

October 19, 2013

VAYERA - And He Appeared

This week's *parasha* - *Vayera* - is chock full of material that would make an interesting *d'rash*. The first one is "Who Ate Lunch With Abraham," but since Asher Intrader has already written a book with that title, and since it has been discussed by several *chavarot*, I think I will try a different topic.

Other events that are included in the *parasha* are the destruction of Sodom, Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt, and the incestuous affair of Lot and his daughters. Next, Abraham goes to Gerar to visit King Abimelech, tells Abimelech that his Sarah is his sister which could have been very harmful to Abimelech and his subjects. Several years after the birth of Isaac, Sarah insists that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away, and then, HaShem insists that Abraham sacrifice his only remaining son. All good material.

Often times when writing a *d'rash*, it is not always easy to see a connection between the suggested *parashah*, *haftarah*, and *B'rit Chadasha* readings. However, this week, the three readings practically scream, "It's all about pregnant women!" And in all three readings, their pregnancies are miraculous.

We all know that Sarah was way past the age of bearing children, and Abraham was quite a bit over the hill, too. It would take a miracle for Sarah to become pregnant, but it happened. In the *haftarah* section, Elisha the prophet told a Shunammite woman that she would embrace a son in about a year. Since her husband was old, and I imagine she was no spring chick either, she said to Elisha, "Do not lie to me." In both the *parashah* and the *haftarah*, the couples are both old and without a son. In both readings, the same phrase is used. Literally it says "At the time of life you will embrace a son." And so, she did with the miraculous help from HaShem. Lastly, in the *B'rit Chadasha* reading, we find the by the power of *HaShem*, Miryam is pregnant with Yeshua. In all three cases, the women did not ask for a son, but they were blessed with the pain and joy of childbirth.

Bringing all of this together, my take is that HaShem can do anything He wants when He decides that the time is right. As the Creator, He can do that which suits His purposes and brings about His glory. It does not matter what we may have in mind nor what our circumstances may be. Our God is a mighty God who is in control of our lives and the lives of every living being. Baruch HaSham.

Genesis 18:9-10

Genesis 18:9-12

2 Kings 4:14-17

Luke 1:26-37

