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The Zera Emes Project by Rabbi Moshe Hubner was created to honor and share the Torah of over 250 Gedolim who weren't zocheh to descendants of their own. Their legacy lives on through their words of Torah and emunah that continue to inspire and touch countless lives. By bringing their timeless divrei Torah and wisdom to life, we create a powerful connection to the past to help inspire today's generation.

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Righteous Tefillos

Yitzchak and Rivka were married for ten years and were still childless. They needed a miracle to have a child, and indeed a miracle occurred—they were blessed with twins. How did this happen? The Torah gives us some of the details about how they davened and how they were answered.

The Torah states that Yitzchak and Rivka stood on opposite sides of the room when they davened. Fascinatingly, it then says that Hashem listened to Yitzchak's *tefillah*. Why should that be? After all, they were both clearly davening.

Rashi explains that Yitzchak's *tefillah* was accepted—as opposed to Rivka's—because Yitzchak was not only a righteous person himself, but he also came from righteous parents. The *tefillah* of one with righteous lineage is accepted faster than the *tefillah* of one who does not have such lineage.

The **Bas Ayin** explains why this is so. Why should one's lineage play such an important role in one's *tefillah*? And more so, what should someone do if he does not have righteous lineage? Is that his fault?

He explains that the secret to having one's *tefillah* answered is humility. When one

has righteous lineage, he relies on that lineage in his *tefillah*—he asks Hashem to answer him not based on his own merits, but on the merits of his holy fathers. Since he “realizes” that he himself may not be worthy of being answered, he exhibits true humility, and that humility is what causes his *tefillah* to be accepted.

However, someone like Rivka—whose parents were not righteous—feels compelled to rely on her own merits. As a result, her *tefillah* is missing an element essential for it to be answered: humility. Therefore, her *tefillah* is not as readily accepted.

The **Bas Ayin** reinterprets the words of the *passuk* to reflect this idea. When it says that “she was barren (עקרה),” he reads it as “she was the *ikkar*—עיקרה—of her *tefillah*,” meaning she herself was the main basis of her *tefillah*, since she could not rely on her lineage. Yitzchak, however, did not have this issue; his *tefillah* was *l'nochach*—לנכח, meaning “in contrast,” indicating that they were davening with two opposing approaches.

The **Yismach Yisrael** (os 3) offers an almost identical explanation but adds another layer. Why does someone with righteous lineage

naturally display humility? Because such a person assumes that whatever greatness he achieved is due to the holiness of his ancestors. His potential was shaped by the spiritual wealth he inherited. Therefore, when he davened, he does so in their merit. There is a genuine sense of humility in such a person.

However, someone who does not have righteous lineage knows that whatever spiritual level he reached was achieved through his own efforts. He must rely on his own merits. His *tefillah* must be based on himself, and therefore there is a slight lack of humility compared to one who davened in the merit of his holy lineage.

The **Yismach Yisrael** also notes that Yitzchak davened *l'nochach*—לנכח, opposite his wife, because their approaches to *tefillah* were opposite one another.

ALL TEFILLOS

Of course, any sincere *tefillah*—especially when davening with humility—is accepted. As Rashi states, “the *tefillah* of one with righteous lineage is accepted faster than the *tefillah* of one without it.” Both are accepted—just maybe not at the same pace.

AFIKOMEN GIFT

The custom of Rav Menachem Brody, the Be'er Menachem was that no one would return the Afikomen to him until he promised to fulfill a request. R' Yeshaya Freidman, the *gabbai* of the Beis Haknesses, was still without a son after sixteen years of marriage.

During the Seder of 1925, R' Yeshaya was the one who hid the Afikomen. When Rav Menachem was ready to eat it, R' Yeshaya asked for a *brachah* for a son. The room fell silent as everyone awaited Rav Menachem's reaction.

Rav Menachem was quiet for a few seconds. Then he smiled and said, "This is a holy night, when miracles can occur. All the gates of heaven are open." He turned to his wife and said, "Because you are the daughter of holy people, give him a *brachah* that his request be fulfilled."

The Rebbetzin did not hesitate. She said, "I promise you results."

The excitement in the room was palpable.

On the 7th of Adar of the following year, R' Yeshaya and his wife were blessed with a son. The *bris* was held on Purim, and Rav Menachem served as the sandik.

נת עין

R. Avraham Dov Auerbach (1760 – 12 Kislev 1840) was born in Chmielnik, Ukraine, where his father served as a Maggid. He became a student of R. Menachem Nochum (1730–1797), the founder of the Chernobyl dynasty and author of the *Me'or Einayim*. He also studied under R. Mordechai Twersky (1770–1837), the son and successor of R. Menachem Nochum, as well as R. Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740–1809), renowned author of *Kedushas Levi*. R. Avraham Dov served as the Rav of Zhitomir and Ovruch, Ukraine, until 1831, when he emigrated to Eretz Yisrael, settling in Tzfas. There, he assumed leadership of the local Chassidic community during a particularly turbulent period. He survived the upheavals of the 1834 Peasants' Revolt and the devastating 1837 earthquake, but ultimately succumbed to the plague that struck the city in 1840. His teachings were later compiled and published in *Zhitomir*, 1869.

ישמח ישראל

R. Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchak Danciger (1853 – erev Rosh Chodesh Shevat 1910), was the second rebbi of Aleksander *chassidus*. The *Yismach Yisrael* once went to Reb Yaakov Aryeh of Radzymin for a *brachah* for children. After he left, he said it's a wonder that he's asking for children "he has the *neshamah* of the Ohr Hachaim." On another occasion Reb Yaakov Ayreh said he will be מילדי העברים, meaning he will give birth to Jewish children, not physically bearing Jewish children, but spiritually nurturing them by bringing them closer to Hashem. After he passed away, the *sefer Yismach Yisrael*- The fundamental text of Aleksander ideology, was compiled by his successor and brother Reb Shmuel Zvi, from his own writings and of those of the *chassidim*, creating an everlasting memory to his name. It includes many thoughts from their father, the first Rebbe Reb Yechiel.

ר' מנחם ב"ר אברהם ברודי

R. Menachem Brody (1862-8 Av 1938). Born in Kleinvardein (Hungary), where his maternal grandfather, R. Avraham Yitzchak Weinberger (1805-1884) was the Rav. R. Menachem studied under his grandfather, and married Miriam Lowy *H"yd*, the daughter of R. Meshulam Feish (1821-28 Sivan 1873), the Rav of Tosh. In 1882, R. Menachem was appointed the Rav of Tosh, and in 1902, he became (what would prove to be the final) Rav of Kaliv (Hungary), where he led a *Yeshivah*. One year following his passing, *Be'er Menachem* was published.