

SCHEDULE

שבת קודש

| | |
|---|---------|
| Mincha Erev Shabbos | 4:42 PM |
| Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush | 8:30 AM |
| Sof Zman K"ס- מ"א 8:39 < גר"א 9:15 | |
| Pirkei Avot Shiur ~Will resume after Pesach | |
| Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos | 4:35 PM |
| Maariv | 5:49 PM |

Sunday

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Shacharis | 8:30 AM |
| ~Shiur to resume next week | |
| Mincha / Maariv | 4:45 PM |

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Shacharis

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Monday, Thursday | 6:40 AM & 8:10 AM |
| Tues, Wed, Fri. | 6:45 AM & 8:10 AM |
| Dirshu Halacha Program (Mon-Fri) | 7:30 AM |
| Mincha (Mon-Thur) | 1:45 PM |
| Shiur Sefer Da Es Atzmecha (M-Th) | 9:30 PM |
| Maariv (Mon-Thur) | 9:45 PM |

Thursday Night Shiur by Rabbi Teichman after Maariv

SPONSORSHIPS

Kiddush

Mazel Tov to Gary Kasper on defending his PhD!

*Kiddush this week is sponsored by
Beverly and Harvey Kasper
in honor of their son the doctor*

Shalosh Seudos

Sponsored by

Mark & Rivka Wartzman

*With Hodaa to Hashem for all the kindness
he has showered upon them*

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פרשת וירא

כ' חשוון

אהל משה



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Issue #113

RABBI'S MESSAGE

The עבודה זרה of “Minimalism” in השם

This week we read of the first act of חסד, kindness, that was performed by the paradigm of חסד, אברהם אבינו. Until now אברהם displayed astounding devotion to his nephew, risking his life on behalf of a relative, but here in the portrayal of אברהם's extraordinary efforts in fulfilling the מצוה of מוצא אורחים, hospitality, to total strangers, lies the essence of his unique excellence in the מדה of חסד.

We would expect then that the first selfless חסד mentioned in the life of אברהם would contain the seeds of all חסדים. Strangely however, the very first benevolent gesture was seemingly deficient! Upon noticing the three “Arabs” he runs towards them and offers them, יקח נא מעט מים... Upon noticing the three “Arabs” he runs towards them and offers them, (בראשית יח,ד), *Let some water be brought...* רש"י points out; the implication was that he didn't physically fetch it himself, but rather asked of others to bring the water. It was because of this indirect involvement by אברהם that his children בני ישראל received the water during their sojourn in the desert only through the agency of משה rather than directly from the hand of Hashem, in contradistinction to the butter and milk that he personally brought, בני ישראל received the מן straight from the heavens. (בי"מ פו.)

In אהרן, משה, אבות, we beseech Hashem to provide rain in the merit of the תפלת גשם, the Prayer for Rain, that we recite on שמני עצרת, שמיני עצרת, the Prayer for Rain, that we recite on שבטים. In the stanza that refers to יצחק we say, ... *זכור הנולד בבשורת יקח נא מעט מים, ושחת להורו לשחטו לשפוך לב כמים...*, *Remember the one born with the tidings of, “Let some water be brought...”*, You told his father to slaughter him, to spill his blood like water...".

There are two glaring questions to be asked here. Firstly, why do we mention the kindness of אברהם in offering water to his guests in the context of the stanza that invokes the merit of יצחק? Secondly, wasn't he taken to task for not bringing the water himself, why conjure a problematic merit? It also seems to link the birth of יצחק and his ultimately being offered as a sacrifice to the “tiding” of “let some water be brought”. In what way is the “tiding” of his birth related to this tangential act of kindness?

The venerated 19th century Gaon and prolific author, HaRav Shlomo Kluger gives a fascinating reason why אברהם אבינו was “lax” in his proffering water to the wayfarers. Many commentaries point out that were משה רבינו to have entered ארץ ישראל then we never would have gone into exile. His presence in our land would have been so inspiring it would have elevated us to a level of service that would never necessitate going into גלות again. But there was a caveat. Were we to fail to live up to the high expectation, Hashem would be forced to vent his wrath, not on the עצים ואבנים, wood and stone of the מקדש, the Temple, but rather on us. אברהם in his prophetic vision foresaw the benefit of exile and the challenges we would face there as a much better alternative to the swift justice that would be meted out within the land were משה to have entered.

The consequence of אברהם's indirect kindness resulted in משה having to be the intermediary in procuring the water in the desert, ultimately leading to his mistake in hitting the rock in the second instance in מריבה, resulting in his being prevented from entering ארץ ישראל thus allowing for our being expelled from the land but nevertheless surviving in exile! The greatest חסד!

Taking this idea a step further perhaps we can suggest a resolution to our questions.

Surviving the vicissitudes of גלות would require an inner strength that would enable us to withstand the challenges of הסתר פנים, divine concealment, and be able to “sacrifice” ourselves in not succumbing to the forces that would seek to envelope us both physically and spiritually in the long and difficult exile. Thus the birth of יצחק, who would possess a self discipline that would be forged in the supreme נסיון, test, of the עקידה, instilling within the נשמה of בני ישראל a resolve to follow the will of Hashem in the face of doubt and difficulty, was the natural necessary sequence of this “tiding” of יקח נא מעט מים!

The water that אברהם אבינו gave to his guests was intended to be used to wash their feet before entering his abode. רש"י quotes the חז"ל that states that it was the practice of Arabs to venerate and worship the dust on their feet, it was this עבודה זרה, idolatry, that אברהם sought to avoid.

The מהר"ל explains that the “Arabs” understood that there was a spiritual entity that one must be subservient to. Each facet of the creation had a “power” that governed it. In the hierarchy of the physical world the lowest level is עפר, dust, with Man being the highest. The spiritual force that reigned over dust was then the first in the pecking order of divine powers immediately above man. It was to this minimum entity that they were willing to submit, not more. אברהם אבינו taught the world that we can each reach the highest level of self perfection and allegiance to Hashem. It was this that he desired to “wash away”, the עבודה זרה of “minimalism” in השם.

The legacy of the עקידה has been evidenced in the sacrifices our people have made over the generations both as a ציבור and more importantly as יחידים, as individuals, in achieving “maximum” levels of self perfection and closeness to Hashem. The courageous facing of daunting tests of faith with a strength and striving for excellence that echoes the greatness of אבינו יצחק, is the yardstick for how we must nobly live our lives!

באהבה,

צבי טייכמן

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FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING

