

## EMUNAH IN DIFFICULT TIMES

### Background

**C**hazal tell us that the *Avos* and *Imahos* were barren. It wasn't an issue of their having difficulty in conceiving; they were physically incapable of having children. The Gemara explains that this was because HASHEM wanted them to *daven*, as if to say, "If I just give them children, they won't have any reason to *daven*. Now they will have a need."

**תלמוד בבלי מסכת יבמות  
דף סד/א**

א"ר יצחק מפני מה היו  
אבותינו עקורים מפני  
שהקדוש ברוך הוא  
מתאוה לתפלתן של  
צדיקים

מדרש תנחומא תולדות  
פרק ט

א"ר לוי בשם רבי שילא  
דכפר תמרתא ורבי חלבו  
בשם ר' יוחנן שהיה  
הקב"ה מתאוה לתפלתם  
אמר הקב"ה עשירות הן  
נאות הן אם אני נותן  
להם בנים אינן מתפללות  
לפני

*Gemara Yivamos 64a*

*Rav Yitzchak said: Why were the Avos barren? Because HASHEM desires the prayers of tzaddikim.*

*Medrash Tanchumah*

*HASHEM desired their prayers. HASHEM said of the Imahos: "They are wealthy, and they are attractive. If I give them children, they won't daven to Me."*

### Questions

**I**t is difficult to envision how much the *Avos* desired a relationship with HASHEM. The sole focus of their existence was to serve HASHEM, and that thought occupied almost every waking moment of their lives. How is it possible to imagine that they would not *daven*?

We know that the *Avos* established the formal *tefillos*. Avraham established Shacharis, Yitzchak established Mincha, and Yaakov established Maariv. So clearly the *Avos* did *daven*. So what does the Gemara mean when it says, "They won't *daven*?"