

THE HIGHLIGHT REEL OF YITZCHAK AND RIVKA

by Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

There's something truly beautiful about the mornings when people wander into our shiur from every corner of life. You look around the room and see longtime listeners who finally made it in person, families in town for a simcha, kids with wide eyes, friends returning after years — and all of them sitting together at one table of Torah.

There's a feeling of continuity in that. A sense that what we're doing isn't just about learning — it's about linking our stories, our struggles, our hopes, and our future.

And that's exactly the energy the Torah draws us into when it speaks about Yitzchak and Rivka.

Because if you look closely, something unusual happens in their story.

The Torah introduces us to Rivka in dramatic fashion, shows us the miracles in Sarah's tent returning when she enters it... and then — silence.

For twenty years.

My friends, if someone left twenty years of your life out of your autobiography, you'd probably take it personally. But the Torah does it intentionally.

Why?

Because the Torah isn't trying to record everything that happened.

It's trying to record everything we need.

The Torah is here to teach, not to document. And sometimes the most powerful lesson comes not from what the Torah says... but from what it chooses to leave out.

So what does it leave in?

Just two scenes. Two moments. But they're enough to build your entire home on.

1. Miracles Don't Make a Marriage — Values Do

When Eliezer arrives at the well, he sees Rivka perform a miracle. The water rises for her. That alone should've been the end of the search. If you're looking for a spiritual superstar, check every box.

But Eliezer doesn't stop there.

He still runs the test.

He still watches her kindness.

He still waits to see her character in action.

And Yitzchak?

He only loves her after he sees that she carries the values of his mother — the priorities, the essence, the spiritual DNA of the Jewish home.

The Torah is teaching us something timeless:

You don't marry a miracle.

You don't marry inspiration.

You don't marry a "wow."

You marry values.

The things that actually build a life.

The things your children will absorb without even realizing it.

The things that hold a family together when life gets hard.

Rivka didn't just amaze the world — she aligned with Yitzchak's world.

And that's when love appears.

2. Praying for Someone Is Beautiful. Praying With Someone Is Transformational.

The second scene the Torah gives us is simple but incredibly deep:

Yitzchak and Rivka praying opposite one another because they could not have children.

The Torah doesn't just tell us they prayed. It tells us how they prayed.

Facing each other.

Feeling each other's pain.

Letting the longing of one heart awaken the tefillah of the other.

The Kotzker says something stunning:

Yitzchak was strong. Almost unshakeable.

He accepted everything in life as God's will — even the hardest things.

But when he saw Rivka cry...

that broke him open.

There's a tenderness to that idea that we often miss.

Relationships aren't built by solving every problem.

They're built by feeling them together.

Standing beside someone else's struggle.

Letting their tears touch your own heart.

And turning that into a tefillah.

Yitzchak wasn't praying for a child.

He was praying for her.

And that kind of prayer opens gates that individual prayer never will.

Know Your Non-Negotiables

All of this points us toward one of the most important questions in life:

What are your red lines?

Not preferences.

Not “nice to haves.”

Not “I’d like it better if...”

But the things you cannot — and should not — compromise, no matter how shiny everything else looks.

Your marriage needs that clarity.

Your family needs that clarity.

Your spiritual life needs that clarity.

Your decisions need that clarity.

Because if you don’t know your non-negotiables, life will negotiate them for you.

And the price is always far too high.

The Torah’s Silence Is the Torah’s Wisdom

Why does the Torah give us only two scenes from twenty years of Yitzchak and Rivka’s marriage?

Because these two scenes are the marriage.

Choosing someone for their values, not their miracles.

And standing beside someone in their pain, not just in their joy.

That’s the whole blueprint.

Everything else is commentary.

May Hashem bless us with the clarity to choose well,

the courage to hold our red lines,
and the heart to stand with the people we love
in their tears as much as in their triumphs.

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

Key Lessons to Carry

1. Not every righteous person is your person.

Compatibility is not superficial — it is spiritual truth.

2. Love grows from aligned values, not from spiritual fireworks.

3. Praying with someone creates a deeper connection than praying for them.

4. Emotional presence is a sacred act.

Seeing another's pain opens gates of blessing.

5. Know your non-negotiables in marriage, parenting, and life.

If you compromise them, you compromise yourself.

6. God listens powerfully when you pray for someone else's needs as if they were your own.

7. Torah records only the moments meant to guide every generation.

The silence of the twenty years teaches us what truly matters.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What “must-haves” or non-negotiables guide your relationships and life decisions?
2. Do you differentiate between qualities that impress you and qualities that truly serve your future?
3. Have you ever prayed together with someone you love? What changed?
4. Where in your relationships could you show more presence, vulnerability, or empathy?
5. What pain of someone close to you have you not yet allowed yourself to feel fully?
6. In what ways can you realign a relationship — not with grand gestures, but through small, consistent acts?
7. How might this story reshape the way you approach dating, marriage, parenting, or friendship?