

These are the offspring of Noach – Noach was a righteous man. (6:9)

The *pasuk* begins with an introduction: the following are Noach's offspring. Yet, rather than mention any names, it goes on to praise Noach as a righteous person. What happened to his offspring? *Rashi* quotes the *Midrash* which teaches that one's primary "offspring" are his good deeds. This is especially true concerning the *tzaddik* whose entire life is devoted to the performance of good deeds.

A young man who had been married for some time-- and had not yet been blessed with children-- had occasion to bring something to the venerable *Rebbe* of *Gur*, the *Lev Simchah*. The *Rebbe* was appreciative. He then said the following: "*Rashi* quotes the *Midrash* that teaches that the primary offspring of a person are his good deeds. The holy *Rebbe* of Peshischa, **Rav Bunim, zl**, taught that in Heaven there are a number of 'gates'. The gate for *banim*, children, is situated right next to the gate for *gemillas chassadim*, good deeds. (This means that the access for prayer and reward flows through these 'gates.')

When a person stands by the gate of *gemillas chassadim* (because he has performed numerous good deeds), it is possible to 'sneak' into the gate which provides children." The young man understood the *Rebbe's* implied blessing. The following year Hashem blessed him with a child.

I write this story due to its veiled message. From a purely psychological viewpoint, it makes sense that the individual who enhances the lives of others by performing good deeds reflects an inherently selfless nature. Positive parenting occurs when parents maintain a sense of selflessness with regard to their children. A *tzaddik* is a person for whom selfhood does not play an active role. It is all about Hashem and the Jewish People. Perhaps this is why the primary "offspring" of the righteous are their good deeds. One good deed leads to "another."