

YACHAD

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Menashe and Aryeh learned together at *Slice of Torah*, Yachad Israel's weekly chevruta program at Yeshivat HaKotel.

This week's parsha, Chayei Sarah, teaches us a tremendous amount about the specific positive qualities of a person that are most valuable. This can be seen based on the criteria Eliezer, Avraham's servant, uses to determine who should be chosen as a wife for Yitzchak. Before Eliezer was about to go up to the well where he was trying to find potential suitors, he davened to Hashem for help. More specifically, he requested that Hashem let him find a girl with a specific quality...

"וְהָיָה הַנַּעֲרָ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיהָ הַטִּי־נָא כַדֵּךְ וְאֶשְׁתֶּה וְאָמְרָה שְׁתֵה וְגַם־גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה אֹתָהּ הוֹכַחְתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיִצְחָק וּבָהּ אֵדַע כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם־אֲדֹנִי

let the maiden to whom I say, 'Please, lower your jar that I may drink,' and who replies, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels'—let her be the one whom You have decreed for Your servant Isaac. Thereby shall I know that You have dealt graciously with my master." (Bereishis, Parshas Chayei Sarah, 24:14)

Rashi (24:14) on the words אֹתָהּ הוֹכַחְתָּ explains:

רְאוּיָה הִיא לוֹ שֶׁתְּהֵא גּוֹמֶלֶת חֲסָדִים, וּכְדַאי לִכָּנֵס בְּבֵיתוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם

She is fit for him since she will be charitable and will therefore be worthy of admission into the house of Abraham".

From both the pasuk and Rashi, what is the main middah that Eliezer values above all? Kindness! The willingness to lend a hand. The value of self-sacrifice. That's what Eliezer valued above all.

Not only was chessed the most important middah in Eliezer's eyes, but the Kli Yakar adds an additional layer to exactly what type of kindness is truly special:

לְכָךְ אָמַר: אֲנִי לֹא אֶתְבַּע מִמֶּנָּה כִּי אִם שֶׁתִּתֵּן לִי לִשְׁתּוֹת, וְהָיָה אִם תָּשִׁיב לִי "שְׁתֵה וְגַם גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה" (בראשית כד:יד), אָז בְּוַדַּאי הִיא בַּעֲלַת גְּמִילוּת חֲסָדִים שֶׁתִּתֵּן לִי יוֹתֵר מִמַּה שֶׁאֲנִי שׁוֹאֵל

I will only ask her for a drink, and if she responds 'drink, and I will also water your camels,' then surely she is one who performs acts of kindness as she will give more than what I ask for." (Bereishis 24:14)

The Kli Yakar is explaining something incredible. What does true kindness mean? Not simply giving a person what they ask for. It's going beyond the request. Seeing the bigger picture, the deeper needs of the person asking, and fulfilling those too. Rivka had both those qualities, and that was why she was fit to be part

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of Avraham Avinu's family, and the Jewish people as a whole. Kindness is in our blood.

Menashe, who learns daf yomi, and has already finished multiple masechtos, explains that the importance of kindness can be found throughout gemara as well. Specifically, Masechtes Chullin, which spends the entire 8th perek on the halachos of mixing meat and milk. What is the basis for this halacha?

לֹא־תְבַשֵּׁל גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אִמּוֹ

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk" (Shemot 23:19)

An entire area of halacha, all emitting from our commitment to chessed. To not disrespect animals, even if they are dead, and halachically allowed to be eaten, still, we refrain from showing anything less than empathy and compassion.

We'd like to challenge us all. Look at the parsha this week, whether during Krias HaTorah, a bus ride to work, or while waiting in line at the store, and simply look for the chessed that the Torah highlights in so many different instances. Let us take those lessons and emulate and act on the chessed that we all are capable of doing. ■



