

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos & Candlelighting  4:39 PM

Daf Yomi 7:30 AM

Shacharis-Followed by Kiddush 8:30 AM

-Sof Zman K"Sh- 9:16 גר"א < 8:35 מ"א

Mincha 2:15 PM

Mincha - Followed by Shalosh Seudos 4:35 PM

Maariv - 5:47 PM

Avos U'Banim! Starts this week! 6:30 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday

Shacharis I 6:50 AM

Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman 7:30 AM

Shacharis II 8:30 AM

Mincha / Maariv 4:45 PM

Monday - Friday

Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman 5:45 AM

Shacharis:

Monday, Thursday 6:40 AM

Tues., Wed., Friday 6:45 AM

Mincha (Mon-Fri) 1:45 PM

MINCHA/MAARIV GONE SOUTH

Daf Yomi -Take II (Mon-Thurs.) 9:00 PM

Maariv (Mon.-Th) 9:45 PM

FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING



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Shul Contacts

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Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Chaim Meister (Sheni)- Gabbai@

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Issue# 309

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Get Emotional!

(בראשית כט לא) וירא ד' כי שנואה לאה ויפתח את רחמה (בראשית כט לא) *G-d saw that Leah was hated, so He opened her womb.*

This pregnancy heralded the birth of the Jewish nation. From this point onward a total of twelve sons would be born from whom would descend all subsequent generations of Jews for all of eternity.

It seems so anticlimactic that this great destiny would begin on so sour of a note. Did Leah only deserve a child because she was "nebach" a victim of resentment?

She names her child in commemoration of the solace she received by begetting a child in the face of her personal plight:

(שם שם לב) ...and she called his name Reuven, as she had declared, "Because G-d has discerned my humiliation, for now my husband will love me."

The Hebrew for ראוּבֵן is thus a contraction of this sentiment רֵא-וֹבֵן, *seen my humiliation,*

How strange Reuven must have felt as he grew up and realized that his very name alludes to the sad chapter of his mother's earlier shame, and that he was merely an instrument to enable his mother to recapture her husband's affection.

This aspect of overcoming her feelings of hatred is reiterated once again with her second child's birth:

(שם שם לג) ...and declared, "Because G-d has heard that I am hated, He has given me this one also." and she called his name Shimon.

שמעון contains the root שָׁמַע, *to hear,* emphasizing His hearing her anguish.

Here too the question begs: Is this any way to start this noble nation? So much negativity.

Additionally, the description of Leah's sentiments seem out of order. Doesn't one have to be first placated from "hated" before they might attain "love"?

Yet in her first expression of relief with the birth of Reuven, she speaks of her renewed love, *for now my husband will love me,* yet she first addresses the residual "hatred" later by the naming of Shimon, כי שמע ד' כי שנואה, *Because G-d has heard that I am hated?!*

Further complicating the matter is Rashi's quoting in the name of רבותי פירשו, *Our Sages who explained,* who claim that Reuven was given his name based on a prophetic vision of Leah's, contrasting between Leah's firstborn and her father-in-law's, Yitzchok's, firstborn, Esav. Leah exclaims:

"See the difference between my son and the son of my father-in-law."

Esav sold the birthright to Yaakov while Reuven never sold it to Yosef, nevertheless not only did Reuven never oppose the transfer he even sought to extract Yosef from the pit! (ברכות ו:)

ראובן in this vein is a contraction of the sentiment רֵא-וֹבֵן, *see the difference.*

Why does Rashi deem it necessary to quote this alternate reason, which differs totally from the Torah's clear explanation of the name?

Furthermore, often Rashi will quote that our Sages, "אמר", *said,* rather than, "פירשו", *explained.* It almost sounds as if Rashi is intimating here that somehow this is an interpretation of the reason given in the Torah. How might this be understood?

The greatest gift we can bestow on children is emotional stability. Inevitably through life each one of us will face many emotional challenges; love, hate, resentment, anger, disappointment and frustration. To simply numb ourselves totally from reacting in order to preserve the "calm" is fatal. G-d made us into emotional beings so that we may experience the full gamut of human emotion and master them. To cry is human, nay Divine. It was the constant tears of Leah that stemmed out of her fear in falling into the embrace of Esav that kept her from throwing in the towel. When we accept rejection without displaying frustration we teach our children to be apathetic. The talent lies in being in touch with our emotions, identifying them but never allowing it to determine our fate.

The house of Yaakov was no doubt was an island of serenity. It would have been perhaps easier for Leah to accept a diminished although ample relationship with her beloved Yaakov. She identified her frustrated attempts to win him over completely but never allowed herself to wallow in self-pity or disengagement.

G-d acknowledged her greatness, her ability to at the same time be in touch with her feelings but not permit them to defeat her. A child born into the arms of a mother so attuned and in control of her feelings will surely learn how to weather life and its challenges with success.

It wasn't merely reward for her "suffering" that G-d blessed her with children. Leah understood that in G-d's granting her children lay the highest affirmation of her worthiness and in her ability to raise the children that would enlighten the world with their character.

Yaakov wouldn't simply love her because she bore children to him. He would now begin to appreciate the value of her "emotional intelligence", fathoming the depth of her greatness and her unique ability to impart to their children the requisite tools for survival in a sometimes brutal and lonely world.

Perhaps this is the deeper meaning of G-d "opening her womb". The womb is called the רֶחֶם, rooted in the sentiment of love and mercy, because that protective embrace that begins in the womb and continues beyond represents her talent in imbuing a child with that ultimate gift, serenity.

The Torah reports how she first recovered her love of her husband. Yet it goes on to talk about the removal of hatred. How can that be, we asked.

Even when we love someone there can still exist emotional distance. *more שנואה* accurately means distance and rejection. We can love yet still be distanced. Leah sought to bridge that gap. One who is acutely aware of their feelings will pursue closeness and even deeper relationship with the one they love.

Reuven's capacity to be so sensitive and understanding even in the face of personal frustration, in reaching out to Yosef to whom he lost his birthright was only possible because he had a mother who mastered her emotions. If he wouldn't have been privy to that experience where else could he have discovered it?

Indeed, Rashi teaches us that the Sages interpreted the verse as two sides of the same coin.

The Torah attesting to Leah's sterling emotional intelligence found its ultimate expression in the persona of Reuven.

May we match up to the greatness of our Matriarch Leah, in permitting ourselves to emote healthily because with our mastering that talent we are assured our children will learn how to ride the seas of life happily.

באהבה,
צבי טייכמן

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