גיליון זה לרפואת והצלחת ובחסות: אמונה ליבע בת אלישבע, ואלישבע בת שרה שתיחי׳.
הרה״ק רבי חיים זאנוויל בן רבי משה זצ״ל מריבניצא. הרה״ק רבי מנחם מענדל בן רבי לוי יצחק זצ״ל.
גיליון זה להצלחת: שושנה תמר בת זוהרה, וכן יוסף בן שרה, אריה לייב בן אידל שיחי׳.
וכן להצלחת: נעכא העניא בת רבקה חנה וכן שמחה בן נעכא העניא אסתר בילא בת ברכה וכל משפחתה אמן!
לע״נ: יהודה בן שלום ושמחה ז״ל, שרה בת פנחס רפאל וחנה ז״ל, לע״נ: גבריאל בן אליהו וחוה ז״ל.
לע״נ: אליהו בן שמחה ז״ל, זוהרה והבה בת תמו תמר ז״ל, לע״נ ר׳ שמעון חיים בן אסתר ז״ל.

וַיִּהְיוּ חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשֶׁבַע שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה...

The life of Sarah was one hundred twenty-seven years, the years of Sarah's life.

The **Ohr Hachaim** comments on the fact that the possuk uses the expression ויהיו. In most other places, when describing the life of a Tzadik or any character from the Torah, the possuk uses the expression אלה חיי – these are the lives, or ימי חיי – the days of the life. Why did the Torah change the expression here? We quoted some explanations of the **Ohr Hachaim** on this last year, but he still has another one.

Chazal tell us that ויהי is an expression of pain. The years were painful for Sarah. Until she was ninety years old, she suffered the pain of infertility. However, once Yitzchok was born, her pain was not over, she had to watch Yishmael threatening the wellbeing of her son. As we see in last week's Parsha and the Medrash, Yishmael threatened to kill Yitzchok.

Once Yishmael was sent away, her life calmed down, and she could enjoy some of it.

The possuk now reads differently - **וַיִּהְיוּ חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה** – and the years of pain that Sarah endured were one hundred. **וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשֶׁבַע שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה** - and twenty seven years were the years of Sarah's life. That was when she truly lived.

גֵּר וְתוֹשָׁב אָנֹכִי עִמָּכֶם תְּנוּ לִי אֲחֻזַּת קֶבֶר עִמָּכֶם...

I am a resident alien among you. Give me a burial plot among you…

Avraham Avinu introduced himself as a Ger and a Toshav. He was an immigrant who had settled in Eretz Cana'an. The **Ohr Hachaim** explains this based on the Rambam who paskens that a person may give a gift to a Ger Toshav, because it is a Mitzvah to help him live, so too may he give him gifts.

The **Ohr Hachaim** now makes an important point about the Torah. He writes that the Torah that we have, besides being commandments from Hashem as to how to live in this world, is also a guide toward the correct way for humans to live in this world.

Although Gentiles are not commanded to keep the Torah, the Torah is still a guide to morality and correct behavior for them. Avraham was telling them that they should treat him nicely because he is a Ger Toshav.

שְׁמָעֵנוּ אֲדֹנִי נְשִׂיא אֱלֹוקִים אַתָּה בְּתוֹכֵנוּ בְּמִבְחַר קְבָרֵינוּ קְבֹר אֶת מֵתֶךָ אִישׁ מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת קִבְרוֹ לֹא יִכְלֶה מִמְּךָ מִקְבֹּר מֵתֶךָ.... וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם לֵאמֹר אִם יֵשׁ אֶת נַפְשְׁכֶם לִקְבֹּר אֶת מֵתִי מִלְּפָנַי שִׁמְעוּנִי וּפִגְעוּ לִי בְּעֶפְרוֹן בֶּן צֹחַר...

"Hear us, my lord. You are a prince of God amongst us. In the choicest of our graves, bury your dead. Not one of us will keep you from burying your dead!"… He spoke to them, saying, "If you are willing to bury my dead from before me, listen to me, and beseech Ephron, the son of Tzochar for me.

The **Ohr Hachaim** explains the underlying negotiations that were taking place between the people of Ches of and Avraham Avinu in these pessukim.

The people of Ches started their message to Avraham with the word שְׁמָעֵנוּ – listen to us. They were telling him to understand the depths of their point.

The Gemara tells us a Halacha about property ownership. If a person lives in a property for three years, with no claims having been made against him, the Beis Din will accept his claim that the property is his as though he produced a document of ownership. However, this is only if the owners had the ability to protest and did not use it. That would tell us that the property was sold. If, however, the person living in the property is a powerful person, from the family of the Reish Galusa – the leader of the exiles, this Halacha is irrelevant. Even when Klal Yisroel was in exile, they were self-governed by a rich and powerful leader in Babylon, and that leader and his family were too powerful for anyone to lodge a complaint against him. If he loses his power and someone calls him to Beis Din for illegally squatting on his property, he cannot use the claim that he had lived there for three years undisturbed.

The people of Ches were telling Avraham that he was a prince among them. His being a prince placed him in a detrimental position, because he could not simply use the land as an owner. If he were ever to lose his power, the people of Ches could dig up the body and reclaim the land. They could say that they left the body there undisturbed for so many years out of fear of the tremendous power of Avraham. He would be suspected of abusing his power and grabbing the land without payment or agreement from the original owners. This would show that they were not particularly interested in his purchasing the property, and all he could do was force them, leading to their reserving a counter-claim if he lost his power.

Alternatively, they meant to tell him the opposite point. He was a G-dly prince among them; nobody would ever dare suggest that he would misuse his power and position to claim something that wasn't his. They were fully willing to sell him the property, and he could trust them that they would leave it in his possession.

They told him to hear their claim and properly ensure his rights understanding their meaning and appreciating how to foresee the future claims.

He answered them – if you truly wish to sell me a piece of land to bury my departed relative, please speak to Ephron. If they were willing to act as agents in this sale, they were showing full willingness to participate in the sale, and that they could be trusted not to use the mendacious claim that Avraham would abuse his powers as a prince.

וַיָּרָץ הָעֶבֶד לִקְרָאתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַגְמִיאִינִי נָא מְעַט מַיִם מִכַּדֵּךְ...

The servant ran towards her and said, "Please, give me a little water to sip from your pitcher".

When Eliezer set up his wager with Hashem, he was more detailed about the conditions through which he would know if the girl is truly the correct wife for Yitzchok. He said to Hashem that he wished to ask her הטי נא כדך – bend your pitcher for him to drink. Now, all he requested was a small sip of water. He didn't need her to pour it, neither was it a great amount.

The **Ohr Hachaim** explains that Eliezer already saw the water rising up towards her, showing him that she was a Tzadekes. He knew that she was a worthy woman, and he already wanted her for his master's son. She was obviously not from the cursed Canaanites, and she deserved to enter the home of Avraham Avinu. Now he was scared that he had set the bar too high, and she would not pass the test. He made the test easier for her, not asking for more than a sip and not requesting a full service from her. He really wanted her to pass the test, and she only had to provide the minimum.

But she prevailed, answering his small request with great magnanimity, telling him that she would give him to drink, not merely a sip, and that she would bend the jug to him. He would not even have to bear the burden of the jug.

וַתְּכַל לְהַשְׁקֹתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר גַּם לִגְמַלֶּיךָ אֶשְׁאָב עַד אִם כִּלּוּ לִשְׁתֹּת...

When she finished giving him to drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels, too, until they finish drinking."

The Torah could have written that he ended drinking, why did the Torah write that she ended giving him to drink?

The **Ohr Hachaim** explains that not only did she give him to drink, she held the cup to his mouth

and was completely in charge of his drinking. He did not have to bother himself at all.

He then offers another pshat. The possuk says וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשָׂדְךָ לִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבָעְתָּ - I will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. The Gemara deduces from this possuk that a person may not eat until he has fed his animals.

However, this only applies to a person who wishes to eat a regular meal. When a person is desperate, the Halacha changes. If he is in danger of passing out due to thirst, he may drink first.

When Eliezer asked for a little water, she realized that he was very thirsty and desperate, and she gave him to drink immediately. But, as soon as she had given him a little to drink, she assumed the danger was past. Now she stopped giving him to drink and turned to his camels, whose thirst takes precedence.

Indeed, when she gave them to drink, she gave them עַד אִם כִּלּוּ לִשְׁתּוֹת – until they finished drinking. They were allowed to drink as much as they wanted, they weren't limited by anything.

וַיָּבֹא אֶל הָאִישׁ וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל הַגְּמַלִּים עַל הָעָיִן. וַיֹּאמֶר בּוֹא בְרוּךְ ה' לָמָּה תַעֲמֹד בַּחוּץ...

he came to the man. And, behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. He said, "Come, blessed of Hashem. Why are you standing outside

The Ohr Hachaim quotes a fascinating Medrash on this possuk and explains it.

Why did Lavan reverse the order of the question? One would expect the question to be "Why are you standing outside? Come, blessed one of Hashem!" Why did he give the blessing first?

The Yalkut Shimoni writes that Eliezer noticed that Lavan was running towards him, and he knew that the reason for this was because he heard about the jewelry that Eliezer had given to Rivkah. He expected Lavan to attack him and rob him.

He invoked one of the holy names of Hashem, and as a result the camels were levitated into the air above the well.

This is why the Torah describes the camels as "הגמלים על העין." Eliezer himself then stood on top of the camels.

He called out to Lavan from an elevated position whereupon Lavan addressed him with the words: "come in, blessed one of Hashem!" Right there, he recognized the Beracha of Eliezer. Afterwards, he invited him into his house.

Another reason why Eliezer is reported as remaining standing by the camels maybe that the Torah wants us to know that the mere fact that Rivka had indicated that there was plenty of room in her father's home for Eliezer to spend the night together with his entourage was not sufficient reason for him to follow her to her home.

The wording of Lavan's invitation, indicates that Lavan did not invite him wholeheartedly but merely to save him the disgrace of having to remain outdoors, i.e. למה תעמוד בחוץ? Even when the wicked perform an act of graciousness such an act reflects a degree of their basic reluctance to do good. If he had invited him in and then blessed him as the one blessed from Hashem, the meaning would have been that the invitation was wholehearted, and his entrance to the house would be with a blessing. Now that the beracha preceded the invitation, the meaning of the invitation is only to spend the night and not to share in the blessing of the house.

וְלִבְנֵי הַפִּילַגְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם נָתַן אַבְרָהָם מַתָּנֹת

And to the sons of Avraham's concubines, Avraham gave gifts.

Avraham wished to ensure that his entire inheritance reached Yitzchok and Klal Yisroel, with nothing for the other nations that emerged from him. He gave them all gifts, to ensure that they do not complain.

The **Ohr Hachaim** notes an omission. One child of Avraham's did not receive anything, will he not return to complain? Yishmael, the oldest son. Yishmael was sent away with a skein of water, and he did not receive anything.

The **Ohr Hachaim** refers you back to what he wrote in Parshas Vayera. Hagar was a maidservant, and when Avraham married her, she did not lose that status. Yishmael was born a slave and everything that he owned belonged to Yitzchok and his descendants. Giving him a gift would not benefit him, because it all belongs to Yitzchok anyway.

The **Ohr Hachaim** adds that this may not be visible to us now. We see that Yishmael is a

powerful nation, and not enslaved at all. However, this will be overturned. Hashem has a day of judgment in His mind, and then He will show the truth to all, and Yishmael's enslaved status will be obvious to his owner.

וּלְרִבְקָה אָח וּשְׁמוֹ לָבָן וירוץ לָבָן אֶל הָאִישׁ הַחוּצָה אֶל הָעָיִן. וַיְהִי כִּרְאֹת אֶת הַנֶּזֶם וְאֶת הַצְּמִדִים עַל יְדֵי אֲחֹתוֹ וּכְשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת דִּבְרֵי רִבְקָה אֲחֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר כֹּה דִבֶּר אֵלַי הָאִישׁ וַיָּבֹא אֶל הָאִישׁ וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל הַגְּמַלִּים עַל הָעָיִן.

Now Rivka had a brother whose name was Lavan. Lavan ran out to the man at the well. when he saw the nose-ring and the bracelet on his sister's arms, and when he heard his sister Rivka say, "Thus did the man say to me." He went to the man, who was still standing beside the camels at the well. (24-29,30).

There are a few questions that we must address. 1) When the posuk mentions the name of Lavan, it uses the expression "and his name was - Lavan." Why did the posuk first say "and his name" and then say "Lavan" instead of saying the reverse, "Lavan was his name?" Chazal tell us that the sequence found in our posuk is used only about the righteous. For example, in Megillas Rus it says about two tzaddikim, Boaz and Elimelech. "His name was Boaz," "His Name was Elimelech." Regarding the wicked, the order is the opposite. For example, regarding the Rasha Naval mentioned in Sefer Shmuel it says, "Naval was his name." 2) Why does the posuk repeat the fact that Lavan went out to meet Eliezer. First it says "Lavan ran out to the man at the well." In the very next Posuk it says again "He went to the man, who was still standing beside the camels at the well." Why the repetition? 3) Why in the first verse does it say that Lavan "ran" but in second verse it says he "went out?" What is the difference between running and going out?

The Ohr Hachaim answers with a novel idea. The Torah is revealing that Lavan had a noble trait. Although Chazal have made it abundantly clear that Lavan was wicked and wanted to completely destroy the Jewish people it does not deny him from praising a good quality trait that he had. In our story, Lavan witnessed a conversation between Eliezer and his younger sister Rivka. Lavan was not aware of the exact details of the discussion. He assumed the worst. He suspected that wrongdoing had occurred and zealously proceeded to inquire what happened and take all necessary action to correct a wrong or punish a crime. This is a virtu, Lavan was acting to protect his younger sister. She was vulnerable and he behaved nobly by running out to protect her. He correctly understood that his role was to protect her as an older brother should do. As the Torah describes this part of the story it refers to him as a Tzadik. It put the term "his name" before "Lavan" as is done when discussing the righteous. It was only later when Lavan became aware that no wrongdoing had occurred and uncovered the true nature and purpose of Eliezer's visit did he calm down and behave differently. This part of the story is what the Torah describes in the next section. "And Laven went out." The tone here is a calm and pleasant Lavan. Now, his evil nature begins to become dominant. He now considered what was in his best interest and tried to take advantage of the situation.