

Parshat Chaye Sara

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Dedications:

- *Shirley Pollack l'iluy nishmat Daniel Efraim ben Akiva, may Hashem avenge his blood*
- *Alissa Grill l'zecher nishmat her parents Nechama bas Moshe Gershon HaCohen & Chasya and Shmuel Mordechai ben Yitzchak Gedalia & Malka*

Thank you to all the anonymous donors as well.

We are gearing up for our **Chochma V'Chessed Chanuka Campaign**. Chanuka is a very hard time for single parents, but with our campaign, the single mothers in this group can breathe a little easier and their children will shine a little brighter.

It will be our first anniversary soon and we have raised over \$30,000 for each other. **TOGETHER**

Let's see if we can double it by next year!

Please email taniahammer@gmail.com if you would like to donate and dedicate a shiur.

Imagination- Dreams - Geulah and The Imahot

1. Sara was a greater Naviah

a) 18:1

וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים הַ בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פְּתַח־הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם:

The LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot

18:7

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֹהֶל:

They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the tent"

18: 12-15

וּתְצַחֵק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרַי בְּלִיתִי הֵיטֵה-לִּי עֵדֻנָּה וְאֲדֹנָי זָקֵן:

And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “Now that I am withered, am I to become young again, and my husband is old?”

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-אַבְרָהָם לְמָה זֶה צָחָקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הֲאֵף אֲמַנִּם אֵלֶּךָ וְאֲנִי זָקֵנָתִי:

Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I in truth bear a child, old as I am?’

הֲיִפְלֵא מִ'ה דְּבַר ? לְמוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעַת חַיָּה וְלִשְׂרָה בֵּן:

Is anything too wondrous for the LORD? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”

וּתְכַחַשׁ שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר לֹא צָחָקְתִּי- כִּי וַיִּרְאָהּ- וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִּי צָחָקְתִּי:

Sarah lied, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was frightened. But He replied, “You did laugh.”

b) Bereisheet Rabbah 48:20

! תְּכַחַשׁ שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר לֹא וְגו' (בראשית יח, טו), רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בְּרַבִּי סִימוֹן אָמַר מֵעוֹלָם לֹא נִזְקַק הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְהִשְׁיַח עִם אִשָּׁה אֶלָּא עִם אוֹתָהּ הַצְּדִיקָתָהּ, וְאֵף הִיא עַל יְדֵי עֲלֵהּ. רַבִּי אַבָּא בַר כַּהֲנָא בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי אִידִי אָמַר כַּמָּה כְּכֹוֹרִים כְּרַכַּר בְּשִׁבִיל לְהִשְׁיַח עִמָּהּ, וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִּי צָחָקְתִּי.

Hashem never speak directly with a woman, except with this Tzadeket, and even in her case, only via a “ilah”, excuse/ pretext. ...how many circumventions Hashem had to make to speak to her and say, No, you did laugh.

What is the meaning of “Hashem never speaks directly to a woman”?

c) Chullin 59b-60a

אמר ליה קיסר לר' יהושע בן חנניה בעינא דאיחזי לאלהיכו א"ל לא מצית חזית ליה א"ל איברא

חזינא ליה אזל אוקמיה להדי יומא בתקופת תמוז א"ל איסתכל ביה א"ל לא מציאנא א"ל יומא דחד משמשי דקיימי קמי דקודשא בריך הוא אמרת לא מציאנא לאיסתכלא ביה שכינה לא כל שכן

The Gemara recounts: The emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya: I wish to see your God. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: You cannot see Him. The emperor said to him: Truly I wish to see Him. Rabbi Yehoshua went and stood the emperor facing the sun in the season of Tammuz, i.e., summer. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Look at it. The emperor said to him: I cannot. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Now, if with regard to the sun, which is only one of the servants that stand before the Holy One, Blessed be He, you say: I cannot look at it, is it not all the more so with regard to the Divine Presence

Mashal: Just like we can not look at the sun because it is too intense and will burn out our eyes,... (unless we have sun glasses to block the intensity of the direct rays)

Nimshal: A Navi can not receive the shechina/ shefa/ directly, as it is too intense, and it will burn out his/her mind, (breaking of vessels). The idea must be processed thru the imagination.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/science-says-why-we-cant-look-at-the-sun/>

2. How Hashem communicates with us.

a) Sechel- ideas and Dimyon- conceptualizing, internalizing the ideas,

Maimonides, emphasizes that this overflow rests first on the intellect and only afterwards on the imagination. He means to say that the intellectual understanding in the mind of the prophet in the form of concepts is then translated in the prophet's imagination into sensible images. This may be viewed as a transition from the mind to the imagination, between which there are laws of transformation that create a correspondence between the concepts and the images.

The revelations/ Divine thought must come first through the sechel but then move to our imagination to process. Hashem does not bypass the sechel (MALE) or revelation of the concept, and reveal the concrete manifestation (FEMALE) of it first.

All imagination(fF) must be a function of the Sechel first absorbing these ideas.(M)

Sechel-imagination - different relationships

MN 2:37

You should know that the case in which the intellectual overflow overflows only toward the rational faculty and does not overflow at all toward the imaginative faculty – either because of the scantiness of what overflows or because of some deficiency existing in the imaginative faculty in its natural disposition, a deficiency that makes it impossible for it to receive the overflow of the intellect – is characteristic of men of science engaged in speculation.

When one is all cerebral, not able to apply ideas

If, on the other hand, this overflow reaches both faculties – I mean both the rational and the imaginative – as we and others among the philosophers have explained, and if the imaginative faculty is in a state of ultimate perfection owing to its natural disposition, this is characteristic of the class of prophets.

Blend of both= Nevuah

If again the overflow only reaches the imaginative faculty, the defect of the rational faculty deriving either from its original natural disposition or from insufficiency of training, this is characteristic of the class of those who govern cities, while being the legislators, the soothsayers, the augurs, and the dreamers of veridical dreams. All those who do extraordinary things by means of strange devices and secret arts and withal are not men of science likewise belong to this third class.

All imagination means there is a lack of ability of the sechel and these are the charismatic dreamers.

3. Saras laughter

a) Woman = Koach HaDimyon/ Receiver of idea (male/sperm) and dresses the idea in a mashal or something familiar to our experience.

The Imaginative faculty must draw on what it is already familiar with.

Hashem never speaks to a "woman", Divine thought is never revealed directly to the imagination first.

When Hashem reveals something entirely new, we are not familiar with it yet, and we do not yet have the tools or constructs to envision it. Therefore **First** Hashem reveals the underlying reality. With time and more experiences we can begin to envision it.

Hashem is revealing here, that all of nature will change, Sara will be rejuvenated, and life will spring from what is considered old and futureless.

This is a mashal for the future Geulah and personal self redemption.

Hashem is causing Sara/Us/ our imagination to envision our rejuvenation/ even when we don't have the ability to yet. This means we are being asked to envision how this physical world can "give birth" to true spiritual life, after we have become "old" disillusioned about anyone/ any society getting it right in this world.

Sara the female/ imagination in all of us is being charged with imagining a better world of truth so that we can find the motivation to build it!

We can become skeptical and dismiss these dreams as wishful thinking, We lose hope in this world getting itself on track, back to Eden and the Etz HaChaim, we do not internalize this truth as the direct thought and plan of Hashem.

b) Ramban:

AND SARAH DENIED SAYING. I wonder about the righteous prophetess: How did she deny that which G-d had said to the prophet,¹⁰⁴ *Abraham..* and also, why did she not believe in the words of G-d's angels?

The answer appears to me to be that these angels who appeared as men came to Abraham, and he, in his wisdom, recognized them. They announced to him, "*I will certainly return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son.*" **And Sarah heard it, but she did not know that they were angels of the Supreme One**, as was the case with the wife of Manoah.¹⁰⁶ *Judges 13:6*. It is even possible that she did not see them at all.

Therefore she laughed within herself in skepticism just [as the word "laugh" is used in the verse]: *He that sitteth in heaven laugheth, the Eternal hath them in derision.*¹⁰⁷ *Psalms 2:4*. For joyous laughter is [expressed in Hebrew as

originating] in the mouth — *Then was our mouth filled with laughter*¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 126:2. — but laughter originating in the heart is not spoken of as joyous.

4. Internal and external Tzchok

Bereisheet 21:6

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה צָחֵק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים כֹּל־הַשְּׂמֵעַ יִצְחָק־לִי:

Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with me

Tehillim 126

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב הַאֶת־נְשִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הַיְיִנוּ כַחֲלָמִים:

אֲזַיִּמְלֵא שְׂחֻק פִּינוֹ וְלִשׁוֹנוֹ רִנָּה - אֲזַיִּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְּדִיל הַלַּעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֱלֹהִים:

הַגְּדִיל הַלַּעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הַיְיִנוּ שְׂמִיחִים:

שׁוּבָה הַאֶת־[שְׁבִיתָנוּ] (שְׁבוֹתָנוּ) כְּאִפְיָקִים בְּנִגְבִּי:

הַזְרַעִים בְּדַמְעָה - בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ:

הֲלוֹךְ יֵלֶךְ וּבָכָה נֹא־מִשָּׁה־הַזְרַע - בְּאִי־בָא בְרִנָּה נִשְׂא אֶלְמִתָּיו:

Yitzchak is named for this transition, and exemplifies the process of believing in the redemptive potential of our physical lives, NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT AND CHALLENGING IT MAY BE.

POST AKEIDA, first Yitzchak is detached and can see no real benefit in engaging in the physical world.

{נִישֵׁב אַבְרָהָם אֶל־נַעֲרָיו וַיִּקְמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ יַחְדָּו אֶל־בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם בְּבְאֵר שֶׁבַע:

Abraham then returned to his servants, and they departed together for Beer-sheba; and Abraham stayed in Beer-sheba.

The Torah does not include Yitzchak, he has detached from involvement in the (female) concrete world

He is pure ideas, communing with Hashem.

Through Rivka (female) he agrees to re-engage with this world and use it to REVEAL the great truths.

5. Yitzchak = the reattachment and belief in the redemptive powers of our physical life experiences and efforts.

Bereisheet 24: 62-67

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׂוּחַ בְּשָׂדֵה לְפָנוֹת עֶרֶב וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו -- וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה גַמְלִים בָּאִים:

And Isaac went out to meditate/pray in the field toward evening and, looking up, he saw camels approaching

Medrash Hagadol: From where did Yitzchak go out?

HE went out from Gan Eden

This does not mean that he was physically dead. Rather, that he was in a state of detachment from this world. Hashem sent Rivka to reconnect him to the lower world and use it to channel Hashem in the physical space.

He sees the “gamal”- Gomal- bestows help/ mayim chayim- for he who is in the desert!!

וַיֵּצֵחֵק בָּא מִבּוֹא בְּאֵר לַחֵי רֹאֵי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב:

Isaac had just come back from the vicinity of Beer Lahai-Roi, for he was settled in the region of the Negev

Mei Ha Shiloach- The Ishbitzer

וַיִּצְחָק בָּא מִבּוֹא וְכוּ' וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׂוּחַ וְכוּ' וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה וְכוּ'. הַיְיִנוּ כִּי יִצְחָק הִיָּה שׁוֹרֵשׁ לְכָל הִירָאוֹת שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם ...כַּמּ"שׁ וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב הַיְיִנוּ מִנּוּגָב מְכַל חֲמֵדָה

Yitzchak was the root of all Yirah of God in the world,

(this means he was so in awe of his attachment to Hashem, that he was perpetually fearful of losing sight of his true identity, by becoming attached and identified with anything else but Hashem)...“he dwelt in the south country [Negev]” or dry (*menugav*) from all desire not directed to *Kedusha*.

The Negev is a desert AND IS SOUTH/ LOWER and it does not seem like a fertile place where things can grow and flourish. It is a hopeless place. Yitzcak

had been in that “state of mind” but saw the opportunity for “water” to bring him back to life

וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרָא אֶת־יִצְחָק - וַתִּפֹּל מֵעַל הַגָּמֶל:

Raising her eyes, Rebekah saw Isaac. She fell from the camel

וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֶבֶד מִי־הָאִישׁ הַלֹּזֵה הַהֵלֶךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה לְקִרְאתָנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הָעֶבֶד הוּא אַדְנִי וַתִּקַּח הַצֶּעֶף וַתִּתְקַס:

And said to the servant, “Who is that man walking in the field toward us?” And the servant said, “That is my master.” So she took her veil and covered herself.

וַיִּסְפֹּר הָעֶבֶד לְיִצְחָק אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

The servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

וַיָּבֵא יִצְחָק הָאֵלֶּלֶה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־רִבְקָה וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֶּאֱהָבֶהּ וַיִּנָּחֶם יִצְחָק אֶת־רִבְקָה אִמּוֹ:

Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he took Rebekah as his wife. Isaac loved her, and thus found comfort after his mother’s death.

Rashi:

INTO HIS MOTHER SARAH’S TENT — He brought her into the tent and she became exactly like his mother Sarah — that is to say, the words signify as much as, [And he brought her into the tent] and, behold, she was Sarah, his mother). For whilst Sarah was living, a light had been burning in the tent from one Sabbath eve to the next, there was always a blessing in the dough (a miraculous increase) and a cloud was always hanging over the tent (as a divine protection), but since her death all these had stopped. However, when Rebecca came, they reappeared

TAKEAWAY: This story of Saras skepticism and then joyous laughter is expressing a transformative concept that Am Yisrael as a nation have gifted to the world.

Unlike asceticism and any ideology that devalues the physical world and our journey through it, Judaism wants us to always maintain optimism and trust that our journey personally and nationally in the physical world is the path

Hashem has designed and we are meant to fully engage and trust its ability to bring us to eternal life.

This is why Yitzchak is associated with Techiyas HaMeitim, his whole story is about eternal life emerging from a finite material death bound reality