaon, Rav Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky zt"l one of the most revered Gedolei Yisroel and father of the Gadol HaDor, Rav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l! Why? How did the Steipler become so great? Because *avah* – he had a desire. The Steipler put in effort and tried his best. He became so great because of his sincerity and desire to get closer to Hashem. We can all learn from that. Let's all try to grow and strive to become greater people. Hashem wants our sincerity. Hashem wants to see us try. Let's take that first step. Every single step we take is so precious in Hashem's eyes. Let's do this! Let's show Hashem that we want to get closer to him!

Have a Great Shabbos!

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