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Parshah Chayei Sarah in a Nutshell

Sarah dies at age 127 and is buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron, which Abraham purchases from Ephron the Hittite for four hundred shekels of silver.

Abraham's servant Eliezer is sent, laden with gifts, to Charan, to find a wife for Isaac. At the village well, Eliezer asks G-d for a sign: when the maidens come to the well, he will ask for some water to drink; the woman who will offer to give his camels to drink as well shall be the one destined for his master's son.

Rebecca, the daughter of Abraham's nephew Bethuel, appears at the well and passes the "test." Eliezer is invited to their home, where he repeats the story of the day's events. Rebecca returns with Eliezer to the land of Canaan, where they encounter Isaac praying in the field. Isaac marries Rebecca, loves her, and is comforted over the loss of his mother.

Abraham takes a new wife, Keturah (Hagar), and fathers six additional sons, but Isaac is designated as his only heir. Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried beside Sarah by his two eldest sons, Isaac and Ishmael. ❖

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule Parshas Chayei Sarah

Erev Shabbos – Nov. 2, 2018

Candle Lighting 5:33 pm

Mincha 5:35 pm

Shabbos – Nov. 3, 2018

Shacharis9:30 am*

Torah Reading.....10:35 am

Rabbi Neubort's Drasha11:10 am

Kiddush..... 12:10 pm

Gemara (2-31 Summit) 4:30 pm

Mincha 5:35 pm

Rabbi's Drasha 5:50 pm

Shabbos Ends..... 6:32 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 10:02 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule

Minyan

Shacharis 6:15 am

Mincha 1:45 pm

Maariv 9:15 pm

Classes

Chassidus, Mon-Fri 5:55 am

Halachah, Mon-Fri 1:40 pm

Torah Studies..... Mon. 7-8:00 pm

Tuesday Talmud..... 9:30-10:00 pm

Kiddush

This week's Kiddush is sponsored by Kay and Nikah Fialkoff. They are celebrating a major art retrospective featuring Kay's embroidery masterwork series:

"Prayers for the Earth." The reception is Sunday, November 4th, 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Fair Lawn library's Pine Gallery. Your invitation is in this week's bulletin email.

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, November 3
Daylight Saving Time

Earliest Tallis 6:31 AM

Latest Morning Shema... 10:02 AM

Earliest Mincha (Gedola).. 1:06 PM

Plag Hamincha..... 4:49 PM

Earliest Evening Shema.... 6:19 PM

Join us each weekday morning Mon-Fri as we delve into the mysteries of Chassidic concepts. 5:55 am Followed immediately by Shacharis.

**Thank You to:
Yossi and Avi Lebovic
And
Kiddush Volunteers**

Shhhhh

Talking during the prayer service and during the Torah reading is inappropriate and disturbing to fellow congregants. If you must talk, PLEASE go outside.

Chassidic Masters

“The Return of Hagar”

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

*And Abraham again took a wife,
and her name was Keturah
-- Genesis 25:1*

*Keturah is Hagar. Why is she called
Keturah? For her deeds were [now]
as pleasing as the ketoret.
-- Midrash Rabbah on verse*

Hagar was the Egyptian maid-servant of Abraham's first wife, Sarah. When Sarah had failed to conceive a child after many years of marriage, she implored Abraham to have a child with Hagar. Hagar did give Abraham a child, Ishmael, who turned out "a wild man, whose hand is against everyone and everyone's hand is against him" (Genesis 16:12). Sarah then demanded of Abraham that he banish Hagar and Ishmael from their home. When Abraham hesitated, G-d instructed him, "whatever Sarah tells you to do, hearken to her voice." Hagar drifted back to the paganism of her homeland, and found an Egyptian wife for Ishmael.

Years later, however, we find Ishmael back in the Abrahamic fold, accompanying Abraham and Isaac to the akeidah. And then, three years after Sarah's death, Abraham remarries Hagar. The reconciliation is now complete—indeed it is Sarah's son, Isaac, who brings Hagar back for her marriage with his

father (as per Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 24:62).

"Everything that happened to the Patriarchs," say our sages, "is a signpost for their children. This is why the Torah elaborates on... the events of their lives... for they all come to instruct the future" (Nachmanides on Genesis 12:6). The same is true regarding the shifts in Abraham's relationship with his "barbarous" wife and son: his expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael and their subsequent readmission into his family represent the different stages in our history of dealing with the "Hagars" and "Ishmaels" in our lives—the raw and unruly elements in our nature, society and environment.

The Spiritualist, the Miner, and the Future

There are three basic ways of dealing with the mundanity in one's life: a) disavowal, b) refinement or c) sublimation.

The first approach is that of the ascetic, whose reaction to mundanity is to escape it. Repelled by the corporeality of physical life, he reduces his involvement in the material to the bare minimum and devotes his life to spiritual pursuits.

Then there is the "refiner," who approaches the untamed wilderness of materiality as a prospector panning for gold. He knows that much of what passes through his hands is profitless sludge, but he is searching for the nuggets of sublimity imbedded

within. So he doesn't disavow the material, but neither does he embrace it unequivocally. His life is an exercise in selectivity: to extract the sparks of potential while rejecting the irredeemable dross.

The third approach is that of the "sublimator," who refuses to regard any element of G-d's creation as "irredeemable." He insists that every creature, every force, every experience, no matter how lowly, can be transformed into something positive and holy. There is nothing that is intrinsically negative in G-d's world, he argues; evil and corruption are never more than skin deep. Everything can, and should, be transformed into a force for good.

These three approaches are actually three stages in the history of human potential. On the second day of creation, G-d divided His creation into two domains, decreeing that "The lower realms shall not ascend to the higher realms, and the higher realms shall not descend to the lower realms." The breach between the spiritual and the physical was absolute: the spiritual could not be actualized, nor could the physical be sanctified. Man had a choice—he could either succumb to the mundanity of the material, or he could transcend it. "Refining" or "sublimating" the material was beyond the capacity of a world in which an inviolable boundary separated the holy from the mundane.

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Chassidic Masters

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This state of affairs prevailed for the twenty-six generations from Adam to Moses. Then, as the Midrash describes it, G-d rescinded His decree. On the sixth of Sivan in the year 2448 from creation (1313 bce), "G-d descended upon Mount Sinai," setting the precedent that the supernal may permeate the earthly, "and to Moses He said: 'Ascend to G-d,' " empowering the earthly to be elevated.

The era of "refinement" (birur) commenced. At Sinai, we were enfranchised to extract kernels of holiness from the husk of materiality. We were given a guidebook, the Torah, to teach us how to distinguish between that which can be positively utilized and that which must be rejected. The Torah spells out which foodstuffs are elevated when they energize our positive deeds, and which coarsen our minds and hearts and deaden our spiritual sensitivities; which relationships can bring love, joy and sanctity to our marital lives, and which are exploitative and debasing. The same applies to every area of life: the Torah instructs us which elements of physical life we are to embrace and develop, and which we are to reject and disavow. To attempt to go beyond this guide—to seek to sublimate that which the Torah decrees to be irredeemable—is futile and counterproductive. Just as pre-Sinai man was incapable of bridging the divinely imposed barrier between

matter and spirit, so, too, are we capable of sanctifying only that which the Creator of life has empowered us to sanctify.

Finally, G-d promises that there will come a time when "I shall remove the spirit of impurity from the earth" (Zachariah 13:2). A time when all evil and negativity shall cease from the earth and the positive essence of every creature and phenomenon in G-d's world shall come to light. No longer will we face the daily challenge of winnowing the holy from the profane; no longer will we know the pain of being compelled to relinquish potent areas of our lives because of our inability to properly and constructively channel them. Instead, we will inhabit a world in which everything will naturally lend itself to a good and G-dly end.

Abraham's Sinai

Abraham lived in the pre-Sinai era. This means that, ultimately, his achievements were confined to the spiritual realm. He forged the Jewish soul, developing his own life into a paradigm of loving kindness and commitment to G-d and bequeathing these qualities to his descendants. He battled the near-universal paganism of his time, prevailing upon many of his generation to renounce their idols and recognize the one G-d. But the physical substance of creation was largely unaffected; the divine demarcation between the spiritual and the material was still in force, precluding any human endeavor to sanctify the mundane.

Nevertheless, as "father" and archetype of the Jewish nation, Abraham embodied the entire history of our mission in life. So Abraham's life also included a transcendent "pre-Sinai" period, a "refinement" period, as well as the futuristic "sublimation" era. These three phases in the life of Abraham are delineated by the three Parshiot (Torah sections) which the Torah devotes to Abraham's life: Lech-Lecha (Genesis 12-17), Vayeira (18-22) and Chayei Sarah (23-25).

The exclusively spiritual period in Abraham's life lasted until his circumcision. The divine instruction to circumcise himself was Abraham's "Sinai"—the first (and only) occasion on which G-d commanded a mitzvah (Torah commandment) to him. For the first time in his life, Abraham could perform a mitzvah—an act that carries a divine empowerment to transform a physical entity (in this case, his own body) into an object of divine will.

[This explains a curious detail of Abraham's behavior related by the Torah. When Abraham wanted his servant, Eliezer, to take an oath, he told him to "place your hand under my thigh"(Genesis 24:2). An oath is taken while holding a sacred object such as a Torah scroll or tefillin; here Abraham is telling Eliezer to swear on the part of his own body sanctified by the mitzvah of circumcision.

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Yet our sages tell us that "Abraham observed the entire Torah" though it was yet to be given [at Sinai]; so Abraham studied Torah, put on tefillin, affixed a mezuzah on his doorpost, etc. It would therefore seem that he had no shortage of "sacred objects" available to him. Why, then, did he have Eliezer place his hand "under his thigh," contrary to all common standards of modesty and propriety? But as explained above, the import of Abraham's pre-Sinai mitzvot were of a wholly spiritual nature. Since G-d had not commanded him to do them, they remained human deeds, subject to the natural law that separated the spiritual from the material; while they had a profound effect on his own soul, the souls of his descendants, and the spiritual essence of creation, they had no impact on the material substance of the universe. The single exception was the mitzvah of circumcision, whose commandment by G-d constituted an empowerment to sanctify the physical. Thus, this was indeed the only sacred object available to Abraham.]

The significance of this watershed event in Abraham's life is emphasized by the fact that, upon commanding him to circumcise himself, G-d changed Abraham's name. Originally, the first Jew's name was Abram; G-d added the Hebrew letter heh to make it Abraham. "Abram" is an acronym for the Hebrew words av ram--"exalted father"; "Abraham" stands for av hamon goyim--"father of a multitude of nations" (Genesis, 17:5). Before he was granted the commandment of circumcision, Abram was an exalted father—a progenitor of spiritual achievements and a founder of a spiritual legacy; his deeds, however, remained "exalted," beyond the realm of the material. Upon his circumcision, Abraham assumed a role of influence upon "a multitude of nations"--a role that involved his refinement and elevation of the pedestrian and the mundane (to the extent that this was possible before Sinai).

"Male and female He created them," is how the Torah describes G-d's creation of human life. Indeed, this duality extends to all forms of life, and to all elements of creation—heaven and earth, sun and moon, energy and matter, and the numerous other physical models of maleness and femaleness. The same is true of the spiritual essence of life—our relationship with G-d comprises both a "male" initiating and achieving aspect, and a "female" receptive and nurturing element.

Thus we find that many mitzvot are commanded solely to the man, while others are the domain of the woman: a husband and wife, our sages explain, embody the two halves of a single soul; the deeds of each contribute to their common soul's fulfillment of both the "masculine" and "feminine" elements of its mission in life. More specifically, each mitzvah is both a "male" and "female" act: it is an act of conquest, of aggressive appropriation of resources from an alien domain for holy purposes, as well as an act of nurture, of refining, purifying and developing the appropriated resource into a vessel of holiness. In the words of the Talmud, "Man brings home grain; but does he chew grain?" Man wrests nutritive potential from the earth, but it is the woman who winnows the chaff from the cereal, sifts the fine flour from the coarse, and kneads, forms and bakes it to edible perfection.

Thus it was Sarah, the female half of Abraham's soul, who effected the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael. When Abraham hesitated, loath to relinquish the potent potentials implicit in his pagan mate and wild son, G-d said to him: "whatever Sarah tells you to do, hearken to her voice." True, you are now Abraham, father of multitudes and elevator of the mundane, but in every refinement process there is the extractable ore and the unprofitable rubble.

Haftorah in a Nutshell – Chayei Sarah

I Kings 1:1-31

This week's haftorah describes an aging King David, echoing this week's Torah reading, which mentions that "Abraham was was old, advanced in days."

King David was aging, and he was perpetually cold. A young maiden, Abishag of Shunam, was recruited to serve and provide warmth for the elderly monarch.

Seeing his father advancing in age, Adoniah, one of King David's sons, seized the opportunity to prepare the ground for his ascension to his father's throne upon the latter's passing — despite King David's express wishes that his son Solomon succeed him. Adoniah recruited two influential individuals — the High Priest and the commander of David's armies — both of whom had fallen out of David's good graces, to champion his cause. He arranged to be transported in a chariot with fifty people running before him, and invited a number of his sympathizers to a festive party where he publicizing his royal ambitions.

The prophet Nathan encouraged Bat Sheva, mother of Solomon, to approach King David and plead with him to reaffirm his choice of Solomon as his successor. This she did, mentioning Adoniah's recent actions of which the king had been unaware. Nathan later joined the Bat Sheva and the king to express support for Bat Sheva's request. King David acceded to their request: "Indeed," he told Bat Sheva, "as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel saying, 'Surely Solomon, your son, shall reign after me and he shall sit on my throne in my stead,' surely, so will I swear this day." ❖

Chassidic Masters

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Hagar and Ishmael represent elements of My creation too crude, too volatile, to be redeemed by your efforts. Sarah, your feminine sense of differentiation, has rejected them—do as she says.

However, Abraham's life includes a post-Sarah era as well—an era in which the most savage of Ishmaels and the most foreign of Hagers have a place in Abraham's family. (Thus Hagar is here called "Keturah," connoting the fact that "her deeds were as pleasing as the ketoret"; for the ketoret, too, represents the transformation of the "irredeemable" elements of creation into a vessel of holiness). This era in Abraham's life is the forerunner and prototype for the age of sublimation, when "no longer will your Master be cloaked; your eyes shall see your Master" (Isaiah 30:20)—when the divine essence of creation will no longer be shrouded in a mantle of corporeality and the positive utility of every creature will be manifest and accessible. ❖



Good Shabbos to all!

ב"ה
 נמלאה הארץ דעה אתה ה'
 ANSHEI LUBAVITCH
BEIS MIDRASH
 בית מדרש לחסידות
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Currently learning

שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל (תּרנ"ט)

THE POWER OF RETURN

by the Rebbe Rashab

Monday-Friday 5:55-6:10 AM

Halachah • שיעורי הלכה

Explore the Ins-and-Outs of Prayer

Hilchos Tefillah..... 1:40-1:45 PM

Monday-Thursday

Tuesday Talmud • שיעורי

גמרא

Tractate Sukkah.....9:30-10:00 PM

WANT TO LISTEN TO A CLASS ON-THE-GO?

Text your WhatsApp number to 201-362-2712 to join the Torah Classes @ Anshei Group

Stay Tuned for More Info

New JLI Course coming up

Crime and Consequence

Shevat 5779 / February 2019

Criminal justice reform is a hot-button topic in the United States, with a bipartisan consensus that urgent reforms are needed. This course discusses some of the most controversial issues with respect to crime and punishment and offers Torah perspectives that are relevant and insightful. The course examines many areas of criminal law, such as sentencing, incarceration, parole, death penalty, evidence, rehabilitation, crime prevention—all in the hope of generating a safer and more just society.



MONDAY EVENING TORAH STUDIES

7:00-8:00 PM • Maariv at 9:15

Monday, November 5, 2018

YOUR TWO CENTS

A Little Effort Is Worth a Lot of Impact

We all dream of a future Temple that will herald in the messianic era. Have you every stopped to think about who will get the contractor bid for the project? Conflicting accounts across the Talmudic discipline paint a hazy picture: Some say it'll come down from Heaven prefab. Others say Jerusalem Contractors, Inc. will be formed. So which one is it? The answer will tell you a thing or two about what it means to put in a day's work.

Monday, November 12, 2018

A RED LINE IS A RED LINE

Finding the Internal Courage to Erect Moral Boundaries

On that fateful night on a mountaintop, as Jacob dreamed, the entire Land of Israel folded beneath him. The reason? It was a harbinger of his descendants' future conquest of the Land. Harbingers aside, what is the reason G-d fashioned such a fantastic miracle? For pure sentiment? It turns out that this sentiment is a key component in crafting the moral compass for Jacob's descendants for all time.

Schedule of classes for

Larger Than Life: Weaving G-d into the Details by the Rosh Chodesh Society

- 2018** November 14.....7:30 pm
- December 12.....7:30 pm
- 2019** January 16.....7:30 pm
- February 13.....7:30 pm
- March 13.....7:30 pm
- May 15.....7:30 pm

Questions? Want to host a class? Call or text Rivky Bergstein: 201.362.2909



Wrestling with Faith

Join us next Sunday evening for Lesson Three: *A Higher Paradigm*

Our upcoming lesson dares to explore a topic that is quite sensitive. It is no secret that the Torah seems to ignore foundational cornerstones of Western society. Many of the Torah's instructions seem to fly in the face of basic values such as inherent rights, egalitarianism, and the freedom to choose one's identity and path in life. Why would we want to have a relationship with the Author of this Torah? Would we be foolish to even attempt to reconcile the Torah with modern trends of thought?

Join us next Sunday, November 11 7:30 pm at Anshei Lubavitch as we tackle these topics together.

FIND OUT MORE

Call 201.362.2712. or email: RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com



Coming Up:

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7:30 PM

Carried Away

The Consumed Consumer

In today's society, it is natural to be concerned about the rights of a consumer and less in vogue to worry about the interests of the vendor. In reality, however, good and evil is done by all of us. Because so much of society focuses on consumer rights, too often, customers are absorbed in a sense of entitlement. Do bargain hunting, taking advantage of a vendor's liberal return policies, window shopping, and such constitute ethical shopping behaviors compatible with the Jewish value system?