

Aligning Our Destiny WITH THE BIRTHRIGHT

YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Toldos

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Equivalent as a Patriarch as Was His Father

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The Most Urgent Level of Prayer for this Miracle

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Unsurpassed In Guile And Deception

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Withholding The Script of Reality

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1. Rivka was barren and miraculously became pregnant due to Yitzchok's supplication.
2. During her pregnancy, she experienced unusual agitation within her womb and suffered greatly.
3. She sought out clarity from Shem the prophet.
4. He told her that there are two nations in her womb; one represents good and the other evil.
5. The 2 entities were in opposition of one another.
6. Rivka was now aware that Esav was truly evil.
7. Why did Rivka not share this information with Yitzchok? It would have prevented so much pain and suffering.
8. Why did Rivka seek out clarity from Shem and not from Avraham or Yitzchok?
9. Avraham passed away 5 years before his time so not to see his grandson Esav pursuing an evil path.
10. Rivka did consult with Avraham, but he did not know.
11. The basis for Esav hating Yaakov is a consequence of Yaakov haven taken the blessing meant for Esav.
12. Had Yitzchok been aware of the evil of Esav he would have never considered blessing him.
13. The context for Esav to be considered for the Blessing was only because Yitzchok did not know his true nature.
14. Rivka realized this should not to be known to her husband Yitzchok, and so could not divulge the true nature of Esav.

Tracing The Force That Brought Existence Into Being

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1. Yitzchok was only conceived by Sarah after Avraham was circumcised & had the letter Hei added to his name.
2. The world was created with the spirituality that is contained in the letter Hei.
3. Gemara: The shape of the letter Hei is indicative of man's free choice.
4. The shape: two vertical legs that are spaced and a small opening on the top of left leg.
5. The wide open space alludes that man has the choice to go into the oblivion, free fall.
6. If he chooses to repent, he can return by taking another path to allow himself to maintain his change for the better.
7. A Noachide must live his life within the context of seven Noachide Laws.
8. Before the sin of Adam, that would have been sufficient to achieve spiritual perfection.
9. After the sin, due to spiritual regression one needs 248 Positive & 365 Negative Commandments for perfection.
10. Since man is prone to fail, Repentance was embedded in the profile of creation.
11. Avraham needed a Hei added to his name to create the force that brought all existence into being.

The Empowerment of the Patriarch Through The Matriarch

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1. After Yitzchok marries Rivka, the Torah tells us of Avraham's passing at the age of 175.
2. Avraham passed away when Yaakov and Esav were 13 years old; why mention it here?
3. Midrash: The Patriarchs' actions are indicative of the future events of the Jewish People.
4. Midrash: Avraham went down to Egypt and so did the Jewish People; Avraham left with great wealth and as did the Jewish People.
5. A Patriarch assumes that role if there is a Matriarch.
6. Yitzchok did not become the Patriarch until he married Rivka.
7. Although Avraham lived many more years, he no longer contributed as a Patriarch once Yitzchok married Rivka.
8. Avraham's actions were valued as an individual; no longer contributing to the destiny of the Jewish People.

When Intervention Is Without Self Interest

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1. Esav returns from the field fatigued and famished.
2. He asks Yaakov to give him of the lentil soup that he is cooking.
3. Yaakov agrees only if he sells him his birthright.
4. Esav agrees to sell his birthright for a pot of lentils and a loaf of bread.
5. As the narrative reads – Yaakov took advantage of the moment to snatch the birthright.
6. Midrash: The service in the Temple was reserved exclusively for the first born.
7. Yaakov said it would be disgraceful for such an evil person to be the officiant before G-d.
8. Yaakov had no self interest in the birthright; his initiative was solely to avert a desecration of G-d's name.
9. Years later Yaakov took the blessings that were meant for Esav by impersonating Esav.
10. Esav, upon returning and realizing what Yaakov had done, lets out a yelp and wails.
11. Yitzchok blesses Esav: When you are pained by the fact that your birthright was taken from you, when the Jews don't keep the Torah, you will then cast their yoke from your neck.
12. Why is the transgression of the Torah a basis to cast off their yoke?
13. Yaakov's justification to take the birthright was that it was disgraceful for an evil person to be G-d's officiant.
14. If there is a desecration it is no longer justified because the Jews themselves transgressed the Torah.



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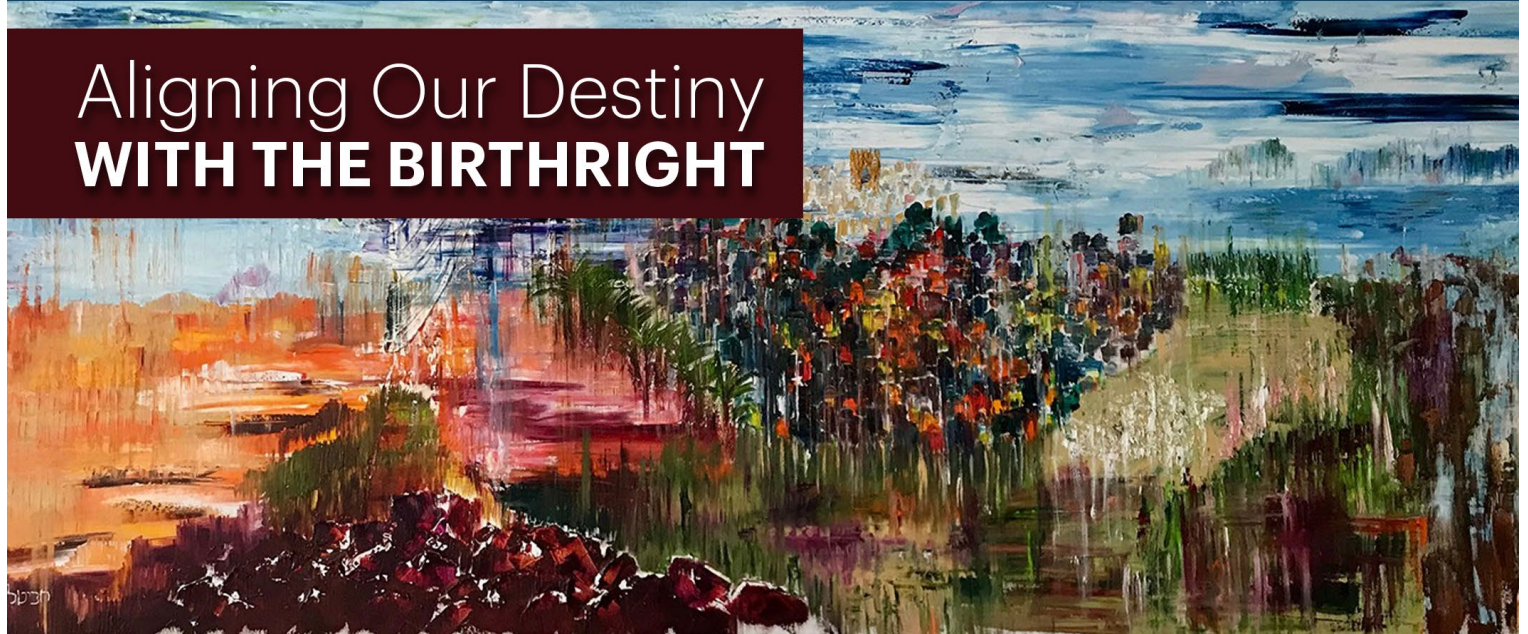
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Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Toldos

Aligning Our Destiny WITH THE BIRTHRIGHT



The Divine Design of Existence

Torah: When *Rivka*, our Matriarch, was pregnant with *Yaakov* and *Esav*, she experienced great pain due to the pregnancy. “The children agitated within her, and she said, ‘If so, why am I thus?’ And she went to inquire of *Hashem*.”

Midrash: *Rivka* sought out the counsel of *Shem*, the prophet, who was the son of *Noach*, in order to understand the cause of the “rumblings” within her womb. *Shem* explained that there were two nations within her that were battling with one another regarding the dominance of the physical and spiritual worlds. This conflict would continue after their birth. They would emerge from the womb as two nations. When one of them ascends, the other will fall. They could possess an equal level of power simultaneously. They represent the battle between good and evil within existence. *Yaakov*, our Patriarch represented “good” and *Esav* was the representation of “evil.” When

Rivka, our Matriarch needed to seek out advice from a prophet to understand the cause of her unusual pain, why did she not consult her husband *Yitzchak* who was a prophet? If not *Yitzchak*, why did she not consult with *Avraham* our Patriarch the founding father of the Jewish people and who was beloved to G-d?

Only *Shem* was able to give *Rivka* a clarification regarding her ordeal, because G-d communicated it to him. It is clear that *Rivka* did not initially approach *Shem* to understand her predicament, but rather she did in fact consult with *Avraham*, her father-in-law and *Yitzchak*, her husband. However, they did not have any understanding regarding what she was experiencing.

Although *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* were both prophets, a prophet is only able to prophesize what G-d reveals to him. Thus, if G-d chooses not to reveal a particular fact to a prophet, regardless of his qualification, he will not be aware of it. After seeking out elucidation from *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* who were not able to respond,

Rivka approached *Shem* who explained to her the cause of the rumblings in her womb. Why would G-d withhold from *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* the cause of *Rivka's* pain?

G-d promised *Avraham* that he would pass away at "a good old age." Meaning, he would pass away with an understanding that he had successfully accomplished his spiritual objective and that his progeny would carry on G-d's Will to actualize the destiny of the Jewish people. If G-d were to reveal to *Avraham* that the cause of *Rivka's* pain was due to the struggle between good and evil, this would have nullified G-d's promise to *Avraham*.

Knowing that *Esav* would be an embodiment of evil and subsequently his descendants would carry on that representation, it would have been contrary to G-d's Promise to him to pass away at "a good old age." This information would have caused *Avraham* unlimited anguish. Therefore, G-d withheld the cause of *Rivka's* pain from him.

Although the conflict between *Yaakov* and *Esav* was destined, the source of contention between them was that *Esav* had believed that *Yaakov* had stolen his birthright from him. If *Yitzchak* had truly known the evil of *Esav*, he would not have considered giving him the blessing, despite the fact that he was his firstborn. It was only because *Yitzchak* was misled by *Esav's* deceit that he believed that *Esav* was deserving of blessing.

After *Yaakov* had rightfully purchased the birthright from *Esav*, he had no choice but to resort to deceiving his father in order to take what was rightfully his, thus establishing him as the father of the eternal people. *Yitzchak's* unawareness is the cause of the eternal conflict between *Yaakov* and *Esav* until the coming of *Moshiach*. G-d therefore withheld the prophecy from *Yitzchak*, regarding the source of *Rivka's* pain.

After *Shem* had revealed the cause of *Rivka's* pain, she understood that she was not permitted to divulge this information to her husband or to *Avraham* her father in law. It was obvious to *Rivka* that *Yitzchak* would never know the true nature of his firstborn, *Esav*. The dimension of guile and deceit of *Esav* was at such a level that unless G-d had revealed his essence of evil, it was impossible for one to know. Even *Rivka*, who had come from a home that reflected *Esav's* negative characteristics, she would not have been able to fully grasp who her son truly was.

Yitzchak, the Unfathomable Patriarch

Midrash citing a verse from Proverbs: "'The father of the righteous one shall rejoice. The one who gives birth to the wise one will rejoice with him.' To whom is King Solomon referring in the verse? It is to the *Yitzchak*, our Patriarch. When *Yitzchak* was born everyone rejoiced. Heaven and earth rejoiced. The sun and the moon rejoiced. The stars and the zodiac rejoiced. Why did all existence rejoice after the birth of *Yitzchak*? Had *Yitzchak* not been created, the world would have not continued."

Midrash citing a verse from *Yirmiya*: "'If not for My covenant, which is in effect day and night, the extent of heaven and earth would not be put in place.' What is the covenant to which G-d is referring? It is *Yitzchak*— as it states in the *Torah*, 'My covenant I will establish with *Yitzchak*.'" It is interesting to note that the *Midrash* tells us "Had *Yitzchak* not been created..." It does not state, "Had *Yitzchak* not been born..." Evidently, *Yitzchak's* coming into being was more than a child being born into existence, but rather he was the equivalent of a new creation coming into being.

Gemara in *Yevamos*: *Avraham*, our Patriarch was not able to father children. In addition, *Sarah* our Matriarch could not conceive because she did not possess reproductive organs. In order to bring *Yitzchak* into existence G-d needed to create within her reproductive organs that did not previously exist. *Yitzchak's* conception was not merely based on an infertile woman being made fertile, but rather it was based on something new coming into existence within *Sarah* that allowed him to come into being.

Existence could not have continued had *Yitzchak* not been created. *Yitzchak* needed to be brought to the *Akeidah* in order to ensure the future of the Jewish people until the end of time, thereby guaranteeing the future of existence. If there would have not been a Jewish people, existence would cease to be. Although the *Akeidah* was the most difficult of the ten tests that G-d presented to *Avraham*, it would not have had the eternal effect and significance had *Yitzchak* not been the dimension of person that he was.

Yitzchak had only qualified as the offering as a result of his coming into existence as a result of being a new creation. He was a person who had a unique dimension of spiritual capacity and potential. He thus qualified to

be the “unblemished offering.” There are two aspects regarding a sacrifice. There is the qualification of the one who brings the sacrifice and the qualification of the sacrifice itself.

The merit of the *Akeidah* was of such significance and importance that it eternally silences the prosecution of satan, thus guaranteeing that the Jewish people should merit the Attribute of Mercy. In addition, because the *Akeidah* had taken place on Mt. Moria, which is the location of the Temple Mount, all of the sacrifices brought by the Jewish people were able to evoke the Attribute of Mercy, thus allowing them to be atoned. Therefore, all aspects of creation rejoiced when *Yitzchak* was created because the existence of the world was guaranteed. *Yitzchak*, our Patriarch, is the least known of the three Patriarchs. The *Torah* does not reveal or describe the dimension of *Yitzchak's* spirituality with any detail. Where does the *Torah* allude to the dimension of his being?

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: The *Torah* reveals *Yitzchak's* dimension of spirituality through one Hebrew letter.

Toldos: “*V'Aiele Toldos Yitzchak* (And these are the offspring of *Yitzchak*...)” The *Torah* could have omitted the letter *vav* in the beginning of the verse in order to communicate what follows. However, the *Torah* is revealing to us through this *vav*, which is a connecting letter, that *Yitzchak* is connected to what the *Torah* mentioned prior regarding his father *Avraham*. This is to teach us that *Yitzchak*, as a spiritual person, was the equivalent of his father.

Yitzchak's spiritual accomplishment was no less than that of his father regarding the evolution of the Jewish people. If the *Torah* reveals in detail the life of *Avraham* and the life of *Yaakov* then why does the *Torah* conceal *Yitzchak's* spiritual accomplishments. It is because of *Yitzchak's* dimension of spirituality, which was expressed through the Attribute of Justice. He embodied exactness and perfection to the ultimate degree. He was completely dedicated to self-perfection as “unblemished offering.”

The only way he could be depicted would be as an angel of G-d. Just as it is impossible to fathom the dimension of spirituality of an angel, because we have no frame of reference to understand it, so too we have no frame of reference to be able to appreciate the spirituality of our Patriarch, *Yitzchak*. The only way he could be depicted is through the allusion of the letter

“*vav*” to inform us that his spiritual accomplishment was no less than that of his father *Avraham*.

Yitzchak's Immunity from Satan's Influence

Midrash: “*Reb Shimon bar Yochai* says, ‘G-d does not associate His name with the devoutly righteous (*tzaddikim*) during their lifetime. It is only after their passing does He associate His Name with them. As it is stated in Psalms, “The holy people (*kadoshim*) that are in the ground are worthy of honor...” When do they assume the status of ‘*kadoshim*?’ It is when they are buried in the earth. As long as they are alive, G-d does not associate His Name with them. Why is this so? It because G-d does not have faith in them. He is not sure if the evil inclination will mislead them (and cause them to sin thereby losing their status as *tzaddikim*). However, after their passing G-d identifies Himself with them. (Because their life ended in righteousness).”

Midrash: “*Reb Shimon bar Yochai* asks, ‘But we do find that G-d associated His Name with *Yitzchak*, the devoutly pious one, while he was alive. As it is stated in the verse when G-d communicated a prophecy to *Yaakov* He had said, “G-d of *Avraham* your father and G-d of *Yitzchak* (*Avraham* had already passed away, however *Yitzchak* was still alive).’ ...the Rabbis explain that the reason G-d associated His Holy Name with *Yitzchak* during his lifetime was because G-d sees *Yitzchak* as the pile of ash upon the altar (of the *Akeidah*).” If *Yitzchak* is seen by G-d as “pile of ash” after the *Akeidah*, evidently his power of choice had been withdrawn so that he should not become evil? If so, then what is the value of his actions after the *Akeidah* if in fact he no longer had the power of choice?

We supplicate G-d every day that He should not subject us to a setting in which we will be tested. Despite the fact that ever moment of life, we are in a state of being tested, we nevertheless request from G-d that whatever test with which we are confronted should not be too difficult. We do not want to be subjected to a test that we could fail.

Although one has the ability to succeed in every test that G-d presents him, despite its difficulty, there is no guarantee that he will in fact succeed. In the merit of *Yitzchak* being a participant in the *Akeidah*, being the dimension of person that he was and allowing himself

to be bound for the purpose of the *Akeidah*, he had special merit. G-d views him as if he had been sacrificed at the *Akeidah* and consumed by the fire of the altar to become a pile of ash.

In the merit of the value of the *Akeidah*, which guarantees the existence of the Jewish people until the end of time, G-d will protect *Yitzchak* from a setting where the consequence of his choice could lead him to forfeit his status as devoutly righteous. Therefore, G-d was able to associate His Name with *Yitzchak*, even during his lifetime, because his status as holy (*kadosh*) is guaranteed.

G-d Setting History into Motion

Torah regarding *Yitzchak's* giving of the blessing: "And it came to pass when *Yitzchak* was old... And he said, 'See now I have aged; I know not the day of my death.'"

Rashi citing *Chazal*: "*Reb Yehoshua Ben Korcha* says, 'If one comes within the years of his parents passing, he must begin to be concerned (about his own death) five years prior to the time of their passing and five years after their passing. (Because one does not know the day that he will die).' Since *Yitzchak* was 123 years, which was five years before his mother (*Sarah*)'s passing he began to be concerned.... Therefore, I have summoned you today to give you my blessing, since I am not certain of the day of my death.'"

The simple understanding of *Chazal* regarding the reason *Yitzchak* gave his blessing at this particular time is because since one does not know the day of his death, he was concerned to give his blessing to his son before he passed away.

Sforno: "One's blessing is more effective when it is given close to the time of one's death. As we find regarding *Yaakov*, and *Moshe*. Why is this so? It is because the spirit (*neshama*) begins to detach itself from the material, close the time of one's death."

Maharal of Prague: The concept of blessing is a spiritual concept because it has unlimited ramifications. Therefore, if one is more spiritualized, such as at the time before one's death (because the soul is beginning to depart) then his blessing will be more effective. The blessing is emanating from an uninhibited spiritual source. Thus, *Yitzchak*, *Yaakov*, and *Moshe* gave their blessing close to the time of their passing.

Chazal: After the *Akeidah*, G-d had seen *Yitzchak* as a "pile of ash" before Him. He was seen as a burnt offering of the *Akeidah*, which was something that was spiritualized. Therefore, G-d associated His Name with *Yitzchak* during his lifetime. When the time came close to his passing, the blessing that he gave to *Yaakov*, our Patriarch was at a more special level. This is because in addition to already being spiritualized, as a result of the *Akeidah*, his soul began to depart from his body, which was already spiritualized to a great degree. Since *Yaakov* was the beneficiary of a blessing that was at the most advanced level, the blessing itself was unique. It was necessary for *Yaakov* to receive a blessing of the most profound level.

Chazal: *Yaakov* was the most special of the three Patriarchs. It was *Yaakov* who fathered the twelve tribes of Israel and thus brought about the eternal people. The success and dimension of the spirituality of the Jewish people until the end of time was rooted in *Yaakov's* being. G-d tested *Avraham* with the *Akeidah* so that ultimately the merit of the *Akeidah* would protect the Jewish people from prosecution of satan and allow their sacrifices to evoke the Attribute of Mercy. In addition, by having *Yitzchak* brought at the *Akeidah*, he became classified as "a pile of ash before Him" Therefore, G-d devised a series of events that not only caused the Jewish people to be protected until the end of time, but also so that *Yaakov* should receive from his father *Yitzchak*, the most profound blessing. This allowed *Yaakov* to father the twelve of G-d.

Negation, the Essence of Value (from *Chayei Sarah*)

Torah: *Avraham* our Patriarch had instructed his servant *Eliezer* to seek out an appropriate wife for *Yitzchak*. Throughout the portion, *Eliezer* is never referred to by name, but rather as "the servant" or "the servant of *Avraham*." When *Eliezer* refers to himself, he does so as, "I am the servant of my master, *Avraham*."

Regardless of his unique and advanced spiritual dimension and level of accomplishment in the material, *Eliezer* was completely negated and nullified to his master *Avraham*. He thus had no identity unto himself. There are however a number of instances in the portion in which *Eliezer* is referred to as "the man (*ish*)" and not as "servant." The *Torah* tells us that after *Eliezer* had prayed to G-d to present before him the

maiden who possessed the attribute of kindness on the most exceptional level to qualify to be the future Matriarch, he witnessed his supplication coming to fruition. The verse states, "The man (*ish*) (*Eliezer*) was astonished at her, reflecting silently to know whether *Hashem* had made his journey successful or not."

Another instance in which *Eliezer* is referred to as "the man" is when *Eliezer* prostrated himself to thank G-d for coming upon *Rivka* who not only possessed all of the necessary characteristics but also was from the family of *Avraham*. As the verse states, "So the man (*ish*) bowed low and prostrated himself to *Hashem*." After *Rivka*'s family agreed to allow her to return with *Eliezer* to be married to *Yitzchak*. *Rivka*'s family called to her and said, "Will you go with this man (*ish*)?" Although *Eliezer* had introduced himself to *Rivka*'s family as the servant of *Avraham*, they refer to him as "the man" in this context. Why is *Eliezer* referred to as "*ish*" in these instances and not as "servant/slave"?

Torah: When *Eliezer* supplicated G-d, he asked that He should perform a kindness on behalf of his master *Avraham*. In addition, *Eliezer* had requested that the kindness present itself "before me." If G-d were to do a kindness with *Avraham*, it is obvious that it would present itself. Why did *Eliezer* need to say "before me?"

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: *Eliezer* understood that his master *Avraham* was sufficiently worthy, that in his merit the proper wife would be located for *Yitzchak*. However, *Eliezer* was concerned that he, as his master's agent, was not sufficiently worthy to succeed in this mission. Therefore, *Eliezer* beseeched G-d that he should have the merit to succeed in this agency on behalf of his master *Avraham*.

When *Eliezer* realized that *Rivka* was in fact the proper wife who was destined for *Yitzchak*, he understood that he had the worthiness to succeed in his mission. The *Torah* therefore refers to him as "The man was astonished..." to indicate that *Eliezer* was seen in the

Eyes of G-d as one who was independently worthy to successfully execute the agency of *Avraham*. When *Eliezer* bowed and gave thanks to G-d it was also within the same context. Therefore the *Torah* refers to him as "*ish*."

Eliezer had totally negated himself to his master, despite his level of accomplishment. *Rivka*'s family referred to him as "the man." Because they were pagans, they had no understanding or appreciation of *Avraham*'s dimension of person. They could not understand how a man of *Eliezer*'s level of distinction and accomplishment be negated or subordinated to *Avraham*, his master.

When *Eliezer* had first approached their home, they believed that he was *Avraham* because he radiated a holiness that had a semblance of his master's. Just as they could not fathom the privilege of their daughter becoming the wife of *Yitzchak*, the son of *Avraham*, who was the equivalent of a living angel, so too they could not appreciate *Avraham* because of their own lack of spirituality. Therefore, they could not relate to *Eliezer* as being the mere "servant of *Avraham*."

Torah: Regarding the bringing of sacrifices, "The man who brings a sacrifice..."

Chazal: The reiteration of the word "man" in the verse is coming to include non-Jews. Meaning, even a non-Jew may bring a sacrifice in the Temple. Why does the *Torah* refer to the one who brings the sacrifice as "man (*ish*)?" It is because when one brings a sacrifice one must repent and negate himself to G-d to the point that he understands that he in truth should be brought as the offering. It is only then when one is humbled and negated that G-d values the individual to accept his sacrifice.

