

PARSHA INSIGHTS

And Avrohom came to eulogize Sorah and to bewail her. (23, 2)

Avrohom came from Beer Sheva, where he had bound Yitzchok on an altar. Sorah's death is juxtaposed with the Binding of Yitzchok because through hearing the news of the Binding that her son was readied for slaughter and was nearly slaughtered, her soul flew from her and she died. (Rashi)

Avrohom had acted according to the command of Hashem. If so, why was he deserving that his wife should die on account of his performing a mitzva? Had Avrohom not bound Yitzchok, the Angel of Death would not have been able to frighten her with the fact that her son was bound and almost slaughtered – and she would not have died. How can a negative outcome emerge from the performance of a mitzva?

Sorah's lifetime was one hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years; the years of Sorah's life. (23, 1)

The Torah already told us that this is the calculation of Sorah's life. Why does the Torah repeat “these are the years of Sorah's life”?

Rav Yakov Kaminetsky zt'l answered that people have the following misconception. They think that had the Angel of Death not frightened Sorah, she would have lived a longer life. This is not true. The reason the Torah repeated “These are the years of Sorah's life” is to teach that Sorah was destined to live one hundred twenty-seven years – period. No matter whether the Angel of Death had frightened Sorah or not, her soul was only destined to be in this world for one hundred twenty-seven years.

Therefore, it was not the Binding of Yitzchok that caused Sorah to die – anyway – that was her pre-destined time to pass away. However, the Angel of Death used the Binding as the means with which to carry out the predestined event of her passing.

With this explanation, we can answer the above question. The performance of Hashem's command to bind Yitzchok on the mizbeyach did not kill Sorah – it was just the means with which to fulfill her pre-destined time of death. Tragedies do occur but one must always realize that the predestined lifespan of a person is nonnegotiable nor changeable. Although it is a quite painful and sad situation, one must overcome it and continue on with life. One should never believe that a tragedy cut the life of a Jew short.

...then Rivka arose with her maidens; they rode upon the camels and went (holach) after the man. (24, 61)

One who is riding on an animal has the halachic status of one who is walking with it. (Kidushin 33b)

The beginning of the posuk uses the term 'riding' and then uses the term 'walking' (holach). This is a hint to the halocho in Kidushin that states that one who is riding has the status of one who is walking. (Riveed HaZahav)

One is not permitted to travel beyond two thousand amos of the city limits on Shabbos. Yet, if one is traveling ten-tefachim (fist heights) above the ground, he is not bound by the techum limit. Therefore, if one is traveling on a donkey on Shabbos and is elevated above the ten-tefachim height, he can travel beyond the techum on Shabbos. (Bais Yosef Orach Chaim 266, 13)

Since one who is riding has the status of one who is walking, even if he is elevated on an animal above ten-tefachim, he is bound by the techum boundary. (Magen Avrohom Orach Chaim 266, 7)

What is the argument between the Bais Yosef and the Magen Avrohom?

The Chasam Sofer (6, 98) explains that there are two ways to understand the rule of “One who is riding on an animal is considered as if he is walking.” 1) Because he is moving, it is considered as if he is walking. 2) It is as if the rider is one entity with the animal and the walking of the animal is considered to be his walking.

The Bais Yosef maintains that since the person is moving above the ten-tefachim height his ‘walking’ is taking place in an area not bound by techum limitations. However, the Magen Avrohom understands that the ‘walking’ is occurring on the ground where the animal is walking, and one walking on the ground is bound by techum limitations. Therefore, one who is riding on an animal, even if he is elevated above ten-tefachim, he is bound by techum limitations.

TABLE TALK

PARSHA DILEMMA

And after that Avrohom buried Sorah his wife in the cave of Machpeila... which is in Chevron in the land of Canaan. (23, 19)

One is not permitted to bury the dead in the Arei Miklot (Cities of Refuge). (Makos 12a)

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MARA D'ASRA RABBI KATZ AND THE KOLLEL

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If one was buried in an Ir Miklot, even if at the time of burial, it was not an Ir Miklot, there is an obligation to move the body to a different city. (Minchas Chinuch 210, 20)

Chevron is an Ir Miklot. (Makos 12a)

Since Chevron was destined to be an Ir Miklot, how could Avrohom bury Sorah in the Meoras Hamachpeila, which is in Chevron? Furthermore, why isn't there an obligation to remove those buried in the Meoras Hamachpeila and bury them elsewhere?

WHO AM I ?

1. I am Purim related
2. In Shabbos I am judge favorably
3. Here I have three "Years"
4. I caused rulership

Last week's clues: I melt the wicked, I stop guests, I am for the future, I am without sunscreen.

Answer: The sun out of its encasement

Congratulations to: Noam Stern

WHO AM I ?

1. I was suspended, although not from school
2. I was a pourer
3. Cursed
4. I was huge

Last week's clues: I happened on Purim, I happened to cities, I happened to the letter Nun, Pick up your Esrog...

Answer: Upside down

Congratulations to: Noam Stern, Ehrlich Family

TORAH RIDDLE

When is Sorah Immeinu's yartzeit?

Last week's riddle and answer: Which mitzvo is greater than greeting Hashem?

Answer: Hachnosas Orchim (hosting guests)

Congratulations to: Noam Stern, Noach Ehrlich

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A GLIMPSE OF GREATNESS

...and it was after the death of Avrohom that Hashem blessed Yitzchok... (25, 11)

Hashem consoled him (Yitzchok) in the manner one consoles mourners. (Rashi)

When Rav Shmuel Salant zt'l comforted a mourner, he was known to be very particular about the following Halocho. He would not speak until the mourner began to speak (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 376, 1).

On one occasion, when Rav Shmuel went with his shamash to comfort a mourning family, he changed from his custom and began to speak before the mourner. After they left, the shamash asked him, "Rebbi, why did you change the Halocho and begin to speak before the mourner spoke?"

"Didn't you hear the mourner begin to speak?" Rav Shmuel answered, "Didn't you hear his moan? There is no greater 'speaking' than that. The trick is to be able to hear what people are saying even if they are not speaking."

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