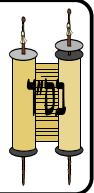




Kinder Torah®

Parashas Toldos



Unlock the Gates

"Do you have the map?"
 "Yes, it is here in my hand."
 "Let's check it. I don't want to get lost."
 "Here it is. We are fine. Our destination is straight ahead. We should be there in a few minutes."

The man and wife walked ahead down the path. Then they saw it off in the distance - a huge palace.

"That must be it. The palace of the King."

Their hearts jumped with elation. They would finally be able to see their ruler, the man who could fulfill their requests and solve their problems. They reached the gates of the large wall that surrounded the palace.

"These are the palace gates."
 "They look pretty rusty. I wonder when they were last opened."
 "It looks like a long time ago. How do we get in?"
 "Look, there is an intercom. The sign next to it says that it connects you directly with the King."
 "Let's press the button and talk."
 "Dear King, we are a young couple standing at the gates of Your palace. We have a request that we know the King can grant. Please open the gates so that we may enter."

The couple waited for a response. The intercom was silent. They pressed the button again.

"Your Highness, we have traveled a long way to see the King. We love Him and respect Him so much. We very much appreciate everything that He has done for us as well as the entire nation. We have just one small request that we know He is capable of fulfilling. Please, oh Mighty King, open the gates."

The couple held their breath. Would the King open the gate? A few minutes passed. No response. The wife pushed the button and began to speak.

"Your Excellency, the Most Honorable King. I have devoted my entire life to serving the King. I do not stop thinking about Him all day. Every act that I perform is to increase the glory of His Kingship. I have but one small request. It is not for my sake, rather for the sake of the Honor of the King. Please open these gates and allow me to come in and make my request."

The intercom was silent. The rusty gates remained tightly closed. The husband and wife looked at each other.

"What shall we do? We have come so far. What more can we say to the King?"
 "There is only one thing left to do."

The wife collected her thoughts, took a deep breath, pressed the intercom button,

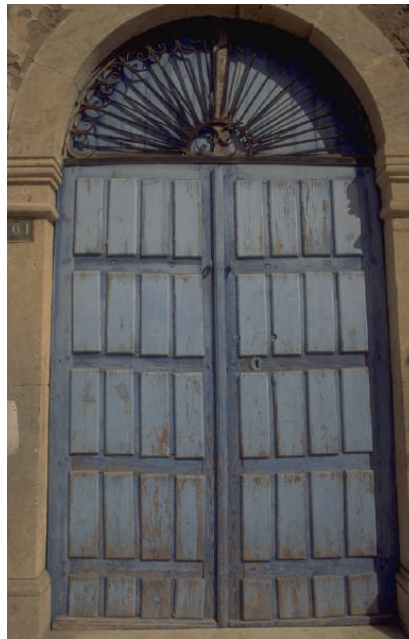
and began to speak.

"Oh most caring and loving King! I am proud and happy to be a member of this nation, and to serve the King. However, I feel that I cannot go on. I have a request that means as much to me as life itself. How can I continue living?"

The wife began to cry.

"Oh please, my dear King, help me! Help me, help me please. I have no one to turn to but You!"

The husband began to cry along with his wife. Their hearts were broken. They tried speaking, but the words would not come. Their voices were sobbing, their eyes flowing with tears. Suddenly, they heard a buzzing noise. A large rusty bolt slid back.



The electronic lock of the gate clicked open. First one gate opened, then the next. The couple could not believe it. They were free to go in to see the King. Their request would be granted.

This story is a parable to the prayers of a Jew to Hashem. Our parasha brings an example of this in the very beginning. Rivka did not have children for the first twenty years of her marriage to Yitzchak. And so, husband and wife prayed to Hashem, as verse states, "And Yitzchak beseeched Hashem for his wife, because she was barren. And Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him, and Rivka his wife conceived" (Bereshis 25:21). The meforshim ask the question, "Why were the mothers of our nation barren women?" Sara, Rivka, and Rachel did not have children for a long time. The Meam Loez answers that Hashem has a deep desire (so to speak) to hear the

prayers of tsaddikim. Why? One reason is that He wants to demonstrate the power of tefillah. Therefore, He created a situation where the Holy Forefathers had to ask for His mercy. Only then was their request granted.

The Avos HaKedoshim lived over 3000 years ago. What about today? Do our prayers still reach the Heavenly realm? The Gemora (Brochos 32b) states, "From the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, the gates of tefillah are locked." How can our prayers reach Hashem? The gates are locked. Can we open them? The Gemora brings the answer in the very next line. "Even though the gates of tefillah are locked, the gates of tears are not locked. As the verse states, 'Hear my prayer, Hashem, give ear to my outcry. Do not be mute to my tears'" (Tehillim 39:13).

Kinderlach . . .

Who is the most important One in the universe? Hashem. Who can grant any request? Hashem. To Whom do we have the privilege of speaking to three times each day? Hashem. He loves us. He wants to hear from us. He wants us to ask Him for everything. Don't be bashful, kinderlach. Don't be afraid to ask and ask and ask. Don't get discouraged if you do not receive an answer right away. Yitzchak and Rivka had to wait twenty years. They did not get discouraged. Rather, they redoubled their efforts and prayed even more to The Almighty. You may ask, "But the gates of tefillah are locked. How can our prayers get in?" The answer is very simple. Cry. Cry to Hashem. Just like a small child cries to his parents for something that he wants very badly. True, the gates are locked. However, your tears are the key that will open them. Kinderlach, may all of your prayers be accepted, and may Hashem grant all of your requests.

Parasha Questions:

- Which one of Yishmael's daughters did Eisav marry? (28:9)
- How do we calculate how many years Yaakov learned Torah with Shem and Ever? (Rashi 28:9)
- Where did Yitzchak send Yaakov to look for a wife? (28:2)
- Which blessing did he give him? (28:3-4)

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