



Candle Lighting: 4:24

Parshas Chaya Sarah 5772

Vol. 8 Issue 5

By Rabbi Sruli Schwartz

Circle of Life

Marriage is probably the happiest occasion in life and death the saddest. These two concepts are the main themes in *Parshas Chayei Sarah*. The *parsha* begins with Sarah's death and burial and continues with Yitzchak's marriage. Why are these diametrically opposite ideas located in the same *parsha*, side by side?

The answer lies in the *posuk* that bridges the two portions together. "Now Avraham was old, coming with his days, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything" (*Bereishis* 24:1). The commentators explain that the words "coming with his days" mean that Avraham fulfilled his days by living every day to its fullest. Every day he accomplished and every day he grew closer to G-d. No matter what situation he found himself in, Avraham used it as an opportunity to grow spiritually. Whether he was involved in happy occasions, like marrying off his son, or in sad situations, like burying his beloved wife, Avraham realized that everything was a unique opportunity for growth. This *posuk*, which connects two seemingly contradictory themes, shows us that no matter what life brings us, there is always a way to connect with Hashem.

I read a story about the legendary Rabbi Akiva Eiger that underscores this point. When the controversy about the Chasidim evolved, people asked Rabbi Akiva Eiger his opinion on the movement. He replied, "I will cite you one *gemorah*. At the end of *Taanis*, the *gemorah* states that at the end of days, Hashem will gather the righteous and seat them in circle while G-d remains in the middle. All the righteous will then point with their fingers and proclaim 'Behold! This is our G-d, we hoped for Him and He saved us, let us exult, and be glad in His salvation.'" Rabbi Akiva Eiger continued, "Everyone in the circle is pointing to Hashem, but from a different angle. Nonetheless, everyone is pointing to the same G-d in middle of the circle. Each person has his way of coming close with Hashem, but ultimately, everyone is serving the same G-d."

Similarly, life consists of a wide variety of situations. In

each situation, we should come close to Hashem in the way offered by that specific occasion.

No Solicitors, Please!

"...and she replies, 'Drink and I will even water your camels,' she is the one You have chosen for your servant, for Yitzchok" (*Bereishis* 24:14).

Rashi comments that the girl who does this kindness is fitting for Yitzchok, because she will perform acts of kindness and is therefore worthy to enter the household of Avraham. What did Rivka do that was so incredible? Any decent person confronted with someone in need will try his best to fulfill the person's request, especially if it does not cost that much, like drawing water.

The *Sidduro Shel Shabbos* explains the difference between two types of kindness. Basic kindness is fulfilling the requests and needs of those that request something from you, and this level is called *rachamim*, or mercy. Someone asked you for a favor, and you act out of compassion to fulfill the person's request. This is the first step of kindness. However, there is a higher level of kindness called *chessed*. *Chessed* is to go out and seek things that need to be done- performing unsolicited kindness. This second element of *chessed* is where Avraham shined and Rivka had to prove her capability. Avraham not only gave room and board to the people who sought it from him, but he went out of his way to find and assist needy people. So much so, that he sat outside of his house in the heat of his day, three days after his *bris*, looking for someone he could help.

This aspect of *chessed* that Avraham personified is what Eliezer sought in Rivka. When someone asks a favor of a truly kind person, aside from fulfilling his request, the kind person thinks and looks to see what else he can do for the requester. Kind people try to go above the letter of the law. Eliezer asked Rivka for something to drink. Besides for fulfilling Eliezer's basic request, Rivka also offered to feed the camels, something that Eliezer did not ask for. This showed Eliezer that she too was the type to try to find needs and fulfill them- unsolicited. This is what Avraham's teachings were all about and Rivka was thus ready to be a member of such a household.

Riddle Corner– By the Kollel Rabbis

“Hashem has greatly blessed my master, and he prospered; He has given him flocks, cattle, silver, and gold, servants, and maidservants, camels and donkeys.” (Bereishis 24:35)

The order of the *pasuk* seems strange. Firstly, if Eliezer is describing Avraham’s wealth in ascending order then why

are animals the first to be mentioned? They are certainly not more precious than gold and silver. Plus, even if one would consider owning numerous flocks of sheep and cattle more precious than acquiring money and servants than why are camels and donkeys mentioned all the way at the end?

Kollel News

1. This Shabbos at the Kollel: Parshas Chayei Sara

Thursday, November 17:

8:15 p.m.: Rabbi Biberfeld’s Gemarah Yoma Shiur

9:00 - 10:00 p.m.:

Rabbi Frand’s Weekly Parsha Shiur

9:00-10:00 p.m.: Kollel Erev

10:00 p.m.: *Maariv*

Friday, November 18:

8:25-8:50 a.m.:

Rabbi Prupas’s Chumash Shiur

4:24 p.m.: Candle Lighting

4:42 p.m.: *Shkiya/Sunset*

Shabbos, November 19:

8:15 a.m.: Shacharis

Chaburas Chacham Lev

8:42/ 9:18 a.m.: Latest Krias Shema

4:02 p.m.: Mincha

4:42 p.m.: *Shkiya/Sunset*

5:37 p.m.: *Maariv*

5:54 p.m.: 72 Minutes

6:30 p.m.: Masmid Program

This week’s Masmid Program is sponsored by: Dr. and Dr. Nachum and Dvasha Stollman in memory of Chava Esther Fruma bas R’ Eliezer Yehudah a”h.

2. Philadelphia Community Kollel’s Eleventh Annual

Dinner Please join us in “Uniting Through Torah” at the Philadelphia Community Kollel’s Eleventh Annual Dinner to be held Sunday, January 8th, 2011 at the Lower Merion Synagogue. We feel privileged to honor a diverse array of community members who share the Kollel’s ideal of real commitment to learning and teaching Torah.

Guests of Honor

Dr. Leon and Tova

& Wertheimer

Chavrusa of the Year Award

Rabbi Yaakov Deutscher

Jonathan & Jed Zaslow

Please join us in paying tribute to our worthy honorees and to the Kollel’s impact on our community by attending the upcoming dinner and by placing an ad in the dinner journal. Contact the Kollel at 610-668-9557 for an Ad and RSVP blank. May your support of Torah learning give you the blessings of Torah.

3. Masmid Program 5772

You’re invited to a new season of the Arthur and Gail Morgen-

stern Motzaei Shabbos Boys’ Masmid Program 5772!

*Great Learning! - *Pizza! - *Prizes! - *Stories! - *Grand prize raffle to be drawn at the end of each session!

Check out the Masmid website for details:

<http://www.phillykollel.org/masmid-program.html>

4. Women’s Rosh Chodesh Kislev Shiur You are invited to join us in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev to hear **Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld** speak on the topic: **“Holding a Candle to the Sun”** *Unique insights to the lighting of the Menorah.* **Monday evening, November 28, 2011 at 8:15 p.m.** At the home of Mrs. Kineret Shakow: 409 Sycamore Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066.

5. Change of Date! The CCHF presents: Rise and Shine

The Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation presents an unforgettable evening: **RISE and SHINE** *Wisdom, Inspiration, and Tips for rising above the challenges of your family, home, and life.* **December 17, 2011: 8:15pm** at the Kollel FOR WOMEN ONLY

Community News

Bnos of Bala Cynwyd will *iy”H* meet this Shabbos, Parshas Chayei Sara, November 19th, from 2:45pm - 3:45pm at LMS. Craft Program beginning now for those who registered! Also, Bnos Pre-Chanukah Carnival on Dec. 4, \$3 for current members, \$10 for non-members - spin art, moonbounce, prizes and more! If your daughter attends Bnos, please pay your yearly \$36 membership. Contact Meira Friedman for more info (610-617-9529).

Torah Youth: 2:45 - 3:45 pm in the LMS Social Hall. If you would like to help sponsor a Shabbos or want more information contact Rabbi Ari Silver at 610-6686-6833 or SilverDolar@verizon.net

Mazel Tov To:

Dr. and Mrs. Leon and Tova Wertheimer on the marriage of Cookie and Yehoshua Richards!

Rabbi Dr. Chaim and Mrs. Andrea Diamond on the birth of a granddaughter, born to Ari and Sarah Fenton!

Condolences To:

Mr. and Mrs. Seth and Leah Yoffe on the passing of their mother and mother-in-law, Mrs. Sally Margulis

If you would like to receive Menucha Vesimcha by weekly email or to sponsor an issue of Menucha Vesimcha in someone’s honor / memory, please contact the editor at: menuchavesimcha@verizon.net

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