



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Yaakov Book on the occasion of his engagement to Michal Goldman (daughter of Mr & Mrs Osher Goldman).

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Bernard Levey on the occasion of the birth of a grandson, born to Mr & Mrs Mikey Avrahami in Yerushalayim.

Turn Back The Clocks

A reminder to turn your clocks back an hour on Motzei Shabbos

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Home and Hearth

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

This weeks Torah Portion details two episodes that are critical to the formation of our nation. Firstly we read how Avraham Avinu buried Sarah which is followed with the fascinating story in which we read how Rivka was selected to be Yitzchak's chosen wife. Both stories interconnect for the life of Sarah formed the foundation and building blocks with which Yitzchak was to build his own home.

This week I was given the book 'Out of the Depths' which is a moving memoir penned by Chief Rabbi Lau of Israel. In the book Rabbi Lau describes how he endured against incredible odds as one of the youngest survivors of Buchenwald to become Israel's Chief Rabbi. It is an inspiring chronicle of faith and courage.

At one point in the book he describes how after dating the daughter of Rabbi Yitzchok Frenkel, the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, he met his prospective father in law who shared with him an interesting thought.

In the beginning of Bereishis when the Torah describes the creation of Adam and Chava Adam proclaimed 'This is a bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh...!'. The Torah then diverges from the Creation story and says, as if in parenthesis 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and they shall be one flesh'.

Rabbi Frankel asked him why the Torah emphasizes 'therefore shall a man leave his father and mother'? We understand the importance of the positive statement and shall cleave to his wife but why use the verb 'to leave'? Surely our parents should always be central to our existence?

He explained that each time he officiates at a wedding ceremony he wonders if the marriage will truly last. After all the Chasan and Kallah hail from two different families and they each represent divergent worlds. But then, he continued, I see the parents on either side of the bride and groom. Twenty or thirty years earlier they too stood side by side under the chupa. They too were not born in the same mold yet their marriage has endured. They serve as the role models for their children as their parents were for them and they provide the young couple with the surest guarantee that their marriage will blossom.

He continued to explain that the Hebrew word azav meaning 'to leave'

also carries another connotation. Azav can also mean inheritance. There is a material inheritance which parents bequeath to their children upon their passing, and there is a spiritual inheritance which they grant them when they leave their home to get married.

When a child sees that his parents truly respect one another and live in love and peace they are being given the greatest gift of all. They have a personal example to emulate and to bequeath to the generations that will follow them.

With this thought he confided in his future son in law, the young Rabbi Lau, that when the match was first suggested he was concerned. After all, Rabbi Lau was liberated from Buchenwald at the tender age of eight. He had been stripped away from his illustrious parents as a young child and had never been gifted the inheritance of watching their interaction with one another. However after inquiring about him he was assured that his innate goodness and natural sensitivity would surely substitute for that which his parents would have given him.

Perhaps this too is what transpired in our Parsha. When Yitzchak first met Rivka he was concerned. How can a young girl reared in such a pagan environment serve as a matriarch and role model for all future generations? Who bequeathed to her the spiritual values and sensitivities that must accompany such an exalted role. Yitzchak was not immediately sure that she was a worthy matriarch for the Jewish people. However, when he brought her into his home and witnessed the return of the spiritual glow that emanated from the tent when his mother Sarah was alive, he realized Rivka's eminent qualities and was thus assured that she was a perfect match for him.

The sages tell us of three particular blessings that pervaded the home during Sarah's lifetime: a blessing in the dough; a spiritual light that glowed through the week; and a cloud-like halo that hovered over the tent.

The Week Ahead

פרשת חיי שרה

Candle Lighting	5.35pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	5.40pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.24am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur	4.49pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	5.19pm
Motzei Shabbos	6.39pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	4.30pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	4.26pm (Shabbos 4.21pm)

These special blessings are impressive but what exactly do they represent? And why were they so important to Yitzchok?

The Hebrew word for house, bayit, is actually the same word as the letter beit, which has a numerical value of two. Ideally, a home is where the material and the spiritual fuse in harmony, the commentaries explain. The letter "beit" always reflects two, signifying diversity, duplication. The implication is that a Jewish home is meant to be more than a comfortable abode. It is intended to be a framework that fosters harmony, spiritual growth and Torah values.

"A blessing in the dough" reflects the union of material elements with the spiritual light and energy manifested in the home. When the two fuse together, they elicit Hashem's Divine protection.

Just like a wedding canopy unites a newly wed couple, so too, Hashem's presence in the form of a Divine cloud was constantly hovering above Sarah's home.

When Rivka revitalized these three special qualities, Yitzchak realized that she although she may have lacked receiving a spiritual inheritance from her parents.

May our hopes be granted that our children will glean from us the tools and values necessary to replicate the spiritual qualities of Sarah's tent.

The Satan Had One More Trick Up His Sleeve

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

In the pasuk "And Abraham came to mourn Sarah..." [Bereshis 23:2], the letter "chaf" in the word "v'livkosa" (and to cry for her) is written as a small letter. The Baal HaTurim gives a reason for this: Since Sarah lived to the ripe old age of 127, the mourning for such a person is not that overwhelming. This is indicated by the smaller size letter in the word for crying.

I saw an interesting interpretation in the Sefer Kehillos Yitzchak from Rav Yitzchak of Volozhin. The Medrash explains the juxtaposition of the story of Akeidas Yitzchak with the death and burial of Sarah.

According to this Medrash, the Satan appeared to Sarah and told her that Avraham took Yitzchak to offer him as a sacrifice on an altar. Before Sarah had a chance to hear the end of the story, "her soul flew away from her" and she died.

We know from the Medrashic teachings of our Sages that the Satan had tried to pull out all stops to prevent our Patriarch Avraham from carrying out his test of Akeidas Yitzchak.

This event was such a seminal event in Jewish history, which resulted in eternal merit for the Jewish nation that the Satan tried every trick in the book to stop Avraham from passing this test and achieving the reward for his descendants that he eventually achieved. The Medrashim say that the Satan changed himself into a river and Avraham had to wade up to his neck to cross the river, etc., etc.

Once a person does a mitzvah in his life, no matter what type of wicked person he later becomes, the credit for that mitzvah will not be taken away from him. The rule in spiritual reward and punishment is that a sin cannot extinguish the effect of a mitzvah and a mitzvah cannot extinguish the effect of a sin.

There are two separate accounts in Heaven: Debits and Credits. The fact that a person has debits does not take away from his credits. When a person does a mitzvah, the mitzvah is done and it will always remain with him.

There is however, one exception to this rule. This is something called "regretting what was originally done" (toheh al ha'rishonos). If a person performs a mitzvah and later comes to regret the fact he did it, that regret causes him to lose the reward that came for doing the mitzvah.

When the Satan saw that he was unsuccessful in deterring Avraham from doing the Akeida, he did not give up. He had one more trick up his sleeve.

Although Avraham had earned the reward for passing the test of the Akeida, so the reward was in the bank, if the Satan could get Avraham to regret performing the mitzvah, Avraham would lose his reward. This is exactly what the Satan tried to accomplish by bringing about the death of Avraham's wife through her hearing about her husband's participation in the Akeida.

There is no force in the world that is as persistent, that is as big a 'nudge' as the Yetzer HaRah [evil inclination, which is the Satan.] Even when we think the battle is over, the battle is not over!

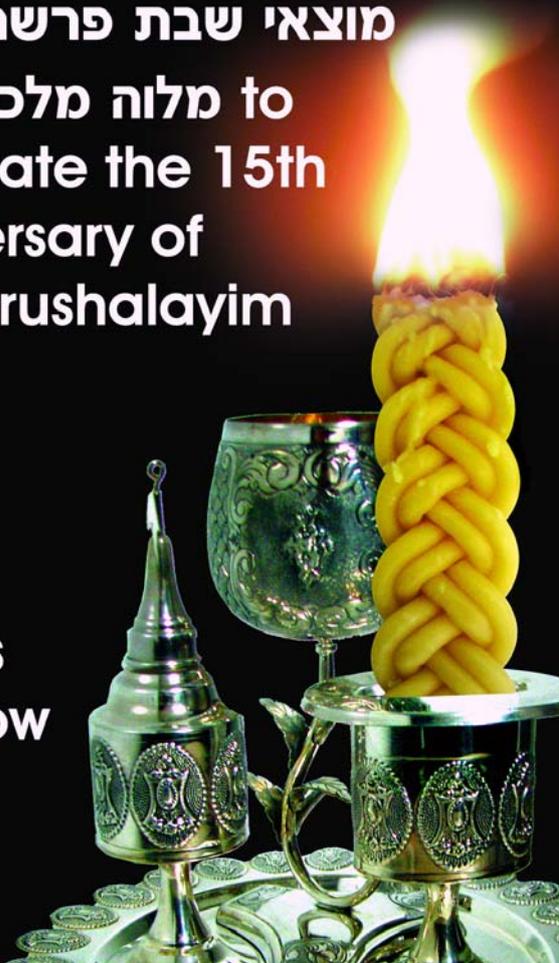
I once heard in the name of Rav Aharon Kotler: After the Akeidah, the pasuk says, "And behold an individual ram was caught up in the underbrush". Why does the pasuk need to tell us this seemingly insignificant detail? It is to show that the Satan had still not given up.

The Satan was trying to make it hard for Avraham to find a substitute animal to offer, so he had to cut through the dense underbrush to get the ram free so that it might be offered in place of his son.

Here too, with Sarah's death, the Satan tried to put another obstacle in Avraham's way of Avraham keeping the reward he had already earned. It was yet another test to see whether he would now regret his willingness to sacrifice Yitzchak because it apparently led to the death of his wife.

Avraham Avinu did not want this to happen so he purposely downgraded his crying for the death of Sarah (small Chaf) to indicate that her time was up already and that he was not going to let her death upset him to the extent that he would regret his participation in the Akeidah.

As a result of this, the merit of the Akeidah remained with Avraham and was preserved for his descendants for all generations. The practical lesson from all of this is that the Yetzer Harah never gives up and we must be forever vigilant against its wiles.



Please join us on
מוצאי שבת פרשת וישלח
for a מלוה מלכה to
celebrate the 15th
anniversary of
Ohr Yerushalayim

Details
to follow