

The Non-Identical Twins

Letters and Numbers of Torah – Toldot

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- The Torah says Yitzchak was 40 years old when he married Rivkah and was 60 years old when his children were born. Yet, the text does not make mention of Rivkah's age at all. This incongruity suggests that the age of Yitzhak and Rivkah may not be the Torah's main concern. In fact, the numbers 40 and 60 may not be describing a timeline only, rather they may also be communicating a deeper message about marriage and having children.

What is the message?

- The Torah begins this *parshah* with the verse, "These are the offspring of Yitzchak...." The Hebrew word for offspring is תולדת *toldot*. Here, the word is spelled with one *vav*. Yet, in the Book of Ruth, we find that the word תולדות *toldot* is spelled with two *vavs*.

What does this discrepancy teach us?

- Another mysterious fact: in this *parshah*, it says that Rivkah was pregnant with twins, תומים *tomim*. We would expect this word to be spelled with an *alef*. *Rashi* tells us that the reason *tomim* is incomplete is that one of Rivkah's twins was not a righteous person.

But why does the Torah omit the *alef* in particular, rather than another letter?