

- Doesn't the *pasuk* say that in the *Akeidah*, Avraham Avinu proved that he was truly *yrei Elokim*?
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- Don't we repeatedly ask Hashem, (especially on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kipur) to have mercy on us in the merit of the *Akeidah*?
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- How do we ascribe *אכזריות* (cruelty) to Avraham Avinu who personified the *middah* of *chesed v'rachamim* (lovingkindness and mercy)? He even *davened* for the people of *Sdom*!
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- Don't Chazal learn from Avraham Avinu's *tefillah* that Avimelech and his household be cured, that "a person who doesn't forgive one who asks forgiveness is cruel"? (ב"ק צב.)
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- The *Rosh* stated that Yitzchak Avinu wanted to curse Yaakov. Where do we see that in the Torah? It was only Yaakov Avinu who expressed his fear that if he followed Rivkah Imeinu's plan to receive the *brachos* meant for Eisav, *וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קְלָלָה וְלֹא בְרָכָה* (I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing). Rivkah responded, *עָלַי קְלָלָתְךָ בְּנִי* (Your curse will be on me, my son). However, nowhere do we find that Yitzchak wanted to curse Yaakov Avinu.
- Also, we do find that Yaakov Avinu used the word *ארור* (cursed) when he rebuked Shimon and Levi. *אַרְוּר אֲפֹס כִּי עָז* (בראשית מ"ט:ז"). Why then, does the *Rosh* present Yaakov Avinu as the one who has *rachamim* on his children as opposed to Yitzchak Avinu who wanted to curse Yaakov?

It seems that we can understand the *Rosh's* explanation in the following manner. When the *Rosh* described Avraham Avinu's desire to slaughter his son as "cruel", he meant that Avraham Avinu had to utilize the *middah* of *achzariyus* (cruelty), in order to sacrifice Yitzchak Avinu. Without *achzariyus*, he would never have been able to fulfill Hashem's command.



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- The *Meor Einayim* in Parshas Toldos, explains that Avraham Avinu who personified the *middah* of *chesed*, had to draw the power of *achzariyus* from Yitzchak Avinu who personified the *middah* of *din/pachad/gevurah*.
- Therefore, in *Parshas Haazinu*, when the Torah describes Hashem's closeness to Am Yisrael, it specifically mentions Yaakov Avinu, who never had to even utilize the *middah* of cruelty as a tool for the performance of a Mitzvah. Even though Am Yisrael need the merit the *Akeidah* in order to be judged favorably each year, Hashem didn't want to describe his relationship with us in the context of the cruelty that had to be utilized by Avraham Avinu.
- Similarly, when the *Rosh* described Yitzchak Avinu as "wanting to curse Yaakov", he referred only to Yaakov's fear that Yitzchak would curse him if his deception was discovered. Here as well, Hashem didn't want to describe his relationship with Am Yisrael by mentioning Yitzchak Avinu, but not because Yitzchak actually wanted to curse Yaakov. The very fact that Yaakov Avinu (whose *middah* is *emes*) mentioned his fear that Yitzchak would curse him reveals that such a possibility was an aspect of Yitzchak's *middos*. That subtle connection was the reason that Yitzchak Avinu isn't mentioned in the *pasuk*.
- Instead, the *pasuk* describes Hashem's closeness to Am Yisrael by referring to Yakov Avinu. Even though Yaakov did rebuke his children, he didn't curse them. As Rashi explains in his *peirush* on the *pasuk* אָרוּר אַפָּם כִּי עָז (בראשית מ"ט: ז) (Cursed is their anger...)
- "Even when he chastised them, he only cursed *their anger* (but not Shimon and Levi themselves)".

Now that we understand the *peirush* of the *Rosh*, we can understand how the Torah views fatherhood. A true father is never cruel to his children, even if he has to punish them for purposes of



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chinuch. Similarly, someone whose children fear that he will curse them isn't viewed by the Torah as a true father.

Even if a father needs to *utilize* cruelty or the fear of a curse for his children's benefit, he also must remember that this isn't the *middah* that the Torah views as correct and desirable.

For example, if a father has to take his sick child to a doctor's office where the child will have to undergo painful treatments, he may have to utilize the *middah* of *achzariyus* which will enable him to restrain the crying child. This is certainly what he has to do, and he shouldn't let his child run away and avoid the treatment. However, even as he holds down the screaming child, he must know deep in his heart that the Torah's true and ideal picture of fatherhood is one involving no cruelty at all. He should wish that the situation requiring him to utilize cruelty in order to ensure his child's health, should never have arisen.

When it comes to *chinuch*, even if the father needs to utilize an aspect of cruelty in order to punish his child in a proper, balanced way, he should remember that it doesn't represent the ideal parent/child relationship that Hashem used as a *mashal* for his relationship to Am Yisrael.

Now, as Am Yisrael prepare to beg Hashem to have mercy on us as a father has mercy on his beloved children, we hope that it will be with the *middah* of Yaakov. We ask that there be no need to utilize any aspect of *achzariyus*, even for our benefit, and that we should have no need to fear curses, even if they would be justified.

ובכך נוכל לבוא לגמר טוב ברוחניות ובגשמיות אכי"ר



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