

וַיֵּרָא

VaYerah

Genesis 18:1-22:24
Haftarah 2 Kings 1:4-37 (4:1-23)¹

Adonai appeared *vayerah* וַיֵּרָא to Avraham by the oaks of *Mamreh* as he sat at the entrance to the tent during the heat of the day. Genesis 18:1

We are back with *Avraham* who is sitting outside of his tent, recovering from the *Brit Milah* (*circumcision*). The tent, in the Biblical symbolism, represents the *Yeshiva* (*the root means to sit*), the learning center. *Avraham* (*father of a multitude*) is sitting, at the feet of his Master and meditates the words he received. We will see, all along the patriarch's life, that his attitude is prophetic and always shows us G-d's heart and His plan:

She had a sister called *Miryam* who also sat at the Lord's feet and heard what he had to say. Luke 10:39

He just changed his name and received the Covenant of the circumcision, a multitude of descendants should come out of him and possess this land and all nations will be blessed through him. He is invested with a great mission and a responsibility towards the nations, that of the elder, the first born, guardian of the familial heritage and responsible for the proclamation of the unique G-d on earth:

Then you are to tell Pharaoh: '*Adonai יהוה* says, Israel is my firstborn son. Exodus 4:22

The next part speaks of the end time Judgment with the destruction of Sodom by the fire and the Wedding of the Lamb with the angels, which is called in Judaism, "the banquet of the *Tzadikim* (*the Righteous ones*)"

¹ Sepharadic rite

In the announcement made to *Avraham* there is a double expression in Hebrew, *shuv ashuv* **שׁוּב אָשׁוּב** (I will come back again, using twice the word) and this is interpreted by Tradition as a coming back to life for *Yitzchak* when he was about to die on the altar and for us, the resurrection, through the image of the sacrifice of *Yitzchak*, image of the *Mashiach*.

Sarah will laugh when she hears the news and her son will be called "he will laugh", the same laugh of unbelief from the nations which will follow the Jewish people through his history. And today we can still face the same unbelief towards the Jewish people's calling.

The cry of Sodom has come to G-d's ears and the cup is full. Jewish tradition informs us that it was merely the sexual sins that brought G-d's judgment upon Sodom inhabitants but rather their lack of hospitality combined with fornication. It was forbidden to welcome or give food to any visitor. There is a story, in the *Talmud* that tells of a young girl (who would have been one of Lot's daughters) who secretly fed a beggar on a regular basis. The inhabitants of Sodom surprised of the duration of the man set a trap and caught the young girl; they tied her and covered her with honey and let her die from the wasps attacks. Her cries of agony came to the Heavens and filled the cup of anger.

Lot, following his uncle's intercession will be saved with part of his family from the wrath of the fire. Fire is reserved for the sexual sins, as we can see it in the book of Leviticus:

The daughter of a *Cohen* who **profanes herself by prostitution** profanes her father; she is to be put to **death by fire**. Leviticus 21:9

The fire will also be used for the final judgment:
But the beast was taken captive, and with it the false prophet who, in its presence, had done the miracles which he had used to deceive those who had received the mark of the beast and those who had worshipped his image. The beast and the false prophet were both thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. Revelation 19:20

The next event has a major role in G-d's plan of redemption. Lot took refuge in a cavern with his two daughters and brought a bottle of wine with him (when the two angels came to visit him he had offered

them a *mishteh*, banquet with wine). He got drunk and his daughters took the opportunity to lay with their father. As a result of this incestuous relationship, two sons were born. One was called *Moav*, literally "from the father or from my father" and the second *Ben Ami*, which means "son of my people".

One more time, we can see the divine redemption plan take form through the *Mashiach*: David, from who is issued the *Mashiach*, is also the fruit of a double incestuous relationship.

Ruth, the Moabite, a descendant of Lot married *Boaz*, from the tribe of *Yehuda*. And *Yehuda* also had an incestuous relationship with his daughter in law, *Tamar*. (Genesis 38:16)

Who was the One able to purify and pay the price for the sins if not the *Mashiach* Himself, carrying in His divine nature the holiness to consume and sanctify?

Next I saw heaven opened, and there before me was a white horse.

Sitting on it was the one called Faithful and True, and it is in righteousness that he passes judgment and goes to battle. His eyes were like a fiery flame, and on his head were many royal crowns. And he had a name written which no one knew but himself. He was wearing a robe that had been soaked in blood, and the name by which he is called is, "the word of God. The armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. And out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down nations - "He will rule them with a staff of iron." {#Ps 2:9} It is he who treads the winepress from which flows the wine of the furious rage of Adonai, God of heaven's armies. And on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords. Revelation 19:11-16 (see also Isaiah 33:23 and Deuteronomy 10:17)

At last, the sacrifice of *Yitzchak* tells us about the final picture. *Avraham* and his son, being unified in the same obedience, once more accomplished the will of G-d in a prophetic way, performing in a symbolic way the sacrifice fulfilled at Golgotha:

He said, Take your son, **your only son**, whom you love, *Yitzchak*.
Genesis 22:2

For God so loved the world that he gave **his only and unique Son**, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed. John 3:16

Avraham, the apostle of G-d who was told to leave his country of birth because of paganism, is now asked to sacrifice a human being, his own son. It was as if he was sacrificing his own life and the lives of all the future generations of Jews, with all the blessings and promises. This act occurred on the *Mount Moriah*, where the future Temple would be built. The binding of Yitzchak, called *Akedat Yitzchak*, would be capital for Jewish history. This act of love and unconditional obedience from *Avraham* sealed the vocation and the calling of Israel. Representing the future Jewish nation, *Avraham* acts as if he was miming G-d giving His Son to be sacrificed at the altar for the sins of men. The comparison with *Yeshua*'s sacrifice is moving:

- Unity between the son and the father:

Avraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on *Yitzchak* his son. Then he took in his hand the fire and the knife, and they both went on together. Genesis 22:6

Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, let not my will but yours be done. Luke 22:42

- Unconditional obedience:

He said, "Don't lay your hand on the boy! Don't do anything to him! For now I know that you are a man who fears God, because you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me. Genesis 22:12

Let your attitude toward one another be governed by your being in union with the Messiah *Yeshua*: Though he was in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God something to be possessed by force. On the contrary, he emptied himself, in that he took the form of a slave by becoming like human beings are. And when he appeared as a human being, he humbled himself still more by becoming obedient even to death – death on a stake as a criminal! Philippians 2:5-8

- A kind of resurrection for *Yitzchak* who had the knife ready to cut his throat and the full resurrection accomplished by *Yeshua*:

When I saw him, I fell down at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right hand upon me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last the Living One. I was dead, but look! –I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys to Death and Sheol. Revelation 1:17-18

But for the same reason that *Moshe* led the children of Israel to the Promise land but couldn't enter in, *Yitzchak* didn't accomplish the final sacrifice for the redemption of the sins of Mankind because this belongs to G-d Himself who would "see (or provide) for Himself and choose the Lamb":

Yitzchak spoke to *Avraham* his father: "My father?" He answered, "Here I am, my son." He said, "I see the fire and the wood, but **where is the lamb for a burnt offering?** *Veyayeh hasseh le'olah* Genesis 22:7

וְאֵיהֶּה הַשֶּׁה לְעֹלָה

A ram was offered instead of *Yitzchak*, another *achar* אַחַר, (in Hebrew, this word means behind or another) instead of him now and in the future sacrifices.

Avraham raised his eyes and looked, and there *behind or another*, אַחַר, him was a ram caught in the bushes by its horns. *Avraham* went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son. Genesis 22:13

The picture is complete; G-d unveils His future redemption plan: *Avraham* called the place *Adonai Yir'eh* (*Adonai* will see (to it), *Adonai* provides) – as it is said to this day, "On the mountain *Adonai* is seen." Genesis 22:14

וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם-הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא, יְהוָה יִרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר יֵאמַר הַיּוֹם, בְּהָר יְהוָה יִרְאֶה

Avraham returned with the fear of G-d, carrying back with him the vision of this "other" Lamb, the One who came to bring us the salvation and whom we wait the return to rejoice together at the Wedding Feast as *Tzadikim* (Righteous Ones):

Though mistreated, he was submissive-- he did not open his mouth.
Like a lamb led to be slaughtered, like a sheep silent before its shearers,
he did not open his mouth. Isaiah 53:7

Then I heard what sounded like the roar of a huge crowd, like the sound
of rushing waters, like loud peals of thunder, saying, "*Halleluyah! Adonai,*
God of heaven's armies, {#Am 3:13 4:13} has begun his reign! Let us
rejoice and be glad! Let us give him the glory! For the time has come for
the wedding of the Lamb, and his Bride has prepared herself - fine linen,
bright and clean has been given her to wear. ("Fine linen" means the
righteous deeds of God's people.) The angel said to me, "Write: 'How
blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the
Lamb!'" Then he added, "These are God's very words. Revelation 19:6-9

To end, let's notice that *Avraham* seems to be a type of the Father,
Yitzchak as the Son *Yaakov* could represent the *Ruach Hakodesh* (Holy
Spirit) through his transformation in *Yisra-El* (prince or fighter of G-d),
unified all together to be ONE. Israel's history and his vocation carry on:

To be G-d's witness on earth. Even in the *Shema Yisra-El* prayer we find
this calling:

"*Sh'ma, Yisra'el! ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad Hear, Yisra'el!*
ADONAI our God, ADONAI is one. Deuteronomy 6:4

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְהוָה אֶחָד. יְהוָה אֵלֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

The two slightly bigger letters in the original text form the word
ED, עַד which means witness!

The *Haftarah* on the prophet *Eliyahu* tells us also of the death and
resurrection, the main theme of the *Parasha* and of the divine plan:

Yeshua said to her, "**I AM** the Resurrection and the Life! Whoever puts
his trust in me will live, even if he dies... John 11:25



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