

The Tenth Test of Avraham

The Key To There Being A Bnei Yisrael

Hashem speaks to Avraham directly and clearly and says "Avraham, Avraham....." take up your son...for an *Olah* . And this is considered to be the most difficult test for him. Why?

After all of the tests that he went through, many without a direct directive from Hashem, he is being told to do something directly from the creator of the universe.

If you or I were being told to do something directly by the all-powerful, all knowing, creator of the universe, would we hesitate? No, not at all. We would jump to do as He tells us. No second thoughts. We would be in too much awe and fear to. So why is this considered to be such a big test?

Because -

- 1- Avraham's midah is that of chesed- a giver. Now he is being told to put that all aside, and to take something. It's the opposite of his nature.
- 2- The minhag then was to worship idols, and Chazal tell us that people weren't dumb to blindly worship a piece of stone, metal, wood or clay, when you worshiped the idol correctly, it granted you your wishes, and gave you whatever selfish thing your heart desired. One of the greatest ways of worshiping the idol would be to sacrifice your precious children to them. Avraham- the archetype of chesed, taught people that they should stop being so self-serving. He taught that they need to stop sacrificing their children to their G-ds. Now Avraham is being asked to do exactly what he has been going around, telling everyone not to do. Such an upending of all of his work.
- 3- He has the midah of chesed, in emulation of Hashem, Who created everything, for the sake of there being someone, 'besides himself', to do chesed to. Now Hashem himself is asking Avraham to take the very purpose for His going to 'all the trouble' of creating the entire universe – a human being- and sacrificing him to Hashem himself. Such an apparently huge contradiction in Hashem's behavior. Take away someone's life and give that life to Me.
- 4- Avraham was told by HaShem in *Bereishit*, 21,12 – For by Yitzchak will be called by you 'offspring'- Only Yitzchak is considered your successor . How can there be a continuation in the rebuilding of the *Kiseseh hameravah* – which was ruined by Adam *Harishon* in his eating from the *Eitz Hadaath*, if there is no Yitzchak??!!

So the answer is that actually, without Avraham performing in this greatest test, there could be no Bnei Yisrael.

Chazal tell us that *Yitzhak* could have no children the way he was born because he had the *nefesh* of a female. So we have to understand first why was he born that way?

So the answer starts with us remembering that Avraham was the ultimate Ba'all chesed- the ultimate giver.

When he is with Sarah, he showers her with huge currents of Chesed, as any Zachar who's capable should. So physically the child is a *zachar*, as *chazal* explain to us how the gender is decided, based on how you control yourself and give to your wife. But the problem was that as if to say, he overdid it on

the chesed, in that he is also giving and pouring out to his child as well. And what happens if you are constantly giving when you are conceiving the child? You end up having a *nekeivah*, a receiver.

So Avraham himself is the cause of the dichotomy of having *Yitzchak* who is a *Zachar* physically, but a *nekeivah* spiritually, and who therefore can't continue the line and have children.

So now Hashem gives Avraham the chance to correct the problem.

He tells Avraham to be the receiver/taker by TAKING Yitzchak's life.

And Yitzchak himself goes along with Avraham knowing that he will be the korban, as he said "we have the wood etc. but where is the animal sacrifice?" and Avraham doesn't answer directly and said "Hashem will show for Him .." . Yitzchak goes along freely.

When he gets to the mizbeach that is set up with the wood that he himself carried up, he HIMSELF directs Avraham to bind him, so that he doesn't move or fidget when Avraham comes with the knife to slaughter him, lest if he does fidget, there will be a *pigum* in the *shchitah* and all of this effort will have been wasted.

Yitzchak Himself is will to GIVE UP HIS LIFE TO AVRAHAM.

So now we have the ultimate GIVER –Avraham switching his role with the Man born as a RECEIVER.

So now Yitzchak's female *Nefesh* can go back up to *shamayim* and be replaced with a male *Nefesh*, and the line from Avraham can continue.

And the next midah in the order, that needed to be corrected by the descendants of Adam *Harishon* – that of *Rahamim* can come about.

One of Yaakov's *Midot* is that of *Racahamim*, which our Chachamim explain comes about with you mix Din- the *midah* of a *Nekeivah* with that of Chesed- the midah of a *Zachar*.

Yaakov becomes possible, both physically and spiritually, only when Avraham takes and Yitzchak gives his life!

And this is **more than hinted to** in the *Torah* (*Bereishith* 18, 19) when *HaShem* "explains" why he needs to tell Avraham about His plans to destroy the cities of Sodom etc. " Because I know him, that he will command his children..to do *Tzedakah*/Kindlines and *Mishpat*/Judgement , so that *HaShem* will bring on Avraham that which He spoke about him." Meaning that the *Chesed*/*Tzedakah*, put together with *Din*/*Mishpat*- will allow Avraham to get that which was promised to him by HaShem.

Furthermore, the ram/**AYIL** that Avraham brings instead of Yitzchak, hints to Avraham and Yitzchak *Le'Olam* .

And that is why on the *Rosh HaShanah*, when we ask for *Rachamim* from HaShem, we blow the *shofar* made, specifically, of a ram's horn, in order to "remind" HaShem of the *Akeidah*- when Avraham and Yitzchak, worked together to coalesce and make firm , the attribute of *Rachamim* in the world.

With every blow of the shofar, we are, as if, screaming and yelling for "*Racahamim, Rachamim!*" "

Actually, this insight is further bolstered by keeping in mind that only a male animal can be brought as a *Korban Olah*. When Yitzchak asks Avraham, " *Ayeh haSeh Le'Olah*/ where is the male lamb for the *Olah*

offering? “ . He is in essence asking a halachik question- does he, in fact, qualifies to be brought as a *Korban Olah*, being that he has the *neshamah* of a female. Avraham answers,” *HaShem Yireh lo HaSeh Le’Olah*/ HaShem will Direct (Yireh being related to the root of the word *HoRaah*/halachik direction, and Torah) for Him the male lamb for the *Olah*.

Avraham answers *Yitzchak*, ‘I already had this discussion with HaShem yesterday when he told me to bring my son as a *Korban Olah*. I couldn’t figure out which one of you actually qualified.

Both of you are halachikly questionable. With you, I poured out so much giving, that you got the *neshamah* of a female. With your brother *Yishmael*, I poured out so much giving, that he became a receiver/and taker – a thief!

[Chachamim teach us that before *HaShem* gave us the *Torah* he gave each nation a chance to grab it, but when they asked what is commands, he told each nation the *halachah* that goes against their *Midah*/character trait. He told *Yishmael* that it states you cannot steal. *Yishmael* declined because that was his essence- he was and is a thief. (Terrorism being a modality of stealing one’s peace of mind and body in order to attempt to take away that which belongs to the victim).]

‘That discussion ended with HaShem specifying that I should bring you, *Yitzhak*’, “said” Avraham.

This point would actually work in Avaraham’s and *Yitzvhak*’s favors, being that *Yitzchak*, it could be argued, was not qualified to be brought as a male *Olah*.

Baruch Hashem, Avraham passed the test that would have made anyone else in his shoes go crazy with all of the contradictions that the request from Hashem entailed. Baruch Hashem Avraham followed the dictates of his absolute *Emuna Behashem*. Without it, creation would have ceased to exist!