



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

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## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Eli and Suri Treuhaft on the engagement of Chaim Yehuda to Orli Baumann. The Lechaim takes place Sunday 5.30-7.30 at Beis Menachem.

### Kiddush This Shabbos

There is a Kiddush this Shabbos after Davening sponsored by Yoel and Hitzel Wreschner in honour of the bas Mitzvah of their daughter, Elisheva

### Seuda Shlishis

The Shalosh Seudos this Shabbos is sponsored to mark the Yahrzeit of דוב ז"ל בן אפרים אלחנן, יצחק בן אפרים אלחנן

## Yishmael, A Re-assessment Of His Life Jonathan Grosskopf

There are a few hints in Sefer Bereishis that Yishmael did Teshuva. Let us analyse these in chronological order.

In his youth Yishmael sinned "by mocking" (Posuk 9, Perek 21, Parshas Vayeira.) The Midrash explains this to mean he committed the three cardinal sins of idolatry, adultery and murder for which both he and his mother, Hagar, were banished from Avraham's household. Nevertheless, afterwards when the Egyptian influence of his mother waned, Yishmael repented.

How do we know that he repented?

In Perek 22:5 in Parshas Vayeira, Midrash notes that the "lads" who were to stay behind whilst Abraham and Yitzchak went to do Hashem's will were Eliezer and Yishmael. So we can see from this Posuk that Yishmael must have been on a spiritual level to participate in that event momentous event. Thus, despite an initial lapse in spirituality on Yishmael's part, he had repented by this point at least enough to be included in Avraham's entourage that was involved in the Akedah.

In addition, Rashi comments on Perek 25:16 in Parshas Chayei Soroh, to say from the term "and he expired and died," one can deduce that Ishmael did teshuva and died a righteous person. Thus, it appears from the Torah that Avraham lived long enough to see Yishmael do teshuva and on his death Yishmael showed that he indeed had repented. What is also notable is that once Avraham died, Yishmael did not revert to evil ways but for the last 44 years of his life until he died aged 137, Yishmael continued to act in a righteous manner.

In conclusion, it is true that Yishmael was called a "Pere Odom" a wild donkey of a man. However, he was a wild donkey from his maternal side and a righteous man from the Abrahamic side. In order to know and eventually defeat one's enemy one has to acknowledge his strong points, but also to see his weak points (the 3 cardinal sins.)

May we must be like the descendants of Avraham and dedicate all that we have to the service of Hashem and like Yaakov, true to ourselves and correct in our dealings with others.

## Torah is Real Gemilas Chassadim Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

She descended to the spring, filled her jug and ascended. The servant ran towards her and said, "Let me sip please, a little, from your water jug." She said, "Drink my lord" and she hurried, and lowered her jug to her hands and gave him drink. When she finished giving him drink, she said, "I will draw (water) even for your camels until they have finished drinking." So she hurried and she emptied her jug into the trough and kept running to the well to draw (water) and she drew for all his camels. (Breishis 24:16- 20)

Rivka may not have known but she was auditioning for the position of Matriarch of the Jewish People. What was her test and how did she display her worthiness? Does she get the job because of her extra sensitivity and

concern for animals?

The Mishne in Pirke Avos. There it is recorded there that Shimon HaTzadik was from the remnant of the Men of the Great Assembly and he used to say: "On three things the world stands on Torah, Service (Avodah), and Acts of Kindliness (Gemilas Chassadim)." What is "Gemilas Chassadim"? How is it different from just plain "Chessed"? Why not one word like the other pillars?

The Rambam says the main display of Gemilas Chessed is Levaya – escorting the guest. Giving food and drink feeds the animal soul while escorting a person affords dignity to the human being.

The Name of the letter GIMEL spells "Gamal" - a camel. What is the speciality of a camel? We all know that a camel is best suited to travel across arid lands because he can drink and store large amounts of water and remain for long periods of time removed from his source. He fuels up and is then able to be cut or dislocated from his source.

What is the first time that Gamal is mentioned in the Torah? Not by Eliezer and his 10 camels. The verse reads, "And the child (Yitzchok) grew and was (vayigmal) weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Yitzchok was (higamel) weaned. (Breishis 21:8)

Why did Avraham make such a great celebration to honor the day that Yitzchok did not need to nurse from his mother Sara? Why does the Holy Torah bother to record it? Why did Avraham not make a party or a feast upon any other occasion? Gemilas Chassadim is a complete program to bring a person to maturity, giving him the ability to give. That escorts, builds, and dignifies a man in his life.

Rivka "emptied her jug into the trough" before running to fetch more water for the camels. Of all the matters in the universe why is it that this detail is included? Why did she first announce her intention to feed the animals before spilling the water into the trough and getting into high gear? What does this add? In a similar way Rivka preserved the inherent honor of the man Eliezer. He had requested a drink. She could have poured into another vessel or into his mouth but rather she gave him to drink from the jug directly in the most dignified fashion.

After this stranger drinks from her jug a new dilemma is born. Can she deliver home a jug out of which a stranger has just partaken?! It's PAGAM! Rivka was alert to the fact that to spill out the water in front of him is insulting.

## The Week Ahead

### שבת פרשת חיי שרה

שבת פרשת חיי שרה	מברכין כסלו
Candle Lighting	No later than 3.47pm
Mincha	3.52pm
Rov's Shiur	8.45am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.51am
Children's Group	10.45am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	3.37pm
Shalosh Seudos	Following
Motzei Shabbos	4.57pm
Ovos uBonim	5.57pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Thurs / Fri Rosh Chodesh	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.45pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

Therefore Rivka cleverly announced her intentions first before emptying the jug into the water trough to spare him even a moment of personal discomfort.

Only then did she launch into her heroic activity to care for his ten camels, fueling them like ten Mack Trucks and all by hand. The whole giant effort may have included a desire to be economical as well as to quench some creaturely thirsts but it may have been mostly motivated by a desire to maintain to the dignity of the stranger. She was not tested on Chessed alone but rather Gemilas Chassadim which is the same numerical value as Torah, 611, because Torah is Real Gemilas Chassadim.

### Avraham's Choice

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba, which is Chevron, in the land of Canaan, and Avraham came to eulogize Sarah and to cry for her. (Bereishis 22:12)

THE TORAH IS not about drama, clearly. Had this been a Hollywood production, the end of last week's parsha and the beginning of this one would be a LOT different. Sarah didn't just die. The Akeidah KILLED her, and the Torah says NOTHING about it.

For those who do not know, the Midrash says that Sarah had been unaware of Avraham's mission. However, Og somehow knew, and he went and told Sarah that the son she had waited her entire life for was about to be slaughtered to G-d by her husband. He even lifted her up so she could verify his words by seeing in the distance. He was a giant so that when he raised her she was higher up.

According to some, her soul left her when she saw Avraham take the knife to slaughter Yitzchak. Some say she died when saw him abstain, not knowing that it was an angel who stopped him. But everyone agrees that she died at the climax of the Akeidah.

The Ohr HaChaim introduces a little Kabbalah to help explain the tragic and shocking death of Sarah Imeinu. It was her final tikun, and the Torah testifies to the level of personal perfection she reached, undoubtedly due also to her final moments of life.

But imagine the shock of Avraham Avinu upon returning home and finding out what had happened in his absence, and why. It was long before the time of social media, and he probably would have had poor reception anyhow. He did not have much time to prepare for the news, if any at all.

And imagine the disappointment! He thought he had "won," meaning that he had gone the full distance and was ready to sacrifice Yitzchak. Then he received the good news that he didn't actually have to go that far, and that Yitzchak would survive, marry, and have children. He had had his cake, and ate it too...so he had been led to believe.

Then he came home and received the tragic news. His beloved Sarah was gone, and because of the Akeidah too. She died thinking that her only son had been slaughtered, and yet he hadn't, or according to the other opinion, that he hadn't been slaughtered has G-d had commanded, but only because G-d had commanded it. How could he not have felt great anguish about that?

As if to add salt to the wound, he couldn't even just bury Sarah...even in the land destined to be his. He had to bargain for a burial spot with some of the lowlifes of the land, and pay top dollar for his OWN inheritance. And he had to do all of that without questioning G-d's plans at all (Sanhedrin 111a).

In general, we know that one plus one equals two. Two plus two equals four. And it is so nice that it does, because it makes life so predictable and therefore, controllable. We go to bed each night with the confidence that the sun will rise again the next morning. Without that confidence, it would be difficult to relax and fall asleep, like during a war when bombs are falling all around increasing the chances of one hitting your bunker.

Then there comes a time when one plus one does NOT equal two, like it should, and the sun does NOT rise the next day as normal. We do not understand that just because Avraham followed the command of G-d and loyally brought up his son as a sacrifice, he should lose his beloved wife, and not even be there to say goodbye? Because he sacrificed his "normalcy" to follow G-d, he should have to be tested over-and-over-and-over again? I'll speak for myself. I have no delusions about my personal level of righteousness. False humility aside, I know I am lucky to be alive. My continued existence is a testimony to G-d's immense mercy. Really.

Yet, like the Talmud says, I expect the reward of the righteous. I HATE when things go south in life. I REALLY hate when they go wrong after I have tried so hard to make them go right. And I really feel victimized when things go awry out of "nowhere," when I am just thrown into what seems to be have been an impossible situation. People second-guess G-d after a lot less.

Even Moshe Rabbeinu was chastised by G-d for doubting His actions. Moshe had gone down to Egypt to free the Jewish people and ended up causing their slavery to worsen. It upset him, and he questioned G-d about it Who, the Talmud says, expressed His disappointment in Moshe (Sanhedrin 111a) though, quite frankly, it is hard not to relate to Moshe's position.

So what was it, blind faith? Is that what separated the Avos from the rest of us? They were able to blindly follow G-d while the rest of us want, NEED to understand G-d's method behind what we perceive to be madness.

It was faith, but it was far from blind. It was faith in the knowledge that once you throw your lot in with G-d, He throws His lot in with you. He may make it rain on your parade, or worse, a lot worse. But it doesn't mean He is against you, and or even just ignoring you. It means that he's dealing with you on a level too deep for you to comprehend at the moment.

You don't have to. You just have to comprehend that this is the case, INTELLECTUALLY and EMOTIONALLY. In practice, we have Nachum Ish Gamzu as a great example. Whatever went wrong, he always said "This too is for the good."

But he didn't just say it with his lips.

He said it with his heart.

This is never an overnight process. It's one that comes from years trying to get to know G-d on the most intimate level humanly possible. It comes from becoming so familiar with His plan for Creation that hester panim, the hiding of G-d's face, becomes impossible to you. If you know every place someone hides during hide-and-go-seek, they're basically found before they even start.

Hester panim is only for the people who "allow" G-d to hide. By living superficially and by just "going with the flow," taking things in stride as they happen to come up, a person can become desensitized to Divine Providence. So when it finally enters their life—in an upbeat way or the opposite—it comes as a great surprise, one that is usually not appreciated by most people for the spiritual opportunity it is meant to be.

The military deals with this in physical combat training. They train their soldiers to become so familiar what their environment around them and how to respond to it in order to take the guess work out of their missions. Success or failure can be split seconds away from each other.

Torah is supposed to train us to do the same spiritually. I would go even so far as to say that when Avraham came home and found out that Sarah had died, and how, he had not been surprised. They had loved each other immensely, and they had been one. But he had been one with G-d the most, and that is what gave him, and can give us, the ability to deal with our challenges and disappointments without sacrificing any loyalty to G-d.

### Q&A

Daniel Lustman

#### Kids

1. How old was soroh when she died?
2. Who did Avraham buy the land from?
3. What is the gematria of בכל?
4. Were Avrahams camels muzzled when they were not in his home?
5. Which year did Avraham die from creation?

#### Adults

1. Why was Avraham and Yitzhak not present when soroh died?
2. Why does the Torah use the word יקום when explaining the transfer of property from ephron to Abraham, כפסוק זה זקק לו?
3. Where is the country ארם נהרין found?
4. Why was קריאת ארבע called this?
5. Who was אבינו?

1. 127
  2. Ephron
  3. 52. This is the same as 17, in אר, א פסוק א, אברהם had everything, כל, all of Avrahams fortunes was worthless until he had a son.
  4. Yes they were so they wouldn't graze in other people's fields (Rashi)
  5. 2123 (Seder olan)
- Adults
1. As Avraham and Yitzhak were still doing the akeidah, she was told by the soton that Avraham had killed Yitzhak, and she then died. (Targum Yonason)
  2. The property became elevated when it passed from the possession of the commoner Ephron to Avraham. (Midrash)
  3. It is found in between the two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris. (Rashi)
  4. As 4 giants lived there, or because 4 couples would be buried there!! (Rashi)
  5. Yishmoels ילד

Answers Kids