

Parshas Chayei Sara

A crazy thing happened on the way home from the office the other night. On my way home, I witnessed a gnarly car crash; there was a victim in the middle of the highway, which I saw and proceeded to stop, put my hazards on, and make sure the lane was blocked to try and prevent any more harm from happening. Before I had a chance to call 911 or be of any help, I was attacked by passengers of one of the vehicles. Thank G-d I am safe and not too hurt. But the whole episode got me thinking about how we are in the immediate revelation of Mashiach.

How is it possible that to stop and try to be of help (and I didn't even really have a chance to engage in helping at the scene of the accident) that a group of people (and one assailant in particular) has the moral depravity to start attacking me? Now, I would maybe excuse this person's behaviour as hysterical due to the extent of the accident. Still, they intended to inflict harm based on why they were trying to attack me (i.e. blame me for the accident and threaten to kill me). The result was the arrest of the assailant, my pressing charges, a trip to the hospital and a clear CT scan that all will heal fine.

Moral depravity results in moral decay but may be evidence of the imminence of Mashiach's arrival. The result of stopping

and trying to help someone in need was met with attack as if it was expected, which is precisely the opposite of what 'should' be the response. If this behaviour is evident, and we're seeing more and more of this similar behaviour as the 'norm', then we are in the moments before Mashiach will arrive. Pesachim 50a, talks about the story of the inverted world, between our world and the heavens¹. If the heavens are opening for the ultimate redemption then along the way the opposites will be evident in the world.

But what about us? We must learn and act like Sarah. The Parsha is called the 'life of Sarah' even though it spends very little time on her life. But why then is it called this? Because we celebrate life and the goodness that we can bring on this earth during our time here, to stave off moral decay and depravity. Because it is through these actions that as the world crumbles, the light of goodness, righteousness, and kindness will shine through the decay revealing the ultimate redemption.

Good Shabbos

¹ And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: These are people who are considered important [yekarim] in this world and unimportant [kefuyim] in the World-to-Come. This is like the incident involving Rav Yosef, son of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, who became ill and was about to expire. When he returned to good health, his father said to him: What did you see when you were about to die? He said to him: I saw an inverted world. Those above, i.e., those who are

considered important in this world, were below, insignificant, while those below, i.e., those who are insignificant in this world, were above. He said to him: My son, you have seen a clear world. The world you have seen is the true world, as in that world people's standings befit them. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked: And where are we, the Torah scholars, there? Rav Yosef responded: Just as we are regarded here, so are we regarded there.