Outlook

ALTZY Weekly Bulletin Parashat Vayera

From Ayin L'Tzion Zichron Yisroel Congregation <info@altzy.org>
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AYIN L'TZION ZICHRON YISROEL CONGREGATION

20 Cheshvan 5787

Parashat Vayera



Mazal tov to Hadar Jakubovic on the occasion of her Bat Mitzvah. Mazal tov to her parents, Yael & Baruch Jakubovic, siblings Gidon, Leah, Dovi and Goldie, grandparents Dr. Henry & Holly Jakubovic, Lori & Larry Wolynetz and great-grandmother, Sylvia Wolynetz.

Schedule

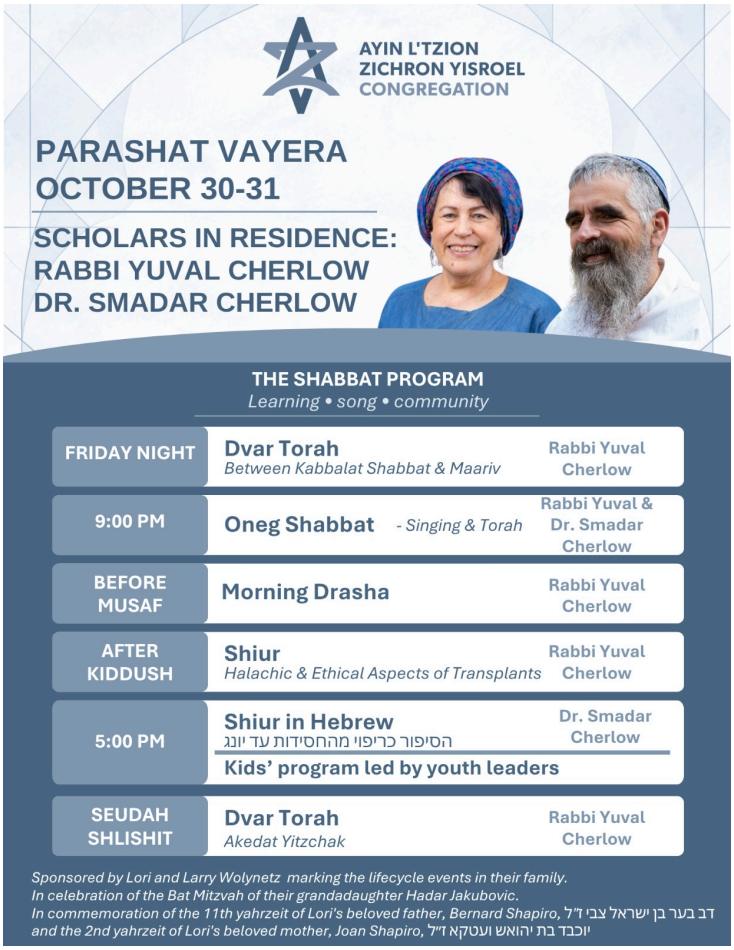
Friday, Oct 30

5:55pm: Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat
5:52pm: Candle Lighting

Shabbat, Oct 31

9:00am: Shacharit
5:50pm: Mincha
6:53pm: Ma'ariv
6:55pm: Havdala
Turn clocks back

Welcome to Rav Yuval and Dr. Smadar Cherlow, our Scholars in Residence for Shabbat. Please join us for an Oneg Friday night at 9 PM and see the flyer below for details about Shabbat.



Thank you to Lori and Larry Wolynetz for sponsoring our Scholars in Residence programs, marking the lifecycle events in their family:
in celebration of the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter Hadar Jakubovic,
in commemoration of the 11th yahrzeit of Lori's beloved father, Bernard Shapiro, דב בער בן ישראל צבי ז"ל
and the 2nd yahrzeit of Lori's beloved mother, Joan Shapiro, יוכבד בת יהואש ועטקא ז"ל

Thank you to our kiddush sponsors,

Week of Oct Nov 1

Shacharit
Sun: 8:00am
Mon, Thu: 6:30am
Tue, Wed, Fri: 6:40am

Mincha/Ma'ariv
Sun-Thu:4:55pm

Monday, 7:30pm:
Please join us online for Tehillim, click here
(password grysman).

Tuesday, 7:30pm:
Lori Grysman's online shiur in Melachim, click here
(password grysman).

Contact

- **Yael, Baruch, Gidon, Leah, Dovi and Goldie Jakubovic** in honour of Hadar's bat mitzvah.
- **Jake Rosenberg** for the first yahrzeit of his beloved father Abraham Rosenberg, Avraham Elimelech ben Yaakov Yehudah Leib z"l.

Kiddush team 4

Thank you to our seudah shlishit sponsors,

- **Alain and Penina Sotto** for the yahrzeits of their beloved fathers Jacob Sotto z'l and Avrahm Galper z'l.
- **Moishe and Jodi Gottesman & family** to commemorate the yahrzeit of Jodi's beloved father, Nathan Kaiman (Natan ben Velf Ze'ev) z"l.

Rabbi Charles Grysman
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Deadline for bulletin submissions: Tuesday

From Rabbi Grysman

This week's and last week's parashot mention two different incidents where Avraham has Sarah pose as his sister to save himself from violence and/or death, while, at the same time, placing Sarah in danger of being violated. Last week we read,

בראשית פרק יב: (יא) וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לָבוֹא מִצְרָיְמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יְפַת־מַרְאֶה אָתְּ (יב) וְהָיָה כִּי־יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרִים וְאָמְרוּ אִשְׁתּוֹ זֹאת וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֹתָךְ יְחַיּוּ (יג) אִמְרִי־נָא אֲחֹתִי אָתְּ לְמַעַן יִיטַב־לִי בַעֲבוּרֵךְ וְחָיְתָה נַפְשִׁי בִּגְלָלֵךְ:

As they approached Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I realize that you are a good-looking woman. When the Egyptians see you, they will assume that you are my wife and they will kill me, allowing you live. If you would, say that you are my sister. They will then be good to me for your sake, and through your efforts, my life will be spared.
Similarly, in this week's parasha, we read,

בראשית פרק כ: (א) וַיִּסַּע מִשָּׁם אַבְרָהָם אַרְצָה הַנֶּגֶב וַיֵּשֶׁב בֵּין־קָדֵשׁ וּבֵין שׁוּר וַיָּגָר בִּגְרָר (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲחֹתִי הִוא וַיִּשְׁלַח אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ גְּרָר וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שָׂרָה:

Avraham migrated from there to the land of the Negev and he settled between Kadesh and Shur. He would often visit Gerar. There, he announced that his wife, Sarah, was his sister, and Avimelekh, king of Gerar, sent messengers and took his sister.

Was Avraham truly the type of person who would endanger his wife, even under these circumstances?

Radak explains that prior to entering Egypt, Avraham had no idea about the vile nature of the Egyptian people and had he been aware, he would not have gone there in the face of such great danger. Once he understood the horrible circumstances they would inevitably face, he concluded that even the most vicious people would kill a husband rather than violate his wife in the husband's presence. The only way to save Sarah from this predicament would be by presenting her as his sister. He says,

רד"ק בראשית פרק יב, יב: לא יעשו פעמים רבות שישכבו אותה לעיניו כי זה יהיה חמס רב וחמס תמידי לא יסבלו אנשי העולם, אבל להרוג אותו אינו אלא פעם אחת ואחר כך תהיה מופקרת להם בלא חמס, כי לא יהיה לה בעל ומזה פחד אברהם.

They would not lie with her many times in his presence because this would be a form of unusual cruelty that is intolerable. However, killing him makes this a one-time situation, leaving her permanently in their hands without undue cruelty since she is a widow. This was Avraham's greatest fear.

It was only Hashem's intervention that could save Avraham from a hopeless situation and, as a true tzadik, he prepared himself for the possibility that Hashem would not intervene. As the Gemara in Megila (7b) tells us, לָא בְּכֹל שַׁעֲתָא וְשַׁעֲתָא מִתְרַחִישׁ נִיסָּא, miracles do not always happen.

It is also possible that as an older brother, Avraham could present himself as Sarah's guardian. The fact that she travelled with him would cause people to think that she was brought along for an arranged marriage. He would be approached with multiple offers for her hand which would delay her removal from his custody, providing Avraham and Sarah time to devise a plan of escape. As Abarbanel said,

אברבנאל פרשת לך לך: כאשר תאמר שהיא אחותו יקוה כל אחד שיסכים אברהם לתתה לו לאשה ע"י מתנות ולא יהרגוהו כי יחשבו שלכך הביאוה להשיאה לאחד מנכבדי הארץ וחשב אברהם שלא יקחוה אבל

ישאו ויתנו עמו במתון ימים רבים ואם יוכל להשמט מהם בתחבולות ותואנות ... ולא עלה על לב אברהם שהמלך יקחה לו לאשה.

When he tells them that she is his sister, all will hope to have him give her to him as a bride in return for favours and gifts that they will provide. This is because all will think that she was brought here to marry into an important family, thereby protecting her from being taken suddenly. Instead, they would spend many days with him in discussion. [This way he could see] if he could evade them with tricks and excuses, and if not, that he would return to his country… and it did not occur to Abraham that the king would take her as a wife.

There are times when the best response to a difficulty is stalling. It provides an opportunity to find new ways to understand and address a problem.

In contradistinction to Radak and Abarbanel, Ramban explains that having Sarah pose as his sister was an error in judgment, where he needlessly endangered his wife, and, because of his actions, his descendants eventually had to leave Israel for Egypt. We read,

רמב"ן בראשית פרק יב, ו: ודע כי אברהם אבינו חטא חטא גדול בשגגה ... מפני פחדו פן יהרגוהו, והיה לו לבטוח בשם שיציל אותו ואת אשתו ... כי יש בא-לקים כח לעזור ולהציל. ... ועל המעשה הזה נגזר על זרעו הגלות בארץ מצרים ביד פרעה.

Know that Abraham our father unintentionally committed a great sin … out of fear for his life. He should have trusted that God would save him and his wife … since G-d surely has the power to help and to save. …It was because of this deed that the exile in the land of Egypt at the hand of Pharaoh was decreed for his children.

Even with their great piety and courage, at times, our Avot and Imahot still faltered. As their descendants, the consequences of these flaws will somehow become manifest in our lives . As a result, it behooves us to continually refine ourselves to enhance the kedusha of Klal Yisrael as we repair the past. This idea is encapsulated in the phrase מעשה אבות סימן לבנים, the actions of the parents are a sign for the children. Ramban treats this idea as a thematic framework for understanding events in the Chumash and in Jewish history.

Throughout the book of Bereishit, Sarah actively partners with Avraham in bringing people closer to monotheism, and when offering Hagar to him as a concubine to continue Avraham's line. Sarah is vocal in her criticism of Avraham as is exemplified in her chastisement of Avraham’s reaction to Hagar

when she disrespected Sarah. The fact that she was an active and full partner in all of Avraham's endeavors, yet unusually silent with respect to posing as Avraham's sister, caused Rav Adin Steinsaltz to say,

המפתיע והמוזר כאן אינה במה שאברהם עושה (שהיא בעיה לעצמה) אלא עוד יותר בשתיקתה של שרה שהרי אין היא נוהגת בפסיביות גמורה.

What is surprising and strange here is not what Avraham does (which is a problem in itself) but even more so in Sarah's silence, for she is not one to act with complete passivity.

Rav Steinsaltz determines that her silence indicates that she collaborated with Avraham and agreed to this course of action, because it was the best possibility for them to both survive and continue their combined efforts in bringing monotheism to the world. It is also clear that if Sarah objected to what Avraham did, a strong response like her reproach about Hagar would have followed. (Nashim Bamikra, p.18 – 19) As we consider Sarah's role in these two incidents, our understanding of Avraham's actions takes on an added dimension.

If we were to assess Avraham's actions as solely his initiative, they could be seen as an effort to try something in a hopeless situation, or as a tragic mistake stemming from a misguided lack of faith. However, if the situation is perceived as a team effort made by a loving couple designed to salvage their monotheistic mission, Avraham's and Sarah's actions become a joint decision made by a couple united in their dedication to a noble cause.

שבת שלום,
Rabbi Grysman

Community Flyers

בס"ד

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