



THE RABBI BINYAMIN KAMENETZKY  
TORAH LEGACY FOUNDATION  
לזכרון של הרב בנימין קמנצקי זצ"ל

אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של  
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,  
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

## **5780 - Parshas Chayei Sarah - An Old Message**

Parshas Chayei Sarah tells the story of Eliezer, Avraham's loyal servant's search for a wife for Yitzchok. After travelling to Aram Naharayim, he meets Rivka's father Bisuel, and brother Lavan. In his conversation, he tells them, "Sarah my masters wife bite a son to my master after she got old." (24:36)

Seemingly he says some extra words. Surely Eliezer did not mean to speak derogatory about Sarah. Why then did he mention now that she bore a son "after she got old"?

***This story is written in a sefer about the life of the Vilna Gaon:***

***A man in his nineties lay ill in a hospital in the late nineteenth century. His family gathered around him, and listened solemnly to the report. The doctors conveyed the ever-so-obvious news, that their father and grandfather was simply too weak to fight off the infection he contracted. His aged body was worn, and it was only a matter of days before his time passed. There was nothing left to do.***

***One can only imagine the shock of the family a few moments later, to see the patient smiling! Not only was he smiling, but he did not seem nervous at all. In his weak voice, he told them, "Don't listen to the doctors. I'll be fine. You'll see, I will recover fully!" His children were afraid he was hallucinating, and asked him if he heard the doctor's report. He responded again by guaranteeing them that he will be fine.***

***"Let me tell you what happened almost eighty years ago, when I was a child" he explained. "On Simchas Torah, I davened in the same shul as the Vilna Gaon, and during dancing, I accidentally stood on the Gaon's tallis. As the tzaddik moved, it to start to slip off his shoulder. He turned to me and calmly said, 'My sweet child, you should live until one hundred years old! But can you please step off my tallis?'"***

***The old man in the hospital explained. "I have a guarantee from the Vilna Gaon that I will live to one hundred - and I still have a few more years! The doctor's verdict means nothing!" Sure enough, the man had a miraculous recovery and lived, just as the Vilna Gaon predicted.***

My grandfather Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l quoted Rav Yitzchok Zev Soloveichik zt"l, the "Brisker Rav" who answers our question. Eliezer understood that Bisuel was a materialistic person. He saw the world through a shallow natural lens and believed that he had control over the outcome. In his mind, it was up to him. If he wished, he could forbid his daughter from returning with Eliezer.

Eliezer sensed this, and he spoke directly at him. "In the house of Abraham," Eliezer explained, there are no laws of nature. Yitzchok himself was a miracle. He was born to an old mother, in a supernatural phenomenon. Not natural occurrences, nor the plans of man can affect the future of Yitzchok. Just as Yitzchok defied the laws of nature in his existence, so too he will defy you, and he will marry the girl who is destined for him.

Yes, this message is old. But we need a renewed "old message" to strengthen our belief that Hashem's hand guides every move in this world.

**Good Shabbos!**

*Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky is the Director of Advancement at Yeshiva of South Shore - ישיבה תורת חיים - בית בנימן. He is currently compiling the vast storehouse of all the Torah thoughts from his grandfather. If you have any stories to share from his grandfather, you can email him at [skamenetzky@yoss.org](mailto:skamenetzky@yoss.org).*