

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

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To-I'dot

There is a question which often plagues those that read a specific story in this week's Parsha. There is a seemingly inconsequential story of Yitzchak and his servants digging the wells (26:18-22). We are told that the servants dig two wells which are disputed by the local population and finally a third well, which is not disputed. Why did the Torah feel the necessity to share with us this incident?

Rabbi Y. Blau answered this question initially by quoting Rambam who explained that these stories are symbolic of future scenarios that will take place to the Jewish people. These incidents hint to the initial tragedies of the two Temple destructions, whereas the third well represents the building of the third. It represents the many unfair oppressions that will occur during the period of our exile. The servants constantly move on to build a new well while abandoning the first two wells, even though the wells were rightfully theirs.

The Abarbanel (Don Isaac Abravanel

1437-1509) takes almost the opposite approach. He believes that Yitzchak kept the original two wells even in the face of protest and opposition of Avimelech. The Torah, rather, is showing us that G-d had begun fulfilling His promise to make Yitzchak a great nation. This is emphasized by Avimelech hastily coming to make a pact with Yitzchak (26:31), proving Yitzchak's position of importance.

One can glance at these two approaches, it would seem antithetical to each other. However, on a deeper analysis, it may portray the different historical situations that the Jew finds himself. The first opinion portrays Yitzchak as the meek Jew in exile, who is constantly bullied by all those around him. The second opinion has the powerful Yitzchak who can triumphantly overcome all challenges.

Often in life we are faced with the dilemma to accept what happens without fighting back or rather, to adopt the position of the Abarbanel, who himself was exiled in the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, to stand up for our rights and fighting for values which are rightfully ours.

May G-d continue to protect all our soldiers fighting to defend Israel on all her fronts. 🏰