

Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him. (25:21)

Hashem “allowed” Himself: Was it so difficult to listen to Yitzchak *Avinu*’s pleas? We pray and pray, and, unbeknownst to us, what we ask for might not be good for us – or, it might adversely affect someone else, someone very dear to us. *Horav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zl*, explains that this is what happened concerning Yitzchak *Avinu*’s prayer. Avraham *Avinu* lived to be 175 years old – five years short of Yitzchak’s lifespan. Why did Avraham live five years fewer than Yitzchak? *Rashi* explains that Hashem spared him the pain of watching his grandson, Eisav, go off the *derech*, renege the faith which had been taught to him in his home. On the day that Eisav became fifteen, Avraham became 175. That day Eisav committed a number of serious sins, cardinal sins, for which he deserved the death punishment. Hashem took Avraham from this world prematurely in order to protect him from such terrible news.

Now, imagine had Eisav been born five years later; had Hashem delayed in listening to Yitzchak, Avraham would have been able to live out his life. He would still be walking around healthy and vibrant. He died prematurely as a result of Yitzchak’s emotional entreaty. Hashem could not tell Yitzchak why He was delaying Eisav’s birth, so He “allowed” Himself; He gave in. Eisav was born; the parents were overjoyed, and, fifteen years later, Yitzchak sat *shivah* prematurely! We pray and pray, and, at times, we know neither for what we are praying, nor the far-reaching effect of our prayers.