

DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



RABBI AVI BERMAN
Executive Director, OU Israel



This week's Parsha begins with the Pasuk "ואלה תולדות יצחק בן אברהם אברהם הוליד את יצחק", "And these are the offspring of Yitzchak the son of Avraham, Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak". This verse has an obvious question. Why the repetition of saying that Yitzchak is the son of Avraham AND Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak?

Rashi explains that we want to be sure nobody accuses Sarah Imenu of becoming pregnant from Avimelech after not getting pregnant from Avraham for so many years. Therefore, Hashem made sure that Yitzchak looked identical to Avraham so that everyone would see that Yitzchak was Avraham Aveinu's son.

This reminds me of an experience I had many years ago. I was zoche to learn in the Yeshiva of Shilo. My wife and I lived there when we first got married, and our first three children were born while we were there. During my time in Kollel, I was asked to run the overseas program which involved being a madrich for the English-speaking boys who came to learn in the Yeshiva (primarily from Canada,

Australia and South Africa). In this role, I helped create their schedule, took them on Tiyulim to see Israel, arranged places for them to go for out Shabbatot, and my wife and I hosted them for meals and other programs.

In the pre-WhatsApp and Facetime era, these boys had limited correspondence with their parents over the course of their year or two in Yeshiva. As their madrich I'd sometimes see pictures of their families, but I would only interact with their parents if they came to visit their sons in Yeshiva during the year. I was constantly amazed that when meeting their parents (in particular their fathers, but I imagine if my wife was a madricha at a seminary the same would apply to girls and their mothers), it would be obvious that many of their son's facial expressions and mannerisms clearly came from their parents.

Those of us blessed to be parents don't usually see ourselves in our children's expressions. Yet, this is an important reminder of the impact our actions have on our children. They pick up on many of our expressions and mannerisms without either parents or children being aware of it. I often use this example to explain to parents and myself that so much of who we are and how we behave trickles down to our children whether we like it or not. Our children see the way we behave, eat

Condolences to Bea Samuel and family
on the passing of her husband
Gerry Samuel z"l

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

the same food as us, observe the way we act at the Shabbat table, and so on. It should not come to us as a surprise that just as they take our movements, they often take on our behaviors as well – both positive and negative.

This past Shabbat, I saw this principle in action when I had the zechut to spend Shabbat back in the Shilo area at a nearby Yishuv called Maaleh Levona for my nephew's Bar Mitzvah (Mazel Tov to Neta Kuflik and family!). It was clear that so many of Neta's positive attributes came directly from my brother and sister in law and their parents. I look forward to B'ezrat Hashem seeing my parents, in laws, and all of us reading this column to continue seeing nachat from our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Over Shabbat I had the honor of running two Oneg Shabbats for the younger and older youth as well as giving a Shabbat afternoon shiur to the community about the history and beauty of the OU, specifically our organization's Kashrut methods, advanced technology, and unique database which the OU uses to control its Kosher certification around the world. I shared there what I have shared

many times before – the OU is extremely proud that its' profits go back to the Jewish community, here at OU Israel through our work with the English speaking community through the OU Israel Center and Torah Tidbits and our work with at-risk Israeli youth across the country.

While in Maaleh Levona, I also had the opportunity to meet the dedicated Torah Tidbits distributors there. Thank you to them and the hundreds of other volunteer distributors who ensure that communities all across Israel receive their Torah Tidbits every week. I also very much appreciated the man who came over to me on Shabbat telling me that me being there for Shabbat saved him an email with some feedback on last week's article. I always appreciate hearing from you – our dear Torah Tidbits readers, and encourage you to share your insights and feedback.

Wishing you an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Avi,

Executive Director, OU Israel

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May the learning from this issue
of Torah Tidbits be
in loving memory of our father,
grandfather, great-grandfather

Alfred S. Cohen ז"ל
אבא שלום אהרון הכהן ז"ל
on his 13th yearzeit - כ"ד מרחשון

*by his daughters: Janice Weinreb,
Barbara Yasgur, Benay Cohen-Nesher and families*

May the learning from this issue
of Torah Tidbits be a Z'chus
for our beloved parents:
Esther Rivka (Elizabeth)
bas Shmuel HaLevi a"h
yearzeit - Rosh Chodesh Kislev and
Shmuel Binyomin ben
Ben-Zion HaLevi ז"ל
yearzeit - 12 Kislev
יהי זכרם ברוך