

Kindert Torah

Parashas Vayera

T"01

Ein Kelokein

“Abba, I have prayed to Hashem for something so many times, and I have not yet received it. What shall I do?”

“Dovid HaMelech reveals the solution in the last verse of *Li'Dovid, Hashem Ori*. ‘Hope to Hashem; strengthen yourself and He will give you courage, and hope to Hashem.’¹ He repeats the phrase ‘Hope to Hashem’ twice. Why? The Gemora² explains, ‘What if a person prays and is not answered? He should pray again. As the verse states, **“Hope to Hashem; strengthen yourself and He will give you courage, and hope to Hashem”**’. The Medrash³ adds, ‘Pray, return, and pray again, and there will be a time when your request will be granted.’ Rebbe Chiya bar Abba⁴ darshens the verse as follows. ‘If you prayed and prayed again be informed that your *tefillah* was heard, and your request will be fulfilled.’”

“Wow! This inspires me to redouble my efforts to pray for what I want.”

“Excellent, Avi! Do you know that this verse is so important, that it has been incorporated into the daily prayers? We say it, along with two other verses, before *Ein Kelokein*. Why should we hope (and pray) to Hashem? Because there is none as holy as Him, none besides Him, and no Rock (stronghold) like Him.⁵ Who is a god other than Him, and who is a Rock like Him?”⁶

“Can you please teach me all about it Abba?”

“With pleasure, Avi. The Dover Shalom relates that the four descriptions of Hashem in the *tefillah* appear in the same order that they are arranged in the Torah. The first is *Elokein*, our Creator, which appears in the very first verse of the Torah, *Bereshis bara Elokim*. The second is, *Adoneinu*, our Master. Avraham called Hashem *Adoni* as our Sages relate, “Until Avraham came, no one called Hashem *Adoni*”. The third is *Malkein*, our King, as stated in the verses, ‘Hashem shall reign for all eternity!’⁷ and ‘The friendship of the King is in him.’⁸ Lastly, Hashem is *Moshienu*, our Deliverer, as stated, ‘Hashem is our King; He will save us.’⁹ Rav Shamshon Refoyel Hirsch elaborates on these descriptions of the Almighty and their four applications. We declare that G-d is indeed the One Sole and Unique G-d; *Elokein* – the Creator and Preserver of our lives. He is *Adoneinu* – the Bearer and Supervisor of all of the individual’s affairs. He is *Malkein* – the Guiding Force of our community. Lastly, He is *Moshienu* – the Determiner of our destinies, causing them to culminate in our collective salvation. We use these four descriptions in four separate contexts. Firstly, we declare the Unity of Hashem in positive terms – *Ein Kelokein*. Only afterward do we elaborate on the simple declaration. We invite inquiry, as it were, to whether there

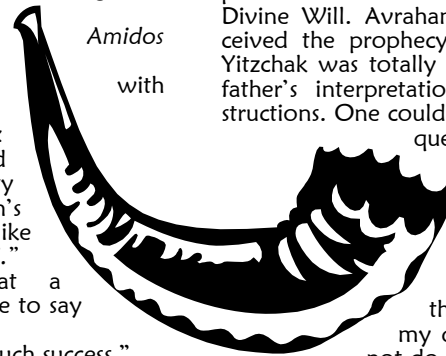
could possibly be any limitation or restriction to G-d’s Oneness – *Mi Kelokein*. Then we turn to Him as our Sole G-d and Rock – *Atto Hu Elokein*. We dedicate our whole being to Him, which not only belongs to Him, but is also forever in His debt. Lastly, we bless Him – *Boruch Elokein*.”

“What a privilege to appreciate and praise all of these aspects of the Almighty’s magnificence, Abba.”

“Indeed it is, Avi. The Kol Bo illuminates an interesting aspect of these twenty expressions of Hashem’s greatness. On Shabbos, the *Amidah* prayer contains only seven *brochos*, which are eleven less than the weekday *Amidah* of eighteen *brochos* (not including *vi’li’malshinim*). Three adds up to 33 less *brochos*. We make this up the seven *brochos* of *Shabbos Mussaf*, the six *brochos* of the third *seudah*, and the twenty expressions of Hashem’s greatness (which are like *brochos*) in *Ein Kelokein*.”

“Amazing, Abba! What a tremendous *tefillah*! I hope to say it with all of my heart!”

“May Hashem give you much success.”



Amidos with

Kindertlach . . .

The Yesod Vi’shoresh Ho’avodah instructs us how to say the tefillah, Ein Kelokein. Put tremendous simcha into your heart! Ein Kelokein – be overjoyed with Hashem’s G-dliness – His hashgacha pratis (personal supervision) upon us His Holy Nation; Ein Kadoneinu – His Mastery of us; Ein Kimalkein – His rule over us; Ein Kimosheinu – He saves us all the time! Who could possibly be like Him? We turn to Him directly, and then bless Him. How happy we are that He is our G-d, and that we are His chosen nation, who is privileged to serve and praise Him. Ein Kelokein – there is no one like Hashem!

The First to Follow

Akeidas Yitzchak was a monumental event in Jewish history. It brings merit to the Jewish people for all generations. It was a test for both Avraham and his son Yitzchak. Rav Mattisyahu Solomon, in his sefer, “With Hearts Full of Faith,” focuses on Yitzchak Avinu. He is the forefather whose deeds are hardly mentioned in the Torah. Who was he, and what was his role in the building of Klal Yisrael?

Let us begin by discussing his father Avraham Avinu was a pioneer. He introduced the world to the revolutionary new idea of serving Hashem. He was the first in everything that he did, for he did not have a father to follow. Yitzchak Avinu was the opposite. He had a father to follow; therefore, he did not have to break any new ground. Yitzchak became

the first follower of the tradition passed down to him from his father. This was his legacy that he passed on to future generations: that we should always follow our fathers.

What was Yitzchak’s test at the Akeida? The Chasam Sofer has a brilliant insight, analyzing the prophesy of Avraham. There was only one prophet in history – Moshe Rabbeinu – who received his prophetic messages from Hashem with clarity. All of the other prophets, including Avraham Avinu, received their prophecies less clearly. They were required to decipher the message and interpret it in order to comprehend Hashem’s Divine Will. Avraham, not Yitzchak, received the prophesy about the Akeida. Yitzchak was totally dependent upon his father’s interpretation of Hashem’s instructions. One could not blame him if he questioned. “Father,

are you sure that you interpreted the prophesy correctly? Could it have meant something different that does not require my death?” Yitzchak did not do this. He accepted his father’s direction with absolute trust, faith, and confidence. This was Yitzchak’s life work, establishing the precedent for unquestioning acceptance of tradition and guidance of the sages. The Akeida was his finest hour. On that day, he reached the ultimate in acceptance. In doing so, he earned merit for all generations.

Kindertlach . . .

Avraham Avinu is the father of our nation. He established the basis of our tradition. Yitzchak followed him. In doing so, he established the tradition of following. Yaakov and his sons, continued following Avraham and Yitzchak. The entire generation in Mitzrayim merited redemption because they followed their fathers and did not change their names, clothing, or language. Hashem the revealed His Will to them at Har Sinai. Each subsequent generation has followed the previous one, keeping Hashem’s 613 mitzvos. Kindertlach, we are the current link in that chain. It is our job to keep the tradition going. How? By listening to our fathers, teachers, and sages. By learning from them, doing what they say, and teaching it to our children, when we become older. This is the tradition of following that we received from our forefather Yitzchak. He was the first to follow.

¹ Tehillim 27:14

² Berachos 32b

³ Medrash Ravba Voeschanan 12

⁴ Shochar Tov

⁵ Shmuel Aleph 2:2

⁶ Tehillim 18:32

⁷ Shemos 15:18

⁸ Bamidbar 23:21

⁹ Yishaya 33:22