



DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

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It might be because my full name is Avraham Yitzchak, but the *parshiyot* of Avraham and Yitzchak's life, which we read in *Lech Lecha*, *Vayeira*, *Chayei Sarah*, and *Toldot*, hold particular meaning for me. I see in them such important *middot* that I try to emulate in my own life and family.

Avraham Avinu, for example, stood out for his *hachnasat orchim* (which my wife and I try to do a lot). He also stood out for his ability and passion for telling the world how amazing *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* is (which I consider a goal for myself as well).

Yitzchak is someone who we can clearly see had a special love towards the Land of Israel, in that he is the only one of the forefathers who never left Israel. He was also known for his *tefillah*, which *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* accepted, asking for children when Rivka was barren.

There is another reason I connect so powerfully to Avraham Avinu. Avraham is the paradigm of *aliyah*, something which so many of those reading this message have done themselves. He showed us the way by following Hashem's voice and leaving his house and land to come to the Land of Israel. He made *aliyah* at a time when there was no OU in Israel to help

him with creating a community. There was no Torah Tidbits in *shul* to read, there was no NCSY there for his future children. There was no JLIC for when he wanted to go to university, or OU Israel Torah Initiatives of *shiurim* for him to go to. There was no Women's Division for Sarah to join. There was no Camp Dror for him to be able to send Yitzchak to in the summer. There was no Nefesh B'Nefesh to help him with the process of *aliyah*. And there are countless other organizations that exist in Israel today that he did not have when he made *aliyah*.

Instead, Avraham Avinu was an *Ivri*. He believed in and listened to Hashem when no one else did, and he went when no one else would. That belief, that ability to pick up and leave and come to Israel, is something that so many of us have walked in his footsteps. We are living in a world where peer pressure and society dictate the way we behave and the choices that we make in our lives. Avraham Avinu lived in a generation where nobody could even comprehend the concept of believing in G-d, yet that did not stop him from doing what he felt that the *Ribono shel Olam* wanted from him. It is so difficult to leave what we know and the comforts of the country of our birth, our father's house. And more than that, Avraham did not know where he was going to end up, "*el ha'aretz asher areka*." Many of us came to Israel without the ability to know exactly where we would establish ourselves. The Torah doesn't tell us the challenges of where we go, but only the challenges of how to leave. Leaving is such a major challenge of its own. Yet those who make *aliyah* have a dream, and know where



The OU Israel family sends heartfelt
condolences to Rabbi Ari Kahn
on the passing of his mother

Rivka Riva (Rose) Kahn a"h

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

HaKadosh Baruch Hu wants them to be.

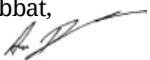
The fact that we're seeing thousands of Jews do this every single year is absolutely remarkable. I was lucky. My parents made the decision for me and my family, when I was nine years old. I didn't have to be forced to do it as an adult with a family, a job, with ties to a community. For that, I thank and will continue thanking my parents forever and ever, because they really gave me such a tremendous gift of doing that and allowing me to be here without those hardships

As an adult, I can understand what my parents must have gone through, to leave their siblings, to leave their parents, to leave their friends, to leave their jobs, to leave their communities, in order to move to Israel. Before *Nefesh B'Nefesh* and before everything else, even before ever stepping foot in the Land of Israel themselves. My father told us when we made *aliyah* that we weren't going to Israel to see if it's a beautiful place. Instead, we trust God that it is a beautiful place, but we're going there because *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* said that that's where the Jewish people should be.

So, here I really want to thank my parents once again for bringing me and my siblings to Israel. And I hope the *beracha* they have received is being able to see their children live and thrive here, to see their grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow and build homes, and that we all connect so powerfully to the Land.

Let's continue walking in the footsteps of Avraham Avinu. Even when things are not easy, and there are so many challenges, we are doing what's right. May we be, *b'ezrat Hashem*, role models for many others.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman

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