



# Kinder Torah



Dedicated in Loving Memory of Ralph and Anita Siegel ob"m.

## The Flowing Well

“A nd the servants of Yitzchak came and told him about the well they had dug, and they said to him, ‘We have found water!’” (Bereshis 26:32). The Torah devotes quite a few verses to describing the various wells that Yitzchak opened. Avraham Avinu’s servants had dug several wells. The Pelishtim filled them with earth, thereby stopping them up. Yitzchak’s servants came along, cleared away the dirt, and unstopped the wells. What is the significance of all this?

The Opta Rav, in his sefer, “Ohev Yisrael” presents a novel and interesting interpretation of this verse. The well represents the wellsprings of Torah knowledge, wisdom, and understanding found within every Jew. When the well flows, the *neshama* (soul) prospers. Sometimes the well cannot flow properly. Why? It is stopped up. With what? With the *ofar* (earth) of which we are made. This represents the physical body, which can overpower the well of the *neshama* and prevent it from flowing. Each and every Jew must “open his well” by removing the excess *gashmius* that blocks up his *neshama*. A person can accomplish this in a positive way, by busying himself with Torah and mitzvos, which have the power to weaken the *gashmius* and remove the spiritual dirt.

However, some people have huge obstacles preventing their well from running. They need extra help unblocking it. Hashem brings upon them His “*middos ha’din*” (strict judgment) in ways that are unpleasant. People’s eyes suddenly open, as the blockage that was preventing them from seeing Him is removed. The verse expresses this process as “the servants of Yitzchak”. They (Yitzchak’s *middos ha’din*) are sent to unstop the well. They successfully fulfill their mission and become transformed. “And they (the servants of Yitzchak) said to him” (Bereshis 26:32). The word for “said” is “*vayagidu*”. The Opta Rav explains that this is similar to the word “*megged*” - sweetness. Once the servants perform their mission by removing the dirt, they become sweetened. The person does not look upon the “*middos ha’din*” bitterly, because they have helped him.

“We have found water!” (Bereshis 26:32). The wellspring of Torah and wisdom begins to flow again, after the well has been unstopped. And all of the harsh “*dinim*” are transformed

to sweet *rachamim* and *chassadim* (merciful and kind deeds) as a result of the great thing that they accomplished.

*Kinderlach . . .  
The Opta Rav gives us a very positive view of “middos ha’din”. Sometimes we encounter unpleasant events. We get sick or injured. We have a conflict with a difficult person. We lose a significant amount of money. We are stuck in a crowded bus, or a long line at the post office, testing our patience to its limits. The Opta Rav tells us to cheer up. We have met the “servants of Yitzchak”. They were sent to help us clean up the well of our neshama. Welcome them with simcha, and allow them to do their job. See the Hand of Hashem in it all. They will be transformed from bitter to sweet, and you will feel Hashem’s rachmonus, helping you to get closer to Him.*



## Keeping Busy

“Ha ha ha! Look at that little tsaddik!” the boys said in a loud, mocking voice. “His *tzitzis* are so long that they reach the ground!”

*The young boy squirmed in his seat on the bus. Those teenagers were mocking him and everyone around them.*

“Don’t look so shocked old man! We are really good boys at heart! Ha ha ha!”

*The decent people cringed at this public display of horrible middos (character traits).*

A young boy quietly asked his father, “How did these boys get so far off, Abba?”

“Yitzy, every person is an individual, with his own story. Who knows exactly what

went wrong? However I can share with you a Devar Torah on this week’s parasha from Rav Moshe Aharon Stern zt”l which sheds a lot of light on the subject.”

“Please, Abba.”

“The Torah describes the two brothers, Yaakov and Eisav. ‘The lads grew up and Eisav became a man who knows how to hunt, a man of the field, and Yaakov was a wholesome man, dwelling in tents’ (Bereshis 25:27). Yaakov was a great tsaddik, a straight, upright young man, who sat in the tents of Shem and Ever, learning Torah. Eisav, on the other hand, was a terrible *rasha* (evil person), a man of the field. Rashi explains that he was an idle person who hunts wild animals and birds with his bow.”

“Abba, what is so terrible about being an idle person?”

“Brilliant, Yitzy! You have touched the heart of the matter. Eisav was a murderer, an immoral person who committed every *aveyra* (sin) possible. Yet the worst thing that the Torah can say about him is that he was an idle person?! Rav Moshe Aharon explains in the name of Rav Elya Lopian zt”l that idleness was not the worst thing that we find in Eisav. Rather it was the cause of everything that he did. Why was he a murderer? Because he was an idle person, and idleness leads to terrible *middos*.”

“I understand. Abba, I always see these boys sitting around doing nothing.”

“Exactly, Yitzy. That idleness is the cause of many evils.”

*Kinderlach . . .  
We are always busy. Doing what? Mitzvos. Learning Torah, helping people, praying, rejoicing on the Chagim; our lives are filled with mitzvos. That is good for two reasons. One, mitzvos are great! They bring us close to Hashem, and as a result, He gives us great reward and blessing. Secondly, one who is busy is not idle. He will avoid falling into the trap of bad middos that idleness brings. Keep yourselves busy, kinderlach, with mitzvos, mitzvos, and more mitzvos.*

### Parasha Questions

- Why was Eisav named Eisav? (Rashi 25:25)
- Who died on the day that Eisav sold his *bechora* to Yaakov? (Rashi 25:30)
- Why did Eisav not want the *bechora*? (Rashi 25:32)
- Why did Yitzchak not go to Mitzraim during the famine? (26:2 and Rashi)
- What do the words “*mea shearim*” mean? (26:12 and Rashi)