

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Chayei Sarah

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Havdalah: Recuperation or Preparation?

Doivid Zirkind

As a general rule, time-bound mitzvot are required of men in Jewish law and not women. However, one notable exception to this rule is Shabbat. Our Rabbis teach us, based on the descriptions of Shabbat in the Torah, that anyone who is obligated in the prohibitions of Shabbat is likewise commanded to observe its active mitzvot. This explains why women are obligated in kiddush despite its time-bound nature. The Rambam writes (Hilchot Shabbat 29:1) that women are obligated in havdalah based on the same principle. However this opinion is not universally accepted: The Shulchan Aruch (296:8) cites the Rambam, but also notes that there are those who argue.

This debate over a woman's obligation in havdalah may teach us a valuable lesson about the dual nature of havdalah, and of Shabbat itself.

In one model, havdalah is the termination of Shabbat. This is highlighted by a statement of Reish Lakish (Beitzah 16a):

אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: נשמה יתירה נותן הקדוש ברוך הוא באדם ערב שבת, ולמוצאי שבת נוטלין אותה הימנו, שנאמר (שמות לא) שבת

וינפש, כיון ששבת ווי אבדה נפש.

“Reish Lakish said: G-d gives man an additional soul before Shabbat and takes it from him after Shabbat, as it says in the verse, ‘He rested, *Vayinafash*.’ Once the resting is complete, woe (*Vay*), for he has lost his soul (*Nefesh*).”

We work for seven days in anticipation of Shabbat, and so havdalah can be seen as a bittersweet moment in our week. We are thrilled to have Shabbat, and the break and the enhanced spirituality that comes with it, but the loss of the *neshamah yiteirah* at the end of Shabbat is a painful one.

In this model it is understandable that havdalah parallels kiddush as a bookend of the day, part of the rites of Shabbat; one rite welcomes Shabbat and the other bids Shabbat farewell. Within this paradigm, women do recite havdalah, just as they perform the other mitzvot of Shabbat.

However, there is a second model of havdalah, in which this *mitzvah* is not just a farewell to the week that was, but also an initiation of the week ahead. Commenting on the same verse as *Reish Lakish*, Rav Chaim Ibn Attar (Ohr HaChaim) suggests that “*Vayinafash*” refers to the Divine act of infusing the

world with spirituality (the soul), putting into place the final piece in the creation of the world. Without Shabbat, all of creation would not have had the independent strength to continue existing. Once there was a Shabbat, an infusion of spirituality, the world was complete - and therefore able to continue.

Along the same lines, the Zohar writes that the brit of a baby boy must be on the 8th day because this insures that every baby will have already lived a Shabbat and therefore been given his *nefesh*.

From this perspective, havdalah can be seen as an introduction to the week ahead. If so, the *mitzvah* of havdalah belongs to the week, inaugurating that continued existence enabled by Shabbat. Therefore, it is removed from the active commandments of Shabbat and consequently from a woman's obligation to fulfill it.

For every person the Shabbat experience is something different. Some people react to the power of its prayers or the time there is to learn Torah while their phones are off and their computers are unplugged. Others wait all week for family time and a delicious home cooked meal. However we experience it, Shabbat can give all of us the strength and rejuvenation we need to make the next week a successful one.

dzirkind@torontotorah.com

Parsha Questions

Meir Lipschitz

(Sources are provided to help the reader research answers)

Answers are provided on the back page.

- Who was Keturah?
(Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Kli Yakar, and Siftei Chachamim to Bereishit 25:1)
- How old was Rivkah when she married Yitzchak?
(Rashi to Bereishit 25:20, Ibn Ezra to Bereishit 23:2, Tosafot Yevamot 61b וכן”)
- Did Yishmael do teshuvah?
(Kli Yakar Bereishit 25:1, Rashi Bereishit 25:9, Bava Batra 16b, [Rashi Bereishit 21:9 and 21:17 with Siftei Chachamim], Rosh haShanah 16b, Ritva to Kiddushin 68b, Ritva to Yoma 38b)
- For Children: What do we learn from the way the Torah tells us Sarah's age of death?
(Rashi Bereishit 23:1) mlipschitz@torontotorah.com

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov extends its condolences to the entire Gelberger and Beck families, on the passing of Samuel David Beck.

This Toronto Torah is dedicated in memory of Oscar Reichner, husband of Magda Reichner, and father of Chani Braunstein and Renee Rubinstein. To sponsor a Toronto Torah in memory or in honour of a loved one for \$180, please email sponsorship@torontotorah.com or call 416-781-1777.

I would like to share with you two of the ideas that I've heard in the name of the Rav, Zatzal, concerning the Akeidah.

1) At the very end of the Akeidah, but before the Parsha closes (as indicated by the space in the Sefer Torah following the end of a section), the Passuk reads: "And Avraham returned to his young men ("Ne'arav"), and they rose up and went together to Be'er-Sheva" (22:19). The Rav asked, isn't this verse so anti-climatic?! Following the intense drama of the Akeida, at the conclusion of what was perhaps the most traumatic and profound religious experience in the history of man (about which the philosopher Kierkegaard wrote his most famous work "Fear and Trembling"), couldn't the Torah have told us something more moving and significant than the fact that Avraham Avinu picks up his other boys (Yishmael and Eliezer) and returns to good, old dusty Be'er-Sheva?

The Rav explained that the challenge of the Akeidah, indeed the challenge of every intense, religious experience, is not the moment of spiritual exaltedness. We all live through such "highs" and undergo powerful encounters with the Divine Being at various moments in our lives. The real challenge is to take these intense experiences back to real, everyday life. The question is: have we

truly been affected, right down to our very beings? If our souls have been genuinely uplifted, we should be able to enhance our closeness to G-d in every aspect of our life. Thus the Torah testifies about Avraham, that he returned to his ordinary life, surrounded by the same associates and disciples, living in the same neighborhood and the day-by-day existence, but now with the Akeidah experience very much a part of his being. Every mundane and familiar act would be

Avraham...", and the Torah continues to tell us in detail about the children born to Milka, the wife of Avraham's brother Nachor. The list of names is long, and (frankly) difficult to pronounce. The Torah doesn't fail to tell us about another four children born to Nachor through Re'uma, his concubine. After all, are we really concerned with these tidbits? Why would the Torah tell us these facts, which seem to be so trivial, and directly following the great drama of the Akeida?

Rashi explains that the entire section of Nachor's generations is recorded as an introduction to next week's Parsha, since Rivka is the daughter of Be'tuel, one of Nachor's sons. This explanation lends itself to a number of objections, the most outstanding of which is the fact that Chazal included this section in the "k'riat haTorah" (public Torah reading) for Rosh

Book Launch: *An Italian Renaissance: Choosing Life In Canada*

Please join Beit Midrash Zichron Dov and Torah In Motion to hear Eli Rubinstein discuss his fascinating and deeply moving account of how his Holocaust survivor parents succeeded in reconstructing their shattered lives in Toronto.

Where: Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

When: Sunday, November 7 at 8:00PM

different; the change in his soul, as a result of the Akeidah, would have an impact on every occurrence, even the most ordinary. That's the true indication that Avraham Avinu had passed the test of the Akeidah with flying colors.

2) The Rav zatzal was bothered by the very next set of verses (22-24) as well. Immediately following the great episode of the Akeidah, the Torah notifies us that "it came to pass after these things (i.e. after the Akeidah) that it was told to

HaShana. We know that the purpose of the reading of Parshat HaAkidah on Rosh HaShana is to mention the great "Zechut" of the Akeidah on the Yom HaDin. But why do we read the section of Nachor's generations on the Day of Judgment?

The Rav explained that apparently this section too is part of the Akeidah. The "nisayon" (=test) of the Akeidah does not end when Avraham is told not to slaughter his son. The real test is how Avraham Avinu will respond when he descends the mountain and receives the news that his brother Nachor, and Nachor's family, is living a normal life, having children, getting married, with no challenges or "nisyonot". It would be a most natural response for Avraham to ask "How can it be that I, who have dedicated my life to discover HaShem and to teach the world about Him, I should be called upon to undergo this most excruciating experience, and my brother, who has done nothing for G-d and the morality of the world, lives such a calm, pleasant life, full of happiness and self fulfillment. Where's the justice"

And yet, Avraham says nothing... This, perhaps, is the greatest test of all!
aberzon@torontotorah.com

613 Mitzvot: Mitzvah 57-60 Guarding the Property of Others

One who agrees to guard the property of others accepts responsibility proportionate to his own benefit. If the guardian will not benefit tangibly, his responsibility is minimal – he must simply avoid carelessness. If the guardian is paid for his work, or if he is able to use the item but he also pays rent for that use, then he is responsible to take extra steps to protect the item

from theft or destruction. A guardian who is permitted to use the item without charge is responsible to take the greatest steps to guard the item from harm. Mitzvot 57 through 60 legislate the types of guardians, as well as the laws pertaining to claims by the owner against the guardian.

torczyner@torontotorah.com

Ha'Am V'Ha'Aretz

Rav Chaim Berlin

R' Meir Lipschitz

Tzippori

Shut Nishmat Chaim #11 Saying "Poteiach et yadecha" with special intent

I customarily rebuke the popular practice of arousing special intent and concentration while saying the verse "You open Your hand" during Ashrei three times each day (Berachot 4b). People do this because they have seen in Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 51:7 that one must concentrate while saying the verse "You open Your hand" and that if one did not concentrate then the verse must be repeated.

However, in truth, one should be more careful [to concentrate] for all the verses which include the name of HaShem, lest one pronounce the name of Heaven in vain. It is more important to be careful to concentrate for verses like, "HaShem is great and exceedingly lauded," "Gracious and merciful is HaShem," "HaShem is good to all," "All Your works shall thank You, HaShem," "HaShem supports all the fallen ones," "Righteous is HaShem in all His ways," and "HaShem is close to all who call to Him." In all of these verses one should concentrate more than for the verse, "You open Your hand," in which the name of HaShem is not found.

The statement in Shulchan Aruch that one must have intent while saying the verse "You open Your hand" is recorded for two reasons. The first reason is to teach us to include this verse, as well, among those other verses. He means to say that since this verse does not contain the name of HaShem, we would have [mistakenly] thought to compare it to verses like, "Every day I will bless You," "Each generation will praise Your deeds," "The splendorous glory of Your power," and "And of Your awesome power they will speak," which may be said without intent, since they do not contain HaShem's name. For this reason the Shulchan Aruch teaches us that this verse is not comparable to all other verses which do not contain the name of HaShem, and we must concentrate when reciting it. But regarding verses which do

Rabbi Chaim Berlin, the first-born son of the Netziv (R' Naphtali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin), was born in Volozhin (today Belarus) in 1832. After learning under his father for many years, he left Volozhin and took his first major position as the Rabbi of Moscow in 1865. He returned to Volozhin in 1889 to assist his father in running Yeshivat Volozhin, and also took a position as the head of the city's rabbinical court.

After the Yeshiva closed in 1892 due to Russian decree, R' Chaim remained in Volozhin for five years, before taking positions in Poland and Russia and eventually emigrating to Jerusalem in 1906. Soon after his arrival, despite not holding an official position, Rabbi Chaim Berlin was already considered one of Israel's most important rabbinical figures. Upon the death of Rabbi Shmuel Salant, the Rabbi of Jerusalem, Rabbi Berlin was elected as his successor, but he refused to take the position. He did, however, continue another of Rabbi Salant's roles, taking over the management of the Rabbi Meir Baal Haneis Salant Charity Fund which Rabbi Salant had started in 1860 with Rabbi Yosef Zundel. Rabbi Berlin oversaw the tzedakah fund until his death in 1912.

Rabbi Berlin's legacy lives on in many forms, but none more prominently than his responsa and the Brooklyn-based Yeshivas Rabbi Chaim Berlin which was named in his honour shortly after his death.

contain the name of HaShem, it is obvious that we must have more intent in them than the verse, "You open Your hand." This is the first reason.

The second reason is that regarding verses which contain the name of HaShem, if one did not concentrate while saying them it is a "crookedness which cannot be made straight," and repeating the verse will not help; the transgression has already been committed. On the other hand, regarding "You open Your hand," despite the need to concentrate, one who did not have the required intent has committed no transgression. The mistake can be corrected by saying it a second time with intent.

mlipschitz@torontotorah.com

Tzippori (Sepphoris) is one of the most ancient Jewish towns recovered by archaeologists. Tzippori was found in the central area of the Galil. Some of the structures that were recovered include a synagogue, a Roman theater, and a Crusader fortress. Today, Tzippori is a national park, and a town with the same name is located just a few miles away.

Tzippori was first built in the year 100 BCE. It was built on a hill, which gave the settlement some strategic advantage over the Chashmonaim tribes which were taking over most of the Galilee. Perhaps because of its bird's eye view, it was named *Tzippori*, the root being the Hebrew word Tzipor-bird.

In the year 37 BCE the Romans came and took over the city. The residents put up a fight, but were defeated and sold into slavery. The Romans chose Tzippori as the capital of the Galil.

Tzippori grew in the next few centuries. After the Bar Kochba revolt, many Jews moved to Tzippori and turned it into a religious center. Rav Yehuda HaNassi also moved to Tzippori, as did the Sanhedrin, albeit temporarily. Tzippori also became a busy market town.

In 363, Tzippori was destroyed by an earthquake. It was later rebuilt, and it remained an important Jewish community in the Galil. During the Byzantine era, the Jews lived peacefully with the Romans, and later the Christians. Only after the Arab conquest, in the 7th century, did the city begin to decline.

In the 12th century, the Crusaders built a fortress and a watchtower that overlooked Tzippori. When they lost the Battle of Hattin to Saladin, the fortress went unused.

Tzippori's importance declined during the reign of the Ottoman Empire. The Jewish and Roman communities all but vanished. The Jewish buildings became covered in dirt, rubble, and debris. The Arabs built their own city close by, called Saffuriyya, leaving the Jewish/Roman city untouched.

In The War of Independence, Tzippori and Saffuriyya came under Jewish rule. In 1990, the archeological digs began. As of now, most of the town has been excavated. The Roman Fortress is situated so that it overlooks the Roman theater and the Jewish town, and today it serves as a museum and gives the visitor a beautiful view of the area. The excavations of the Jewish town have found Jewish homes alongside a main cobblestone street. Several pictures have been found carved into the street, such as a menorah and a game that resembles tic-tac-toe. Several Mikvaot have been found as well.

Adapted from an article originally published by Torah mi'Tzion.

Who was Keturah?

- **Rashi** states that Keturah was Hagar; she was called Keturah since her deeds were as sweet as the Ketoret (incense in the Beit haMikdash), as she did not befriend any man while she was separated from Avraham.
- **Rashbam** disagrees with his grandfather Rashi. He explains that according to the simple meaning, this woman is not Hagar, but a new wife. **Ibn Ezra** agrees.
- The **Kli Yakar** agrees with Rashi, but asks why she was referred to by a name that described her actions. He explains that that when Hagar was sent from Avraham's house with her son Yishmael, it was because Sarah said that both she and Yishmael were idol worshippers. Now that both Hagar and her son had repented, their sins were transformed from being a blemish on their souls into a Heavenly offering, similar to the Ketoret.

How old was Rivkah when she married Yitzchak?

- **Rashi** explains that two events happened after the Akeidah: Sarah passed away, and Rivkah was born. Since Sarah was 90 when Yitzchak was born and 127 at her death, Yitzchak was 37 at her death. Since Yitzchak married Rivkah at the age of 40, Rivkah was three years old at that time.
- **Ibn Ezra** claims that Yitzchak was around 13 at the Akeidah, and there is no chronological connection between the Akeidah, Sarah's death and the birth of Rivkah; we can assume that Rivkah was of marriageable age at the time of her nuptials.
- **Tosafot** propose, based on a Sifrei, that she was 14 at the time of her marriage.

Did Yishmael do teshuvah?

- The **Kli Yakar**, as explained in the first question above, assumes that both Yishmael and his mother, Hagar, repented.
- **Rashi** explains that we can see that Yishmael performed teshuvah,

since he let his brother, Yitzchak, have the primary role in laying their father to rest.

- The **Gemara in Bava Batra** points out that anyone who is described upon their passing as "expiring" and being "gathered unto his people" is a tzaddik. Since these words were used to describe Yishmael's death, he must have repented.
- The **Ritva (Yoma)** explains that it is fit to name Jewish children "Yishmael" even according to the opinion that Yishmael did not repent, since he was named by Hashem.

For Children: What do we learn from the way the Torah tells us Sarah's age of death?

- **Rashi** explains that the Torah describes her age backwards to teach us that even at 100 she was without sin, and that her appearance was as unspoiled as that of a seven year old.

Send your own answers to rlevy@torontotorah.com.

Schedule for the Week of October 30, 22 Marcheshvan

Shabbat, October 30

Shabbat Morning R' Azarya Berzon: Drashot for Hashkama and Main Minyanim, Shomrai Shabbos

One hour before mincha R' Azarya Berzon: Gemara In-depth, Mizrachi Bayit

Sunday, October 31

8:45AM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Medical Halachah: Determining Capacity to Consent, CME credit available, BAYT

9:15AM Itamar Zolberg: Parshah & Issues b'Ivrit, Zichron Yisrael

7:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: The Study of Masechet Megilah, Shaarei Shamayim

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Gemara In-depth, Shaarei Shamayim

Monday, November 1

8:15PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Sephardic History: Music of Jews in Arab Lands, JUMP (1998 Yonge)

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: The Rambam and the Mitzvah of Tzedaka, Clanton Park

8:45PM R' Meir Lipschitz: Gemara Beitzah Chaburah, Shaarei Shomayim

9:20PM R' Azarya Berzon: The Ramban on the Mitzvah of Obeying the Prophet, 12 Midvale Road

Tuesday, November 2

1:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Yoel, at Shaarei Shomayim, with Mekorot

1:10PM Russell Levy: Masechet Pesachim (advanced), Wolfond Centre

8:00PM Dovid Zirkind: Interactive Parshah Discussion, Westmount Learning Centre

8:30PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Minchat Chinuch at Clanton Park

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Halacha and Hashkafa for Life, Lessons to be Learned from Sarah Imanu, BAYT, 3rd floor, classroom #1

Wednesday, November 3

9:15AM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Hosheia, 239 Franklin Women Babysitting provided.

7:00PM R' Azarya Berzon: Gemara B'Iyun, Highlights of the week's shiurim, 12 Midvale Road

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon: Gemara B'Iyun, Shomrai Shabbos

9:00PM R' Mordechai Torczyner: Responsa that changed Jewish History, Week 4: Martyrdom, BAYT

Thursday, November 4

8:00PM R' Netanel Javasky: Landmark Halachic Responsa, Bnai Torah

8:30PM R' Azarya Berzon, Yishuv Eretz Yisrael: Can one spouse force the other?, Clanton Park

8:00PM David Teller: Secrets of the Shema, Week 1: What should I be Hearing? Shaarei Tefillah