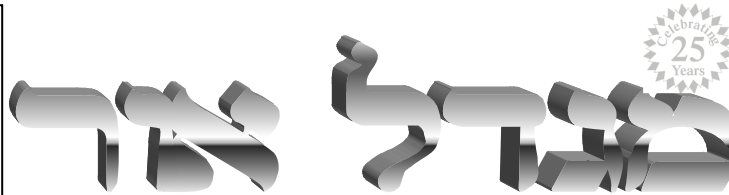


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This week's issue sponsored לע"נ מאכיש חנה ע"ה בת ר' מאיר ז"ל  
By The Grabie and Cohn Families  
*She had a song in her soul and she shared it with the world in perfect harmony.*  
Yahrtzeit 26 MarCheshvan

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:13 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:31 - שקיעה
- 8:35 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:18 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:06 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:31 - שקיעה
- 5:16\* - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:44 - צאת 72

\* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

**Now You Know!**

When Avraham wanted Eliezer to swear, he asked the servant to "put your hand under my thigh."

Today, we are familiar with the idea that when people swear, they place their hand on a holy book (like holding a Sefer Torah), as a means of strengthening the vow and saying they won't defile the sanctity of the book by being deceitful.

Avraham did a similar thing here. "Under my thigh" was a euphemism for Avraham's mila, the circumcision he had done at Hashem's command.

Because he utilized this part of his body for a mitzvah, it became sanctified. An amazing lesson comes out of this:

*We can infuse things with spirituality and holiness, and they remain that way.*

We learned previously that Avraham went back to pray where he had prayed before. This is because that spot had been used for a mitzvah became elevated and more conducive to future prayer.

If we serve Hashem with our bodies, speaking properly, running to mitzvos, and extending our hands to those who need help, we are cultivating holiness within ourselves.

When we use objects or places for mitzvos, they became sanctified and uplifted.

Avraham is teaching us to never underestimate the power we have to make the world, and ourselves, holier.

**Thought of the week:**  
Hashem measures effort and intent, not results.

**"ואם לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחריך ונקית שבועתי זאת רק את בני לא תשב שמה." (בראשית כד:)**

**"If the woman doesn't want to come with you, you will be free of this oath of mine, but do not return my son there." (Beraihsis 24:8)**

Avraham entrusted his servant Eliezer with a crucial mission – finding a wife for his son Yitzchak. He instructed Eliezer to go to the place Avraham came from, and find a wife for his son from there, from his people. To ensure compliance, he asked Eliezer to swear that he would do as Avraham had requested.

Eliezer was willing, but asked Avraham what to do if the people would not send their daughter with him back to Canaan. Should he bring Yitzchak to her? Avraham replied that in such a case, Eliezer would be free of his promise to marry off Yitzchak, but under no circumstances was he to bring Yitzchak out of Canaan.

Rashi tells us that in Eliezer's question was a veiled reference to Yitzchak marrying his own daughter. If the girl refused to return, Eliezer would be free of his oath, perhaps opening up that possibility. Avraham told him it was not possible, but if Avraham felt so strongly that this needed to happen, to the point of making Eliezer swear, why would he give Eliezer an opportunity to make the oath null and void? Why tell him how he could get out of it? Perhaps Eliezer would exploit that loophole for his own benefit!

And even if we were to suggest that Eliezer was too principled to do so, when he retold the story to Besuel and Lavan, he let them know how to end the shidduch as well! He told them that all they had to do was refuse, and Avraham's oath on Eliezer would go away. Why give them the opportunity to ruin the match?

We'd like to suggest Avraham knew this would not cause any harm. Who makes Shidduchim? Hashem! If Eliezer, or even Lavan, tried to manipulate things to prevent Yitzchak and Rivka from getting married, but Hashem had decreed the match, it would happen regardless. They would have their chance to be part of the marriage. If they opted to try to thwart it, they would merely lose the reward, but not be able to stop it.

What would happen if the girl wouldn't come with Eliezer? The Ramban writes, "Then Hashem will find the proper match for Yitzchak." The Ohr HaChaim adds that the part of the oath to marry off Yitzchak would go away, but the prohibition of returning Yitzchak to the land outside of Canaan remained, since that was in his power.

The lesson is that we are supposed to do what we can, but know that our efforts will not be able to change Hashem's plans. They will happen with or without us. We just get the chance to be part of them. We are judged for our choices, not our results.

Even Lavan understood the futility of human bechira against Hashem's will, as he later told Yaakov, "I have power to harm you, but Hashem has said [not to.]" Avraham, in telling Eliezer how to "get out" of the oath, was teaching us that Hashem is in control of everything, and if He wills it to be, no man can do anything about it.

*R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld z"l had a dream one night. He dreamed that if he bought a specific lottery number, it would win. When he awoke, he thought about buying the ticket.*

*"I have one lira to spend," he thought. "I can either use it to buy food for today, or I can buy the lottery ticket. Hashem gives me my parnasa every day. I must only use the money for today, and tomorrow He will provide again."*

*Sure enough, the number he dreamed of won. Someone asked him if he felt bad about not buying the ticket. "Of course not," he replied. "I did what the Torah tells me I was supposed to do with my money. I am happy I did the right thing and have no regrets."*