

Parshas Chayei Sarah

This week's Parsha we hear about the loss of Sarah, who passed away after hearing the "news" that Avraham had brought Yitzchak as a potential sacrifice. Optically, we can think that Sarah passed away out of fear of the fact that Yitzchak her only offspring would potentially be sacrificed, and it is unclear of how a nation will be borne from Avraham. Sarah's passing ought not be viewed as a negative reaction, rather, she knew that Avraham Sarah and Yitzchak solidified their position as the fore parents of the Jewish People. We know that the Neshamos of Avraham and Sarah and the fore parents are from extremely lofty levels. But their power was manifested in their actions of belief on the physical world. Perhaps this is why the Alter Rebbe in his Mamer on the week discusses the purposefulness of our souls down on a physical plane that Hashem created.

Rashi explains in Parshas Vayeira 18:19 on "Ki Yidativ" (which literally means because I know him), but this means, because I cherish him. Rashi explains that Hashem loved Avraham because Avraham commands his children to follow in His ways. This means that Avraham acted under his own accord, and for this Hashem loved him. In this way, and as we see from this week's Parsha, Sarah was saintly and devoid of sin (100-20-7 see Rashi for explanation 23:1), meaning she may not have died over hearing news of her son's binding and offering. Rashi explains on 23:2 "Vayavo Avraham" Rashi states the following very specifically- "Because through the news of the binding, that her son was readied for slaughter, **and was nearly slaughtered**, her soul flew from her, and she died. Rashi doesn't seem to imply it was negative, as well, the added words of "and was nearly

slaughtered" means she heard the whole story, that is Avraham passed his test, and solidified his place as the father of the nation. Sarah's place on this world had come to its completion. Much like Moshe's at the end of his life, that even at 120 he was full of vitality, and he was taken away, at the end, not as a slow death, rather in an instant when the purpose was completed. Sarah's departure was similar to Moshe, and her vitality was there at the end, like in her youth.

As our mother, her strength guided the Jews as well, it is no coincidence that she was 127 years old when she passed, which corresponds to the 127 nations over which Esther eventually ruled (after marrying Achashveirosh). Esther's strength as a leader, and the person who ruled at the time when the Jews accepted the Torah in the fullest of senses (kimu v'kiblu). Sarah Imenu was a true believer in Hashem, and the continuity of her offspring as servants of Hashem.

One final point is we learn a few Halachos related to performing Mitzvos, specifically burial. 1) We learn that for the burial of a person, money cannot be a factor. 2) It is a mitzvah to bury the body at the earliest possible time after departure. 3) for some mitzvos you may be required to "overspend", although this is a matter of debate in Halacha 4) this is one of the few places in the Torah that no one can argue with the transaction that took place (the other two quoted in Bereishis Rabba 79:7 are Yoseph's tomb, and the place of the Beis Hamikdash) and claim they were stolen (although we can postulate of other cases, such as the transaction between Yakov and Eisav, or Rashi's interpretation on Bereishis, we can see there are other eternal rules that cannot be argued.

Good Shabbos