

PARSHAS CHAYEI SARA

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת חיי שרה

שבת מברכים ראש חודש כסלו תשפ"ד / November 14, 2023



ראש חודש כסליו-שבת מברכים
Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Rosh Chodesh Kislev is Like Yom Kippur.

It says in (ירמ' ל:ו) ובחודש התשיעי קראו צוך לפני" (ירמ' ל:ו) - which refers to Rosh Chodesh Kislev. Rashi says, "Rosh Chodesh Kislev is a day for מחילה - forgiveness, just like Yom Kippur. If a person doesn't repent and do teshuvah on Yom Kippur, Hashem waits until Rosh Chodesh Kislev for him to do teshuvah. The reason is that there are forty days from Hoshana Raba until Rosh Chodesh Kislev, equivalent to the forty days that Moshe Rabbeinu returned to heaven to receive the second luchos - tablets—the **Third Month of the Year**.

The Third Month of the Year

Kislev is the third month of the year, (counting from Tishrei) and the third of the shevatim - tribes is shevat Levi. The miracle of Chanukah happened through the Chashmonaim, Kohanim, from Shevat Levi.



כ"ה חשוון - Thursday, November 9
Yahrzeit of the Bilgoray Rav zt"l

כ"ק צרם הגה"ק רבי מרדכי מבילגוריא זי"ע ועכי"א

A BELOVED SON

The Bilgorai Rav zt"l was very beloved to his father, Maran Rebbe Yessocher Dov of Belz zt"l. As a youngster, it was evidence that he would grow up to be great at learning. Maran Rebbe Yissochor Dov used to place his carriage in his Seforim room while he learned there so the torah would be engrained in the child.

One morning Maran Reb Yissocher Dov went to Mikvah, and when he returned, he found young Motte'la in his room reciting Birchah HaTorah with the same chant as his father. When young Motte'la was done, his father entered the room, and Motte'la got scared, for he understood that his father stood outside and heard and would be upset that he mimicked his father. Maran Rebbe Yissocher Dov told him fondly: "Yes, Yes! You should always do things like I do. It will be good for you!"

The family wandered from place to place during WWI. Shuls were closed and each day brought more calamities, but young Motte'la would not be deterred. He would lock himself into a room and sit and learn diligently. His father, Maran Rebbe Yissocher Dov, once said, "My son Motte'las learning helps me to read the kvittlech!"

PARSHAS CHAYEI SARA

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

continued



A RABBINIC LEADER

After his wedding, the Bilgorai Rav zt"l stayed on living in Belz and was appointed to oversee various community affairs since he was an exceptional "Morah Horoah" (expert in Halacha), including Shechita, Kashrus, Eiruv and Mikvah and was trusted by his father.

Later on, he became Rav in Bilgorai and served the Bilgorai community loyally for thirteen years until the outbreak of WWII. He was beloved by all and had no opposition. He had a special connection with the young Bochorim and opened Yeshivas, as well as a Talmud Torah. He used to visit the Cheder regularly and address the girls' learning in Bais Yakov.

When WW II broke out, His holy brother, Maran Rebbe Aharon of Belz zt"l, commanded the Bilgorai Rav to flee with him. The Bilgorai Rav sent his family to his father-in-law in Brezna and joined his brother Rebbe Aharon in Premishlan. From then on, the two brothers never parted. They wandered together from city to city, country to country, evading the Nazis y"s until their miraculous escape and final arrival in Eretz Yisroel. The Bilgorai Rav didn't want to accept any rabbinic mantel in Eretz Yisroel yet served as his brother's right hand in reestablishing Yiddishkeit and Chassidus Belz post-war.

In 1948 Maran Rebbe Aharon zt"l; a sent his brother Rebbe Mordechai on a trip to Europe to strengthen the Yidden who merited to survive the Holocaust. The Bilgorai Rav's first stop was in France, where he stayed for two weeks in the home of Reb Moshe Aharon Shiff a"h in Paris.

Reb Moshe Aharon only had daughters and asked his revered guest to bless him with a son. The Bilgorai Rav blessed him to merit a son. A little more than a year later, a son was born on the day of the Bilgorai Rav's yahrzeit.

A NEW LINK TO THE BELZ CHAIN

In 1948, a son was born to the Bilgorai Rav, Maran Rebbe Yissocor Dov, the present Belzer Rebbe Shlita. The Bilgorai Rav merited the bracha from his grandfather that the Belzer chain would extend from him.

When the Bilgorai Rav returned to Eretz Yisroel, he said: "I'm visited many foreign countries but I have not found a more suitable country than Eretz Yisroel, Spiritually and also Materialistic!"

The Bilgorai Rav was very sick and suffered greatly. His brother Maran Rebbe Aharon of Belz frequently visited him in the hospital. Surgery was performed three days before he was niftar but was unsuccessful. His only son, 'Bern'yu,' was brought to him in his baby carriage. Reb Chaim Friedman a"h, who was present, saw the Bilgorai Rav intently gazing at his son. The Bilgorai Rav explained: "You must be wondering why I'm gazing so intently. 'A father looks at his child with different eyes!'"

Maran Rebbe Aharon zt"l paid his final visit to his brother on the day he was niftar. The Bilgorai rebbetzin and her young son, 'Bern'yu,' were also present. The Bilgorai Rav handed a kvittel to his brother: "I should merit to do complete teshuvah, and the Rebbetzin should merit to raise the child לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים!"

An hour later, after Maran Rebbe Aharon had returned home, he suddenly asked his gabbai Reb Shulem Foigel a"h, "Shulem, why is it so dark?" When someone came to share the sad news, Maran Rebbe Aharon said, "I know everything," and eulogized his brother saying: "He founded a Talmud Torah in Bilgorai where the children's faces shone! He had a special z'chus of having our father learn with him through the nights!"

Maran Rebbe Aharon zt"l escorted the niftar and shed copious tears - tears that were never before seen by Rebbe Aharon despite his copious

PARSHAS GHAYEI SARA

GHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

sufferings. Thousands escorted the Niftar to Teveria. When the escorts returned from Teveria, they handed the Bilgorai Rav's tallis to Maran Rebbe Aharon. He held the tallis in his hands and then gave it to Reb Mordchei Sprung a"h, saying: **"When Bern'yu (Maran The Belzer Rebbe shlita) will im yertzah Hashem grow up, you should give it to him and tell him that his father davened with this tallis!"**

Bilgoray Rav zt"l



Bilgoray Rav zt"l and his holy brother Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l



Belzer Rav Shlita lighting Yahrzeit Candle

Yitzchak was slaughtered and she died from sorrow. So it seems that Sarah would have lived longer if it weren't for the akeidah.

But the Medrash explains that she lived a complete life as the pasuk first tells us ויהיו חיי שרה - מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים שני חיי שרה - Sarah lived 127 years. She lived a full life. Not one day was missing from the lifespan that was destined for her. And then the pasuk continues ותמת שרה... and Sarah died.

Reb Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l had a brother who was a rav, and when he married, his wife's elderly parents lived with them in their home. It worked well for many years until one of the Aurbach children wasn't doing well. A wise mechanach told them their son wasn't receiving sufficient attention from his parents. The parents realized that it was time to place their elderly father in a nursing home. (The mother wasn't alive anymore at the time.) Four months later, the elderly father was niftar.

His daughter couldn't forgive herself for placing her elderly father in a nursing home. She was convinced that had they kept him in their home, he would have lived longer. She suffered from this guilty conscience for a long time.

One day, her husband showed her a picture of the Chazon Ish zt"l, and she fainted. When she was revived, she said, "I once saw my father in a dream flanked by two distinguished rabbanim, and my father told me, 'Don't agonize over my death because I died when it was time for me to go.'" I never knew who these two rabbanim were, but now I know that one of them was the Chazon Ish zt"l.

Circumstances can bring about death, but ultimately, it's Hashem's plan.

ותאמר גם לגמליך אשאב... (חיי שרה כד:יט)
She said, "I will draw water even for your camels..."

The Chassid Reb Moshe Midner zt"l was walking when a wagon stopped near him, and the wagon



EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
ESPECIALLY A GHASSIDISHE STORY...

ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים שני חיי שרה.
ותמת שרה... (חיי שרה כג:א)

Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years: the years of Sarah's life. And Sarah died...

According to one Medrash, it was Satan who informed Sarah about Akeidas Yitzchak, and she died from shock. Others say Sarah thought that

PARSHAS GHAYEI SARA

GHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

continued



EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
ESPECIALLY A GHASSIDISHE STORY...
continued...

driver asked Reb Moshe to come onto his wagon instead of walking. Reb Moshe preferred to walk, so he thanked the wagon driver and politely declined.

The wagon driver was upset and started begging Reb Moshe to come onto his wagon, saying he would take Reb Moshe directly to his destination. Seeing that the wagon driver was so persistent, Reb Moshe agreed to get onto the wagon. While traveling, Reb Moshe asked the wagon driver why he was so insistent that he join him for the ride. The wagon driver, a simple Yid, answered: "I heard a fascinating insight from my Rebbe the Rebbe Reb Moshe of Kavrin zt"l. If a day passes by for a person and he hasn't performed a chesed for another Jew, it is considered as if he didn't live that day! And since I didn't perform an act of chesed today, I was persistent in offering you a ride on my wagon so that I can do a favor for a Yid."

When Reb Moshe heard the wagon driver's reply, he thanked him profusely and said, "Thanks for sharing the beautiful words from the holy tzaddik!"

ולקחת אשה לבני ליצחק (חיי שרה כד:ד)
Take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak.

The Medrash states: A queen asked Reb Yosi ben Chalafta, "How long did it take Hashem to create the world?"

"Six days," Reb Yosi replied.

"And from then until now, what does Hashem do," continued asking the queen.

"He makes shidduchim."

This Midrash is well known, but there's another

version to it that Reb Yosi ben Chalafta told the queen that from the time of Creation, Hashem makes ladders. "He raises some and lowers others."

Both statements are technically the same. Hashem makes shidduchim, but to enable shidduchim to occur, Hashem sometimes needs to raise the poor and make them wealthy, or He needs to lower the rich and make them poor. Because only this way can the destined shidduch occur.

The Reshab, Rebbe Sholom Dovber Schneersohn zt"l, of Lubavitch ran a gemach, which lent money to people and he was very cautious to write down every transaction. But one day, the Reshab took out a Gemara from his bookcase, and within the pages found an envelope with money.

He immediately recalled an incident. Someone had returned a loan, and the Reshab was so engrossed in his studies that he accidentally left the money in the Gemara and forgot to mark down that the debt was repaid.

The Reshab immediately contacted the man who paid back the loan and said, "Now I realize that you said the truth. You did pay back the debt. I was wrong for suspecting you, and I apologize. Please forgive me."

The man replied, "Your apologies won't help me because my reputation was ruined. People said that I tried to steal money from the Gemach. One of my sons ran to Vilna because he was so embarrassed."

The Reshab replied, "I will tell everyone it was my mistake."

The man wasn't satisfied with that offer either. "They'll say that the Rav is just saying it to clear my name. However, I'll remain a suspect." The Reshab suggested, "Then we'll do the

PARSHAS GHAYEI SARA

GHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

continued



following. I have a daughter, and you have a son. We will do a shidduch together, and everyone will believe your innocence.”

And that’s what happened. Though it wasn’t conceivable that the renowned Reshab would make a shidduch with this person, since this shidduch was meant to be, Hashem arranged it so that it would happen.



THIS WEEK'S VORT

פרשת חיי שרה

ויהיו חיי שרה... (חיי שרה כג:א)
These were the years of Sarah's life...

Why does it say the word ויהיו and not the word “וחיתה” like it says in other places in the Torah when mentioning the death of someone “ויחי אדם”, etc.? The word ויהיו is a palindrome – reads the same in both directions to show that Sarah’s years went backward. As Rashi explains, when she was one hundred years, she was like a twenty-year-old, and when she was twenty years she was one hundred.

ויהיו חיי שרה... (חיי שרה כג:א)
These were the years of Sarah's life...

all of Sarah’s years – Rashi writes כולן שוין לטובה – were good

It doesn’t seem like they were all good. Sarah was barren for ninety years, and she and Avraham were poor for the first seventy-five years of their life. So, how does Rashi say that she had a good life? The answer is that Sarah considered her life good.

No matter what she went through, she found the good in every situation, and she was happy with her fate.

לספור לשרה ולבכתה... (חיי שרה כג:ב)
To eulogize Sarah and to bewail her...

The Medrash explains why the word ולבכתה has a small “כ” since Avraham had a daughter named ‘כָּכָה’ who died together with her mother, Sarah. The small “כ” alludes that without the “כ” the word reads “ולבתה” – and her daughter. Avraham eulogized Sarah with her daughter ‘בכל’.

וד' ברך את אברהם בכל (חיי שרה כד:א)
And Hashem blessed Avraham with everything.

A tzaddik never prays and asks only for himself. He asks for everyone. And when he gets blessed, he hopes that all Yidden get blessed along with him. The pasuk implies וד' ברך את אברהם – Hashem blessed Avraham together with כָּכָה – together with all Yidden. The blessings for the Yidden were considered as his bracha.

ותאמר גם לגמליך אשאב... (כד:יט)
I will draw even for your camels until they have finished drinking.

Rivkah gave Eliezer to drink water, and then she said גם לגמליך אשאב – that she would also give it to his camels. The pasuk teaches us that not only those who learn Torah are rewarded with everything good, but also those who אשאב גם לגמליך אשאב – do chesed are rewarded with everything good.