



שבת שולחן ניצוצות

Shabbat Table Sparks

Igniting Torah Learning at the Sabbath Table

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Insights & Questions From the Parashah

"Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught: Shabbat pleaded with the Holy One, Blessed be God saying: "Everyone else has a partner, but I have nothing!" G-d answered saying: "The community of Israel will be your partner." G-d continued: "And when thy stood before Sinai, G-d said to the Israelites: "Remember what I said to Shabbat, that the community of Israel is your partner, "Remember Shabbat and keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8) ".

Breishit Rabbah

Parashah Breishit Toldot 25:19-28:9

א *Abraham heeded My voice, and observed My restrictions, My commandments, My rules, and My instruction...Gen. 26:5* The Kehot Chumash comments, "The Talmud deduces from this verse that Abraham observed all the precepts of the Torah prior to their having been commanded at Mount Sinai...When we encourage people to perform commandments and they subsequently do so at our behest, they have fulfilled the commandment physically. However, because it was our influence that brought them to do so, it is considered as if we had performed these commandments spiritually. Thus, in addition to the physical observance of the commandments that we ourselves fulfill, we must also imitate Abraham's spiritual observance, by influencing others to perform them." ***What does this teach us about HaShem's desire to "preach the gospel"?***

ב *And gave them the same names that his father had given them...Gen. 26:18* The Chassidic Insights state: "The first time the word for "names" appears in this verse, in reference to Isaac's wells, it is spelled with the letter vav; the second time, in reference to Abraham's wells, it is spelled without the letter vav. The image of the vav represents a flow from a higher to a lower point. As we have seen, Abraham's inspiration did not permanently refine and transform his students. This fact is reflected in the missing vav his inspiration did not "descend" into their consciousness. In contrast, Isaac's inspiration did effect a transformation in his students, which is why the vav is present in his wells." ***So the man - the Akeidah - is associated with true transformation? Discuss how this reveals the work of Yeshua.***

Psalm of The Parashah

Psalm 36

For the music director, of David the servant of HASHEM. An oracle of Transgression-within my heart, to the wicked one: "There is no fear of G-d before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes, too much to notice his iniquity-or hate it. His mouth's words are iniquity and deceit. He has ceased to be wise and do good. Even on his bed he plans sin. He puts himself on a path that is no good, never refusing evil." Your love, HASHEM, is in the heavens, Your faithfulness up to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mountains of G-d. Your judgments are like the great deep. You preserve man and beast, HASHEM. How precious is Your love, O G-d! The children of men find refuge in the shadow of Your wings. They drink their fill from the abundance of Your House. You give them drink from the river of Your delights. For with You is the fountain of life in Your light we see light. Continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, and Your justice to the upright in heart. May the foot of pride never tread on me, nor the hand of the wicked drive me away. There the evil-doers lie fallen thrown down, not able to rise!



An Inspirational Story

The Suns and the Earth

“Rabbi Mikhal said: ‘In every generation there are great tzaddikim who shirk the work of salvation by devoting themselves to the Torah. As they fulfill the commandments, each of them ponders on what holy place his soul came from, and is intent on having it go home to that place after its earthly journey is accomplished, to rejoice in the light of heavenly wisdom. That is why to such a man the things of this earth are as nothing. And though he is saddened by the misery among men and the bitter exile of Israel, this is not enough to move his heart to dare in prayer what must be dared. All his great longing is directed solely to his homecoming, as it is written: ‘One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; and the earth abideth forever. The sun also riseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he ariseth.’ Suns rise and go down and let the misery on earth endure.”

Tales of the Hasidim pg. 155

“Now Yeshua was going around all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Matt. 9:35-36

A Spark Of Mussar

“Rabbi Akiva says: a

safeguarding

fence around wisdom is

silence.”

~ Pirkei Avot 3:13, contributed by Batyah Gage

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א *There was a famine in the land...Gen 26:1* Life is a test. The word test (*nisa*) is related to the word *nasa* (to raise up). Thus, as Rabbi Munk explains, the purpose of a test is to give the people of HaShem an opportunity to raise themselves up to a new level. **What test have you faced in life and how have they elevated you?**

א Chazal teach that Isaac was not able to leave the Holy Land because he was a sanctified offering to HaShem. He was the only Patriarch given this special halacha. **What does it mean to be sanctified? How can we be considered a sanctified offering to HaShem? How should we live as such an offering?**

א *Because Abraham obeyed My voice, and observed My safeguards, My commandments, My decrees, and My Torahs...Gen. 26:5* In this verse, HaShem was telling Isaac the source of his blessing. The faith of Abraham was *never* mentioned **What does this teach us about the value of obedience? Why didn't HaShem simply say that Abraham follow His Torah? Why all the added words?**

א *The voice is the voice of Jacob...the hands are the hands of Esau...Gen. 27:22* The Chassidic Insights say, “The Midrash reads the verse as follows: “When the voice of Jacob, the voice of the Jewish people, is heard praying and studying Torah in the synagogues and halls of Torah study, the hands of Esau cannot harm them.” This verse echoes the prophecy given to Rebecca, “When one rises, the other will fall.” When Jacob strengthens himself with Torah study and prayer, Esau falls” **What does this teach us about the nature of “spiritual warfare”? How can we best defeat the forces of darkness in our life?**



A Mikvah Moment

“The feminist sensitivity of our times presents is Jewish women with a complicated challenge: we need to simultaneously reassert our place in the Jewish community by increasing our knowledge...of Jewish laws that are practiced by women and break new ground by finding ways to talk about this observance in terms of the interests of women.”

Total Immersion p. 69