



# Kinder Torah<sup>®</sup>



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table  
Parshas Vayechi

## Give Him Honor

“Leah, did you get your Chumash test back?”  
 “Yes I did, Miri.”  
 “Do you mind if I ask you how you did on the test?”  
 “I don’t mind at all Miri. I got a 95.”  
 “Ninety-five. That’s great Leah. You are so smart.”  
 “Boruch Hashem.”  
 “You always say that when I compliment you, Leah.”  
 “Say what?”  
 “‘Boruch Hashem.’ Why do you say it?”  
 “My parents say it. They are wonderful role models. I always try to do what they do. Now you’ve got my curiosity going. I want to ask them why they always say ‘Boruch Hashem.’”  
 “When you find out, please tell me.”  
 “Sure, Miri.”

A few minutes later . . .

“Imma, I’m home.”  
 “Great to see you, Leah. How was school today?”  
 “Great. I got a 95 in my Chumash test.”  
 “Boruch Hashem.”  
 “I’m glad that you said that, Imma.”  
 “So am I.”  
 “I always wanted to know why you say ‘Boruch Hashem’ whenever you hear good news, or whenever someone gives you a compliment.”  
 “Leah, you always ask the most thoughtful questions.”  
 “Boruch Hashem.”  
 “A compliment is a very nice thing. It tells a person about his good qualities. Think about it for a minute. Who gave the person his talents?”  
 “Hashem.”  
 “Who gave him the opportunities to develop his good qualities?”  
 “Hashem.”  
 “Who keeps a person alive every minute of every day?”  
 “Hashem.”  
 “Therefore, who deserves to be blessed when a person does something good?”  
 “Hashem.”  
 “Right. That is why we say, Boruch Hashem. Do you know one of the places that we learn this from, Leah?”  
 “Let me guess – this week’s parsha.”  
 “Right, Leah. Yaakov Avinu was sick in bed at the end of his life. Yosef brought his two sons, Efraim and Menashe before him to receive a blessing. Yaakov asked Yosef, ‘Who are they?’ Yosef replied, ‘These are my sons who Hashem has given to me here’ (Bereshis 48:8-9). The Ohr

HaChaim HaKadosh comments that this is the way of tsaddikim. Whenever they mention a good thing that happened to them, they give honor to Hashem, because He is the Giver. That is what we do when we say, ‘Boruch Hashem.’ We are giving all of the credit to Him.”  
 “Imma, I have only one thing to say.”  
 “What, Leah?”  
 “Boruch Hashem.”

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*Did someone give you a compliment today? Boruch Hashem. “Esti, you got dressed so quickly this morning.” “Boruch Hashem.” “Ahuva, you washed the floors in the whole house.” “Boruch Hashem.” “Savta, you brought us such yummy treats for Shabbos.” “Boruch Hashem.” “Shoshie, you made shalom with the neighbor.” “Boruch Hashem.” “Imma, the Shabbos food is outstanding.” “Boruch Hashem.” This is how we respond to good things, good news, and compliments. We give honor to the One Who made these things happen.*

## Every Drop Counts

“**M**ay they multiply abundantly like fish within the land” (Bereshis 48:16). The Medrash Rabba (97:3) adds another insight to Yaakov’s blessing with a parable. Although these fish grew up in the water, when one drop of rain falls, they rush to drink it as if they had never tasted water in their lives. So too it is with the Jewish people. We grow up immersed in the “sea” of Torah, which is compared to water. Still, when we hear a *chiddush* (original Torah thought), we drink it in with great thirst as if we had never heard a word of Torah in our lives.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*This is what we should we are striving for in our Torah learning. It is not so hard to understand. Try offering ice cream to someone who has never tasted it. He may want to try it. He may not. He does not really know what he will be eating. Someone who knows how delicious ice cream is will always want to eat it. Someone who has not tasted the sweetness of Torah learning may not be so anxious to hear a chiddush. On the other hand, someone who knows the pleasure of Torah learning will always want to learn more.*

## What’s In A Name?

“**M**ay the angel who redeems me from all evil bless the boys, and may they be called by my name and the names of my fathers, Avraham and Yitzchak, and may they multiply abundantly like fish within the land” (Bereshis 48:16). This is the blessing that Yaakov gave to his two grandsons, Efraim and Menashe. It is so beautiful that we say it every night before we go to sleep. What is good about being named after Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov? The Sforno zt”l explains that tsaddikim do not name their children after evil ancestors, like Terach and Nachor. And the opposite is also true. A wicked person, even though he has righteous ancestors, will name his child after one of his evil ancestors. Therefore, Yaakov Avinu blessed Efraim and Menashe that they should always be ready to do Hashem’s will, and they should receive *Siyata Dishmaya* (Heavenly Assistance) to succeed. In this way they will be fit to show their relationship to their righteous ancestors, Avraham and Yitzchak.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*What’s in a name? A blessing. When we receive the name of a tsaddik or a tsadekes, we know that our parents care about us and love us very much. They are observing Hashem’s Torah and Mitzvos, just like their grandfather of great-uncle did. And they want their newborn baby to be a tsaddik just like he was. So they give the baby his name. Isn’t that beautiful? This is Yaakov Avinu’s blessing to all of us. May we all be tsaddikim and tsidkonios and therefore merit to be named after, and name our children after righteous ancestors.*

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