חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

IZBICA · CHAYEI SARA, MEI HASHILOACH

Why did Yitzchak pray instead of acting on his own?

Mei HaShiloach

Even when a person's inclination is toward stillness and restraint from action, as with Yitzchak dwelling in the dry south, there comes a point when God's will requires active movement toward life's purpose, such as marriage. Yitzchak's fear of initiating action on his own led him instead to pour out his heart in prayer, and his immediate answer, seeing the camels approach, teaches that sincere prayer rooted in genuine need is met by God's swift response, "before you cry out, I will answer you." AI SUMMARY

“And Yitzchak came from the way of the well ‘Lechai Roi,’ for he dwelt in the south country. And Yitzchak went out to meditate in the fields upon evening, and he raised his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels were coming.” (Bereshit, 24:62) Yitzchak was the root of all fear of God in the world, and even when (the mitzvah, or God’s will) involves “sitting” and refraining from action, as it says, “he dwelt [sat] in the south country [Negev]” or dry (menugav) from all desire not directed to Kedusha.

And concerning this, since Avraham Avinu understood that the soul of Yitzchak had a great desire to serve God with active performance, he sent his servant to find him his soulmate. And here truly, “this has come from God” (Tehilim, 118:23), for the time had come for Yitzchak to marry a wife.

Furthermore, Yitzchak’s heart woke to the understanding of (Yeshaya, 45:18), “God did not create a desolation for his creations,” yet since he feared the actual performance of something in this direction, he went out to meditate, to pour out his heart in the field and ask God to help him and to prepare his zivug (mate).

“For some, their zivug comes to them,” (Moed Katan, 18b), and his prayer was answered immediately, “and he raised his eyes, and saw the camels coming,” for “before you cry out, I will answer you” (Yesahya, 65:24).

Translation: Living waters, the Mei HaShiloach. Trans. and edited by Betsalel Philip Edwards, Jerusalem, J. Aronson 2001 [Revised digital edition, 2021]