CHAYEI SARAH 5787

The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Land of Closeness

Presented by Rabbi Elihu Abbe, Senior Torah Educator

Even though Avraham is determined that Yitzchak's wife must be from his family in Charan and not from the daughters of Canaan, there is one thing that Avraham is not willing to sacrifice. Yitzchak is not to leave the Land of Israel. This is somewhat perplexing in light of the following. The Gemara (Avodah Zara 13a) teaches us that although there is a Rabbinic restriction for a kohen to leave the Land of Israel out of concern for contracting *tumah* (ritual impurity), nevertheless, if it is for the sake of either studying Torah or getting married, it is permitted. If so, why was Avraham so adamant that Yitzchak not leave the Land of Israel for the sake of finding a wife?

In Parshas Toldos, when Yitzchak is considering going down to Egypt to evade the famine in Israel, G-d tells him to stay in Israel. This is also surprising because the Gemara (Bava Basra 91a) teaches that one may leave the Land of Israel during a famine. The Midrash suggests two explanations: First, Yitzchak was dedicated as an offering to G-d and therefore had the sanctity of an offering which may not be removed from Israel's boundaries. Second, since G-d accompanies the Jewish people into exile, were Yitzchak to leave Israel it would force G-d into exile as well. Presumably these explanations also answer our question as to why Yitzchak couldn't leave Israel in order to marry Rivka.

Perhaps we can suggest a third explanation based on the simple reading of G-d's promise to Yitzchak in Parshas Toldos (Bereishis 26:3): "Dwell in the land that I will tell you… and I will be with you, and I will bless you, for to you and to your seed will I give all these lands…" G-d tells Yitzchak that he should remain in Israel because it is there that G-d will be with him, there that he will be blessed, and there that will be home for future generations. Were Yitzchak to leave the Land of Israel to find a wife, he might never return, and his future offspring would miss out on the closeness to G-d and the unique blessing that the Land of Israel affords. Therefore, even though in general an individual may leave Israel to marry, our forefather Yitzchak had to remain in order to establish the home of the Jewish people in the Land.

As a people, we have been forced to leave the boundaries of the Holy Land. Our Parsha reminds us of the uniqueness of our true home. May we all soon merit to return to the Land of Israel and to merit the special closeness to Hashem that can only be attained therein.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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This week's Shabbos Delights is sponsored by Dino Feigelstock l'iluy nishmas his father, Yosef Yitzchak ben Natan z"l.

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Now Avraham was old, well on his years, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything. (24:1)

The numerical value of "bakol" / everything is fifty-two, the same value as "ben" / son. Since Avraham had a son, he needed to marry him off. (Rashi)

Why did Rashi need to reiterate that "since Avraham had a son?" Rashi just finished saying that Avraham had a son. Rashi should have just said, "and he needed to marry him off."

Parsha Riddle

Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years... (23:1) What connection is there between Sarah and Queen Esther?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:
How old was Yishmael when he was sent away from Avraham's house? How old was Yitzchak at the time of the Akeida?
Answer: 37, 37 (See Bereishis Rabba 48:9)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Chayei Sarah (24:60), the Torah relates that when Rivka's mother and brother sent Rivka away to marry Yitzchak, "they blessed Rivka and said to her, 'Our sister, may you become thousands of myriads, and may your seed inherit the cities of their enemies.'" Maseches Kallah (1:2) teaches: "From where in the Torah is the benediction of the grooms (birchas chasanim) derived? As it is stated: 'and they blessed Rivka.'"

The Talmud (Kesubos 7b), however, offers two alternate derivations for birchas chasanim: *Rav Nachman said: Huna bar Nasan said to me that it was taught: From where is it derived that the benediction of the grooms is recited in a quorum of ten men? It is as it is stated: "And he took ten men of the Elders of the city and said: Sit you here, and they sat" (Ruth 4:2). And Rabbi Abbahu said that the source is from here: "In assemblies [mak'helot], bless G-d, the L-rd, from the source of Israel" (Psalms 68:27). This verse indicates that a congregation [kahal], which contains at least ten men, blesses G-d when reciting a benediction related to the source of Israel, i.e., conjugal relations, which will lead to the birth of Jewish children.*

The Tosafos suggest that Maseches Kallah is referring to birchas erusin (the blessing recited in connection with the kiddushin [the first stage of the marriage ceremony, generally accomplished by the groom giving a wedding ring to the bride]), while the Talmud is referring to birchas nisuin (the seven blessings recited in connection with the nisuin [the second stage the marriage ceremony, generally accomplished by the presence of the groom and bride together under the chuppah and / or other aspects of the wedding ceremonies]).

The Tosafos conclude that the derivation of Maseches Kallah is merely an asmachta (a mere allusion, as opposed to an authoritative derivation), since there is no basis in that context for the requirement of ten men, and the simple meaning of the text there does not refer to birchas erusin. Hadar Zekenim, however, commenting on the verse earlier in our parashah (24:10) that relates that when Avraham's servant set out on his journey to find a wife for Yitzchak, he "took ten camels of his master's camels," explains that "he took ten men of the children of Avraham riding on ten camels in order to recite birchas erusin."

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. We had light all week.
2. Our dough was fresh.
3. For us it was cloudy.
4. We are one and two of three.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I found a match.
2. Don't confuse me with Damascus.
3. Hashem helper.
4. I meant 318 soldiers.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Gemorah (I am not Talmud Bavli, I was turned upside down, I was home to cruelty, I was one of five.)
#2 Ram's horn (I was tangled, Moshiach will use me, I don't beep, I was at Matan Torah.)

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