

# SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



## Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 20

*Toldos, Sicha 1*

### The Context:

On the seemingly repetitious opening verse of parshas Toldos, "And these are the generations of Yitzchak the son of Abraham; Avraham begat Isaac," Rashi cites a Midrashic teaching:

"The scorners of the generation were saying that Sarah had conceived from Abimelech, for she had lived with Avraham for many years and had not conceived from him. What did G-d do? He shaped the features of Yitzchak's face to resemble Avraham's, and everyone attested that Avraham had begotten Yitzchak. This is the meaning of what is written here: "Yitzchak, the son of Avraham," because here is proof that "Avraham begat Yitzchak.""

### The Question:

The language, "what did G-d do? He shaped..." implies that G-d miraculously engineered this resemblance. Yet a father and son's physical resemblance is a natural

reality, why would it require Divine intervention?

### The Explanation:

A person's physical appearance reflects their psychological and spiritual constitution. Avraham personified the attribute of kindness and generosity, while Yitzchak personified the attribute of judgment and restraint. Naturally, therefore, their appearances should have reflected their diverging personalities. Yet, G-d miraculously fashioned Yitzchak's features to resemble his father's.

This outer resemblance also implies that an inner transformation took place as well. Yitzchak's natural restraint was revealed to be compatible with Avraham's generosity. Instead of restricting Avraham's openness, the force and strength needed for judgment and severity was used for the task of giving. Avraham's generosity was amplified with Yitzchak's intensity. Only a being that transcends the natural constraints, G-d Himself, could finesse these opposite inclinations into one human being.

### The Lesson:

G-d did not, in advance, fashion Avraham to resemble his future son, Yitzchak. He fashioned Yitzchak to resemble Avraham. In the terms laid out above, G-d altered the disposition of severity to conform to kindness. This is a lesson for every person who is faced with a choice of responding with judgment or kindness — like G-d, we are to choose kindness.

### The Relevance:

This is related to the theme of the 19th of Kislev. The exposure of the inner teachings of Torah, the “king’s crown jewels,” is a union of opposite — the essentially concealed is given and revealed without limitation. This was necessary because the very essence of the Jewish soul’s survival was at stake. When the essence is threatened, G-d defies all natural demarcations — even the wisdom which was once supposed to be concealed becomes open to all.

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