



THE DANGER OF LEITZANUS

"AVRAHAM HOLID ES YITZCHAK" - WHY THE EMPHASIS?

אברהם הוליד את יצחק, "these are the children of Yitzchak ben Avraham." אברהם הוליד את יצחק (Bereishis 25:19). The question is, after the Torah mentions that Yitzchak was ben Avraham, why does it need to say after that, אברהם הוליד את יצחק? If I tell you Yitzchak is ben Avraham, most geniuses, even simple folks like me and you, could figure out that אברהם הוליד את יצחק. They have these riddles. If Yitzchak's father's name was Avraham, what's the name of his son? Most people could figure that out.

Rashi addresses this question. He quotes *Chazal* who explain that since the *passuk* wrote that Yitzchak was the son of Avraham, it wanted to re-emphasize and say that אברהם הוליד את יצחק. The Torah is making a separate point here. Now, why does the Torah have to write that?

So Rashi says: לפי שהיו ליצני הדור אומרים, in that generation there were *leitzanim* (scoffers). I guess not much has changed since those times. There were *leitzanim* in those generations also. After Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak and it was a *kol ra'ash gadol adir vechazak*, the *leitzanei hador*, they came along and said: מאבימלך נתעברה שרה. You know what these *leitzanim* said? It was from Avimelech that Sarah had a child and they said אברהם עם אברהם, for many years she lived with Avraham, ולא נתעברה הימנו, and she never had a child. But soon after being kidnapped by Avimelech, she became pregnant. So, Avimelech must be Yitzchak's father. That's what they said. מה עשה הקב"ה, what did Hakadosh Baruch Hu do? צר קלסתר פניו, He formed the shape of Yitzchak's face דומה לאברהם. Yitzchak was identical to his father. The *gemara* says there was a coin that Avraham Avinu coined. On one side he had etched out his picture and on the back was Yitzchak's. When people would look at the coin, they would say, "It's got to be a mistake. It's Avraham and Avraham. Which one is it? Yitzchak and Yitzchak? Avraham and Avraham?" Because they looked the same. They were so identical that people did not *chap* the difference. And once that happened העידו הכל, everybody testified that Avraham clearly was the one who was מוליד את יצחק and not Avimelech.

THE BRISKER QUESTION: WHY WAS THERE LEITZANUS?

The Rebbe (Rav Meir Halevi Soloveichik) used to always say over from his father: "What kind of *leitzanus* was this? What in the world did they gain with their jokes? After all is said and done, the main *nes* was the fact that Sarah, who was not capable of giving birth, had a child." She was an *akarah!* She didn't have a *beis valad!* She was already way past *orach kanashim* and she experienced a return to her youth! That is the biggest *nes*, as it says תלד שנה תשעים, "can a 90 year-old woman give birth?!" (Bereishis 17:17). So how does saying that Avimelech was the one who fathered Yitzchak mitigate the *nes* that Sarah had?! That was *the* miracle. Also, their *ta'ananah* is surprising. They said Avraham was married to Sarah for many years and she never became pregnant. Wait a minute...but Avraham already had a child! Avraham obviously didn't have a problem with having children! Even though initially he may have had a problem, he overcame that problem, and had a son from Hagar, called Yishmael! The *chisaron* wasn't that he wasn't able to give birth. What did they gain by saying מאבימלך נתעברה שרה?

You have to study this because in Brisk they said that here lies a lesson and a tremendous revelation about the mechanics and dynamics of *leitzanus*. In Brisk, they also asked why does Chazal refer to them as *leitzanei hador*, "scoffers of the generation"? They should have called them *shakranim*, liars.

The Brisker Rav said that when somebody makes *leitzanus* of something you always have to know - what is the point that the *leitz* is trying to minimize?

Somebody might think that maybe the *leitzanim* didn't like miracles. There are some people who just don't like miracles. They don't accept miracles. So they try to make all kinds of *leitzanus* to minimize miracles. Some guy once wrote a book explaining how *krias Yam Suf* wasn't a miracle. It was a natural phenomenon, he claimed. The guy was such a retard. He wrote a whole book on this topic! He should have called it *Comedy*. It was utter stupidity. Just because he talks in scientific language doesn't mean that it has any truth to it. He writes about the winds and how they were blowing. So it made twelve openings. And how did the water split in every cup?! Were people blowing in their cups?! Did you ever blow in your cup and it separates your coffee?! So it must be that people were doing that. Blowing the water. You can use a straw, but it produces bubbles. People say all kinds of *narishkeit*.

So what was the *leitzanus* over here? The Brisker Rav said these *leitzanim* had no issue with miracles. Their main difficulty was with the miracle happening to Avraham Avinu. That's what they were challenging. To Sarah - yes, but to Avraham - no. What bothered them so much to go to such length? As great as Avraham became, as prestigious, as *mechubad*, as honored

and as revered and awed as he was - Avraham was a superman in every single area. Nu, what happened to this superman? People looked up to him in awe! You know what they had a problem with? They didn't *fargin* him about one thing. Do you know what that was? That he was still Avraham *Ha'Ivri*!! He was the guy who proved the whole world wrong. He was the one who was against the entire world. People don't like when somebody ends up being right, and those people didn't like the fact that Avraham Avinu was right. Avraham had said that Hashem told him he was going to have a child with Sarah. This is what was eating them up inside.

AVRAHAM'S GADLUS

Now, if this miracle happened to Avraham Avinu, you know what that means? People would say, "Wow! That's a nail in the coffin of anybody who ever had a *shitah* against Avraham. Avraham turned out to be 100% right!" Avraham was calling out *bekol gadol* to the whole world, telling them there's one Hashem. Hashem can do anything. Hashem is the only One to serve, the only One to worship. He went from city to city, and he pushed Hashem, he sold Hashem. When he did *hachnasas orchim* all over the place, in all his inns, where he said, "Don't thank me. Thank Hashem!"

And one of the brachos that Avraham Avinu received from Hashem was the promise of: **והרבה ארבה את זרעך**, "I'm going to increase your offspring." (Bereishis 22:17)

Now, when Sarah gave birth, everybody was saying, "Okay, he's a superman. He's an amazing person." They had a great deal of respect for him and his *shitah*. "Yes, he was powerful before that. But *lema'aseh* he didn't have this kid, so there's not going to be any continuity over here. The thousands of *talmidim* he had won't continue, and won't bear any fruit, because *lema'aseh*, his big *havtachah* as the years went by, wasn't being fulfilled. The probability of it being fulfilled became more and more diminished." And now all of a sudden Avraham Avinu pulls the carpet out. Whoosh! "Watch this, boys. Look what I've got. This little baby."

So the *leitzaanim* were now in a quandary. They were all in a big quandary. His *shitah* turned out to be right! Avraham Avinu was right. He did discover the key to the source of all miracles. He got the source of all *kochos*. And now everything else in the world became debunked, as they say in English. So what did the *leitzaanim* come along and do then? They had one *ta'anan*: "Yes, G-d does miracles, but this miracle never happened to Avraham."

They started saying their jokes - **מאבימלך נתעברה שרה** - because they were now facing bankruptcy on their whole *shitah* of life! They said, "Surely, it was a great miracle, but it did not happen to Avraham so the *havtachah* of Hashem never was fulfilled to him."

That's why they're called *leitzaanei hador* because they didn't deny the fact that there was a miracle. What they were challenging, is they did not want to relate this miracle to Avraham - so it shouldn't be a boost to his *shitah*.

A PERSONAL REASON TO DISLIKE A NES

That's what you have to know when you have a *nes*. People struggle sometimes if you tell them that somebody was learning Torah, somebody committed himself *shtark* to learning, and Hashem made him a *nes*. They hate it because what it does is it makes the *ben Torah* look like Hashem showered him with special *brachah* and *hatzlachah*. It shows that if you're an *ohav Hashem*, if you're committed to Hashem, then **שומר ה' את כל אהביו**. That makes them grate their teeth. They always come back, and say, "And how come the *reshaim* have miracles when the *passuk* says **וואת כל הרשעים ישמיד**?" They want to hear miracles by *reshaim* because they want to debunk the fact that **שומר ה' את כל אהביו**. They don't want a person to think that by keeping Shabbos or learning Torah you're bringing *brachah* on yourself. By doing *mitzvos*, you're bringing *hatzlachah*. And by doing *aveiros* you're undermining that *hatzlachah*.

My Rebbe said that's what it means when it says: **ליצינות אחת דוחה מאה תוכחות** - one scoff can push off one hundred rebukes. What does the word *tochachos* mean? *Tochacha* is usually translated as a rebuke, *mussar*. But he said that's not what it means. He said the word *tochachos* comes from the word *hochachos*, proofs. It means you could have one hundred proofs to something and one *leitzaanus* undermines one hundred proofs. That's the *koach* of *leitzaanus*. Even though the *leitzaanus* has no *ta'anan* of any substance, it doesn't make a difference. In people's minds, all the proofs become nullified.

This is what the *leitzaanei hador* in the time of Avraham Avinu were doing. They tried to diminish the *nes*. They diminished the proof of the fulfillment of the promises to Avraham that show the greatness of Hashem when Hashem chooses somebody to bestow His *shefa* and *brachah* on.

Now, this is truly amazing. Even after it was clear to everybody that Yitzchak was the son of Avraham, you would think they would just give up at that point. No. They were using *leitzaanus* in order to undermine the *hochachah* for the fulfillment of the promise of Hashem. You know how you know that? After Yitzchak was born and after Yitzchak looked like Avraham, did that stop anybody? What's the first thing people do when you look at a baby? What's the first thing they say? They ask: "Who does he look like?" By Yitzchak, they didn't ask that question. Yitzchak was a carbon copy of Avraham! He looked like a little miniature of his father in his crib. Try to picture that. People didn't know the difference. Is this Avraham or is it Yitzchak in the crib here?

WHO DID AVRAHAM INVITE TO HIS MISHTEH?

It says in *Parshas Vayeira* that Avraham made a big party, a huge *mishteh* on the day that Yitzchak was weaned off nursing from his mother. Rashi says, who was there? The *gedolei hador* were there. Shem, Eiver, and Avimelech. In the *midrash* (Bereishis Rabbah 53) it says Og Melech Habashan was there, too. All the *gedolei hador* were there with him. They turned to Og, and they said, "Didn't you say that Avraham can't have any children? Look. What's this?!" He gave some kind of an inappropriate answer. So Hakadosh Baruch Hu said: "מה אתה מבזה על מתנתי, you're belittling my *matanah*? I swear that you're going to see, thousands upon thousands and tens of thousands coming out *mibenei banav*." My Rebbi pointed out that you see from this Chazal that they didn't stop their *leitzanus*. They kept on going. It's already years after Yitzchak was born. He was already weaned off his mother's milk. But Og Melech Habashan was still making jokes. Incredible!

Avraham Avinu invited all the *ovdei avodah zarah* to this party. When he made this big *mishteh* he said, "Welcome all of you, *rachok vekarov*, all of you *ovdei avodah zarah*." He made sure they're going to get very special invitations. A big, gold, embossed invitation with a runner. He wanted every last *oved avodah zarah* in the world there. Everybody should see how the *havitachah* of Hashem was fulfilled. Og Melech Habashan was around even in the days of the *mabul*. He already heard all the *havitachos*. It's amazing. He saw the *mabul* and he saw the *dor haflagah*. He saw that Hashem said that He was going to bring a flood and He brought a flood. He saw so many *havitachos* of Hashem fulfilled. But after the birth of Yitzchak, he was always trying to say, "*Epes* maybe there is somewhere I could find where Hashem is not..." So he started to make his *leitzanus*.

That's the way *leitzanim* are. They don't want to get disproved. Hashem put a stamp on Yitzchak's face so it should be clear that Yitzchak and Avraham are father and son. And even that didn't stop the *leitzanim*.

SCOFFERS IN EVERY GENERATION

Now, in Brisk they say: "*kol dor vedor omdim aleinu leitzanim*," in every generation *leitzanim* are always *omdim aleinu*. *Leitzanim* always say, "*Avada* there are *nissim*," but they say that the *nissim* happened because of themselves (i.e. their own efforts). For example, there is a *Medinah*. Everybody knows that the existence of *Medinas Yisrael* is not *shayach bederech hateva*. If you read any history book about how the *Medinah* came about, it's mind-blowing.

You know what it's *mechayev* people? Does it obligate people to anything? Nope. It doesn't obligate anybody to relate it to Hashem. They want to bring a *ra'ayah* that it was their *koach* that brought about these *nissim*. Their fighting. Their protestations. Their this. Their that. They never want to attribute any miracles to Hashem or to the *yarei Hashem*. They don't allow it to prove that the ones who are with Hashem and are committed to Hashem contributed to these miracles at all. The Brisker Rav said that it wasn't any of the fighters that brought a cessation to the war in 1948. It was the *tzaddikim* in *Yerushalayim* who made a three-day fast. They fasted for three days in *Meah Shearim*. They're the ones who brought it about. The *nes* was all theirs. Otherwise, *Yerushalayim* would have been overrun. But the *leitzanim* can't accept that. They would otherwise have to recognize the *yarei Hashem*. They would have to look up to the *tzaddikim*.

This form of *leitzanus* sometimes takes on 'frumme faces.' The Rebbi explained one of the faces that *leitzanus* takes on is *ahavas Yisrael*. There are those people who wave the flag of *ahavas Yisrael* whenever they could be 'dan lekaf zechus' the *reshaim*. They love to do that. And it's always under the umbrella of *ahavas Yisrael*. Always *ahavas Yisrael*. People who do bad things against Hashem, who clearly say they're against Hashem and act that way, the *leitzanaim* say about them, "We have to say they're not *reshaim*. We have to *dan* them *lekaf zechus*."

When the *tzionim* began their mission to spread Zionism, most of the Jewish world fell for their nonsense, hook, line, and sinker. One of the things that a lot of *frum* people felt was that they were trying to save the *Yidden* from exile. They were *pashut* trying to give the *Yidden* hope. The *Yidden* will have a place to live without suffering from the *goyim* - *Eretz Yisrael*. What's wrong with that?! And most of them fell for the baloney *she'ein kamoso*.

One of the founders of Zionism, one of the big proponents was a fellow named Theodore. I'm trying to imagine that. Europe over one hundred years ago and there's a *chashuve* Yid named Theodore. Now, Theodore happened to have a beard and a nice handlebar mustache. My Zeida said there was a controversy at that time about how to view him. He never wore a *yarmulke*. He was a wicked man. [Following his and his wife's deaths, in 1904 and 1907, their children suffered terrible fates. Their oldest daughter died of a drug overdose in her 20's. Their only son, Hans, who both parents decided not to give a *bris milah* to as an infant, converted to Christianity at the age of 15, and then committed suicide in 1930 at the age of 40. Their youngest daughter died in the concentration camp during WWII. Theodore's family came to an end when his only grandson, Stephen Theodore Norman, committed suicide in 1946, at the age of 28]. It was *geferlich* how far away from *Yiddishkeit* Theodore was. Not only that, he had no connection to *Eretz Yisrael*. He didn't even care if the *Yidden* got *Eretz Yisrael*. He was fighting to get *Uganda*, especially after the *Kishinyov Pogrom* in 1903. He just wanted to have a Jewish state. He wanted to be a leader of a Jewish state.

And he simply sold his nonsense to people. And *Yidden* bought it. You can't imagine! *Frumme Yidden*! When Rav Gifter was a *bachur* learning in *Telz*, he once went for a *Shabbos* to a certain city, a very *chashuve* city. They asked him, the *yeshiva bachur* to say a few words from the *bimah*. He said something negative about Zionism, that they were not being *mechaven leshem shamayim*. He said that people in the shul started to bang and scream, "*Moche* (we protest) *lekavod shamayim, lekavod haTorah, lekavod talmidei chachamim*. You are *mevazeh talmidei chachamim*!" They *pashut* went nuts. They were so clueless,

it was unbelievable, Rav Gifter said. But their main guy didn't even wear a yarmulke. Their response was: "You're *choshed bekesheirim!*" they said to Rav Gifter. "You see what beard he had?! How could such a *rav*, such a *chashuve* guy not wear a yarmulke?!" That's how they were. They just couldn't get into their minds how the guy was *mamash* such a *rasha*.

THE ROOT OF ZIONISM - A COVERUP TO UPROOT TORAH

That's what many people thought about Zionism. They thought, "They mean well. They want to help us. Maybe they don't know exactly how, but *be'emes*, they're doing it *letovas Yisrael* (to benefit the Jews)."

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik said it back then, and now it's clear to all. Rav Chaim said that when they started this idea of Zionism, their whole *kavanah* was for one reason and one reason only - to undermine the Torah and its *chashivus* and commitment to it. That was the whole underlying idea of Zionism. Most people, even the *frumme* ones who accepted Rav Chaim's *shitah*, thought: "They want to make a state. They want to have a country. They mean nationalism. But if the Torah gets in the way of their dream, they'll have to push away the Torah." Rav Chaim said it's *punk fakhert*. The *reishis hadavar*, the *haschalas hadavar* is they want to be *oker* the Torah. They couldn't come out and say it up front that they wanted to be *oker* the Torah, so they said, "Let us create a state, and that will be the cover-up." Of course, everybody thought he was radical, but Rav Chaim was Rav Chaim. Rav Chaim was a *gaon atzum*.

Today, Boruch Hashem, all of this is clearly documented. You can read the writings of these *reshaim* when they found the need to change the language. It's a *pelah*. Why did they have to change the language? All the Yidden spoke Yiddish! Even if they didn't want to speak Yiddish, let them speak *lashon kodesh!* You have to know their true intention to uproot *lashon hakodesh!* Most people who are ignorant think *Ivrit* is *lashon hakodesh*. They have no idea. They just think that *Ivrit* created a few more words. Not long ago somebody sent me documentation, writings of the people who made up this language, which describes why they rejected Yiddish. It was because Yiddish had too much *shaychus* to Torah, religion, and Am Yisrael, so they created a new language, one not tied to the past, to establish a new identity for the Jewish people. We all know that every nation identifies itself by a language. The people from Italy speak Italian, people from France speak French, etc. These people didn't want the Yidden to speak Yiddish, so they came up with this new language called *Ivrit*. It's just amazing!

So what did the *leitzanei hador* come and say about that? They said, "This is *ahavas Yisrael*. How come you're not *dan* them *lekaf zechus?*"

LOVING THE BAD GUYS

The Brisker Rav used to say as follows. When he saw someone who started to talk about *ahavas Yisrael* in relation to *reshaim*, he knew immediately that this person hated *erliche* Yidden! Without a shadow of a doubt. He said the reality is these people can't tolerate the *chareidim* who denigrate *reshaim*. They have no problem tolerating the wickedness of *reshaim*. Do you know why they could tolerate it? Why do leftists tolerate garbage, *rishus*? Because inside of themselves they have a leaning toward *rishus*, so they love the *poshim*, and that's why they don't love the *yirei Hashem*.

There was a time when a certain *chashuve* person, a *chashuveh* writer, would write an article every week on *ahavas Yisrael* in a newspaper in Eretz Yisrael. It burned the Brisker Rav up to no end. Not only that, he tried with all his *kochos* (and he finally was *matzliach*) to get the paper to stop accepting pieces from this writer. Why? Many people could not understand what was bothering the Brisker Rav. They thought he was a little radical, a little extreme. What's the *chisaron* about writing about *ahavas Yisrael*?! But the Brisker Rav saw that the intention of the writer writing about *ahavas Yisrael* was to bring about an *ahavah* of *reshaim*. That was the whole purpose. It wasn't to bring about *ahavas Yisrael* and *ahavas Hashem*.

People don't understand that there are some individuals who get involved in all kinds of *mitzvos* - but they have a hidden agenda. I remember when the *lashon hara* campaigns came out, and in a certain newspaper, the rabbi from a Conservative temple wrote a whole article about how he was surprised with all the *lashon hara* being spoken by the *frum* people. He was surprised that the *frum* people have no qualms about putting down the Conservatives. Where's the mitzvah of not saying *lashon hara*?! They're not *machmir* in *lashon hara*! The next week a *rav* submitted a letter to the editor. He wrote a very nice letter. He said: "I see that you're familiar with the halachos of *lashon hara* and the stringency of *lashon hara*. You must have looked into the sefer of the Chafetz Chaim, but evidently you never reached the end. Because at the end of the sefer, the Chafetz Chaim qualifies that: 'Everything I wrote over here is only referring to *erliche* Yidden. If a person questions the validity of the event of Sinai, if there's an individual who questions even just one passuk in the Torah, or he comes up with some *lokshen* that questions Torah min hashamayim, or something in Torah sheba'al peh - there's no *isur* to talk *lashon hara* about him at all. Therefore your whole article was moot."¹

That's what people have to realize. That's *leitzanus*. If a guy comes and says, "Don't talk about Reform Jews or Conservative Jews," or orange Jews, whatever it is, that's all undermining. That's *leitzanus*. That's nothing to do with *chashivus*. They never have any qualms about talking *lashon hora* if they catch a few Yidden who ripped the government off. Then, all the papers go to town on it! Let's say they find a few *Chassidim* or a few Yidden from Lakewood who supposedly took money from the government. Do you see anybody writing about the *issur* of *lashon hara* over there?! Nah. *Kol hamarbeh harei zeh meshubach*. But I get it! The more you speak, the more you bring out the truth from these people. *Ahavas Yisrael* does not exist at that

וכל זה האסור של לשון הרע הוא דוקא על איש, שעל פי דין תורה הוא עדין בכלל "עמיתך" דהיינו עם שאתרבתורה ובמצות, אבל אותן האנשים, שמכירים, שיש בהם אפיקורסות, מצוה לגנותם ולבזותם, בין בפניהם ובין שלא בפניהם, בכל מה שהוא רואה עליהם, או ששומע עליהם, דכתיב: "לא תונו איש את עמיתו", ו"לא תלך רכיל בעמיתך", והם אינם בכלל זה, שאינם עושים מעשה עמך, ונאמר [תהלים קל"ט כ"א]: "הלוא משנאיך ה' אשנא ובתקוממך אתקוּסט" וכו', ואפיקורס נקרא הכופר בתורה ובנבואה מיישראל, בין בתורה שבכתב ובין בתורה שבעל פה, ואפלו הוא אומר, כל התורה מן השמים, חוץ מפסוק אחד או קל וחומר אחד או גזרה שוה אחת או דקדוק אחד, גם הוא בכלל הזה (חפץ חיים, הלכות איסורי לשון הרע, כלל ח סעיף ה)

point, for the benefit of those Yidden and that's where the real *lashon hara* exists. That's where the real *rechilus* and *motzei shem ra* exist. That, people have no problem talking about, because deep inside they have more of a *netiyah* to *reshaim* than they have a *netiyah* to *tzaddikim* and *yarei Hashem*. A person has to be honest with himself, and understand that.

One thing that Brisk was outstanding in is they were *emes* to a fault. *Toras emes haysah befihem*. Somebody once asked me, "Could you give me a short sentence about what Brisk is?" I said, "Yes. I could give you two words. No bull. That's it, my friend. In every area. That's it." Because when it comes to learning, when it comes to saying over a *ma'aseh*, when it comes to how you think and how you view something, they're a critique. They only want the *emes*. That's what it's all about, the *emes*.

We have to be loyal to Hashem and not buy into any *leitzanus* and we have to detect *leitzanus*. We live in a generation that we're so *noteh* (inclined) to *reshaim* that we try to whitewash the greatest *rishus* in the world and make it okay. "It's a lifestyle. You have to live and let live. Aren't they *tinok shenishba*?" No, they're not. They know about Shabbos. They know it's wrong. They know you're not supposed to eat *chazir*. And they do. I met one person in my life, a young man of 27 years, American born and bred, who had never heard that Jews don't eat pork. That was the first and last time I met such a person. People know. They just don't want to know.

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THE BOTTOM LINE

What was the nature of the claim of the *leitzanim*, the scoffers, that the Torah chose to emphasize *Avraham holid es Yitzchak*? How could they call into question the open miracle of Sarah Imeinu becoming pregnant at the age of 90 and then giving birth to Yitzchak? The reason they scoffed, says the Brisker Rav, was that although they couldn't deny the fact of the miracle, they could not bear for it to be a *ra'ayah* to Avraham's *shitah* because he was the one who debunked all their twisted beliefs. All they cared about was protecting their crooked beliefs and ensuring they were not contradicted or challenged. In our own times, we see a similar tendency, even in our own communities, to either minimize or outright dismiss clear *nissim* and blessings that many Yidden, who dedicate themselves to the service of Hashem and learning His Torah, experience. Another common example is the creation of the State of Israel - an obviously miraculous event beyond the shadow of a doubt - where many have claimed and still do, that the mighty *koach* of the Israeli army brought about this miracle. The above examples of modern-day *leitzanus* deny one of the basic principles of Torah, **לכ תא ה' רמוש ויבהא** and ultimately attempt to minimize the proof of the fulfillment of Hashem's promise and His greatness. This week, I will try to, *bli neder*, examine my own deeply held beliefs through the prism of the above message and try to "recalibrate" them to be ultimately in "sync" with Hashem and the Torah.