

VAYERA (and he appeared)



יהוה appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre by Balage Balogh

Genesis 18:1 And יהוה appeared to him in the plains of Mamre (*vigor/lusty*): and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day (*healing from his circumcision*). C-MATS

Question: Who came to Abraham first? And יהוה appeared to him (in spirit) in the plains of Mamre. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה come to visit Abraham? It was the third day from his circumcision when the wound is most painful and he was the most weakened, and יהוה came and inquired about his welfare. When people carry out great deeds of obedience, יהוה shows himself to them as a token of tribute and honor. *Chumash*

Question: Do you think that visiting the sick actually helps them to recover? When a person isn't well, besides his physical weakness he can feel emotionally down, which can make it harder to recover. Knowing - and seeing - that people care enough to visit him can give him the emotional boost he needs to heal properly.

Question: If a man looks down upon himself, what is a constant sign to him of his covenant with יהוה? The mark of the circumcision should remind a man to walk in the ways of יהוה, so he can receive the blessings of the covenant. When lust overtakes a man, he should look at the mark of the circumcision and keep himself pure before יהוה. *Chumash*

Question: Why did Abraham long for guests? Abraham was never content with past accomplishments, but he sought to serve יהוה at all times. Abraham's manner of service was through being kind to people, so he could inspire them with his example to learn about and serve יהוה.

Question: Is 'the world is built on acts of kindness' correct? When people work together and try to help each other out, the world transforms into a kinder, happier place and everyone benefits.

Question: Is it good enough to do good deeds as the opportunity comes our way, or should we actively seek them out? It is certainly good to do the good deeds that avail themselves to us, but one who seeks them out becomes a spiritual superman or woman.

Spiritual Exercise: Try to come up with a creative good deed to do. Perhaps something you can lend, free-of-charge, to others.



Abraham and the Three Angels (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

Genesis 18:2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked and three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door and bowed (*worshiped*) himself toward the ground.
C-MATS

Question: Who were the three men who came to see Abraham? Did Yahusha come in human form to talk to Abraham? Scholars have always debated who the 3 men were speaking to Abram and who of the two went to Sodom and Gomorrah but both Abram and Lot bowed down and worshiped upon seeing these so-called Angels or men. An angel will never receive worship (**Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See you do it not: I am your fellow-servant, and of your brethren that have the testimony of Yahusha: worship Elohim: for the testimony of Yahusha is the spirit of prophecy.**) and the Hebrew word used for their Worship is Strong's #7812 *shachah* which is the strongest Hebrew word for worship there is. As this story unfolds it becomes very clear Abraham and Lot are speaking with **את** Yahusha. For no angel would receive worship and carry on a conversation with Abraham on whether or not He should destroy Sodom and Gomorrah without it being **את** Elohim. This same Hebrew word *Angel* that is used to describe the two men who went to Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 19:1 And there came two angels (messengers) to Sodom at evening; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed (worshiped) himself with his face toward the ground.**) is also used to describe the *Angel* who spoke to Moses from the burning bush who also received worship (**Exodus 3:2 And the Angel of יהוה appeared to him in a blaze of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked and the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed.**) C-MATS



Abraham and Sarah at Mamre – Felix Fossey (1826-1895)

Genesis 18:3 And Abraham said, My Adonai, if now **מָצָאתִי I found grace in your sight (after being obedient to circumcision), please do not leave your servant: 4 Let me get a little water and wash your feet and rest under the tree: 5 I will get a piece of bread to refresh you before you go on since you have come to your servant. And they said, Do as you have said. 6 And Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, Quickly get ready three measures of fine grain, knead *it and* make cakes in the hearth (oven). C-MATS**

Question: Why did Abraham call the meal he was about to prepare “a piece of bread”? He provided them with bread and water until he could make the extravagant meal he was about to serve. *Chumash*

Question: Why did Abraham ask Sarah to make the bread when Sarah had many servants? Abraham wanted Sarah herself to perform the commandment of serving the guests so she could receive a blessing also. Since it was Passover, Abraham wanted Sarah to guard carefully over the dough to make sure there was no leavening in it. This shows that Abraham and Sarah fulfilled the commandments before the Torah was given. *Chumash*



Giovanni Andrea de Ferrari, Abraham and the Three Angels, 1660-69, oil on canvas

Genesis 18:7 And Abraham ran to the herd and got a choice tender calf and gave *it* to a young man; and he hurried to dress **אתו** it (*him*). **8** And Abraham took butter, milk and the calf, which he had dressed and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree and they ate. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham run? This portrays Abraham's great desire to show hospitality. Though he had many servants eager to serve him, and he was old and weak from his circumcision, he ran personally to choose the animals for the meat. *Chumash*

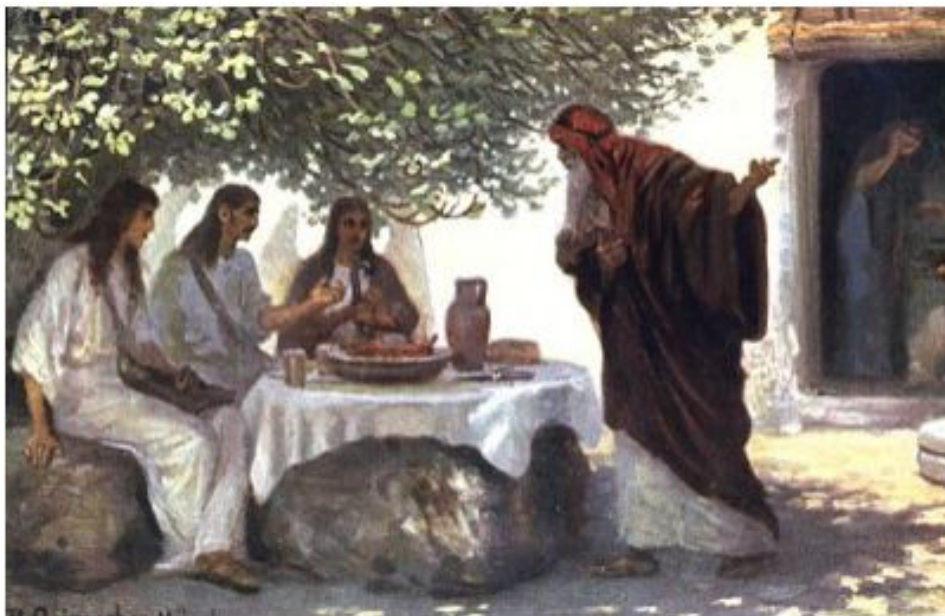
Question: Do angels eat? Angels do not eat in the human sense; they only appeared to eat. Angels, as spiritual beings, receive their sustenance from righteousness. *Chumash*

Question: What did Abraham serve the guests? Bread and butter, milk, and meat

Question: What reveals more about a person's true character: what he says or what he does? While words are important and do tell us something about a person, actions reveal much more. Often a person might say something to give a certain impression or because he feels that it is what he is 'supposed' to say. How a person actually behaves can really help you know how he feels inside. Many times a person's actions speak louder than their words. Impressive sounding promises and claims are worth very little if they are not backed up by deeds. In fact when it comes to doing good to others, a person should try to do even more for somebody than he committed himself to do. When Abraham invited some weary desert travelers to stay at his home as guests, he offered them a piece of bread, thinking they would not be embarrassed to accept such a small bite to eat. But then he and his wife Sarah prepared them a great feast! Like Abraham, we should try our best to say little and do much.

Question: Why do you think it is better to promise less and do more rather than simply promise what you really think you can do? One of the highest values is integrity. A big part of this is the ability to stand behind one's word. Often when we make big promises we may even hope or expect to fulfill them. Yet perhaps we have over-estimated or not considered a factor, which might prevent us from doing what we said. In such a case we may end up letting down and actually harming someone that we have intended to help. By being modest with our promises, and then trying our best to give as much as we can we will often exceed our commitments and leave others pleasantly surprised.

Spiritual Exercise: Promise only what you know you can do. Keep all your promises just as if you promised them to יהוה.



Angels visit Abraham

Genesis 18:9 And they said to him, Where *is* Sarah your wife? And Abraham said, She is in the tent. **10** And He said, I will certainly return to you at this time next year; and Sarah your wife *will have* a son. And Sarah heard *it in* the tent door which *was* behind him. **11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well advanced in age; and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean “well advanced in age”? Each day in a person's life carries with it its own challenge and mission. What is to be accomplished today cannot be postponed to tomorrow, because tomorrow has its own set of things to do. In the normal course of events, people go through life with their "spiritual calendars" marred by countless days and hours that were wasted or, even worse, misused. But the greatest people, such as Abraham and Sarah, come through life with all their days intact, all of them utilized properly and purposefully. They reached their old age with a rich harvest of days that truly mattered. *Chumash*

Spiritual Exercise: Are you procrastinating? Are you wasting countless days and hours that could be used properly and with purpose? Do not postpone until tomorrow what you can be doing today.



God and the Angels visit Abraham Arent de Gelder 1645 – 1727

Genesis 18:12 Therefore, Sarah laughed within herself saying, After I have become old, will I have pleasure *with my master (husband)* who is old also? C-MATS

Question: Why did Sarah question יהוה's ability to give her a child? Sarah looked at the natural and not the supernatural. She looked at her insides and said, “Is it possible that these insides will carry a child; that these breasts, which have dried up, will give forth milk?” Hasn't my menstrual cycles ceased to come? *Chumash*

Question: Did Abraham question יהוה or did he believe in יהוה? Abraham believed and it was counted to him as righteousness. *Chumash*



Sarah Laughs

Genesis 18:13 And יהוה said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh saying, Will I certainly bear a child since I am old? **14** Is anything too hard for מִיְהוָה? At the time appointed I will return to you, at this time next year and Sarah will have a son. C-MATS

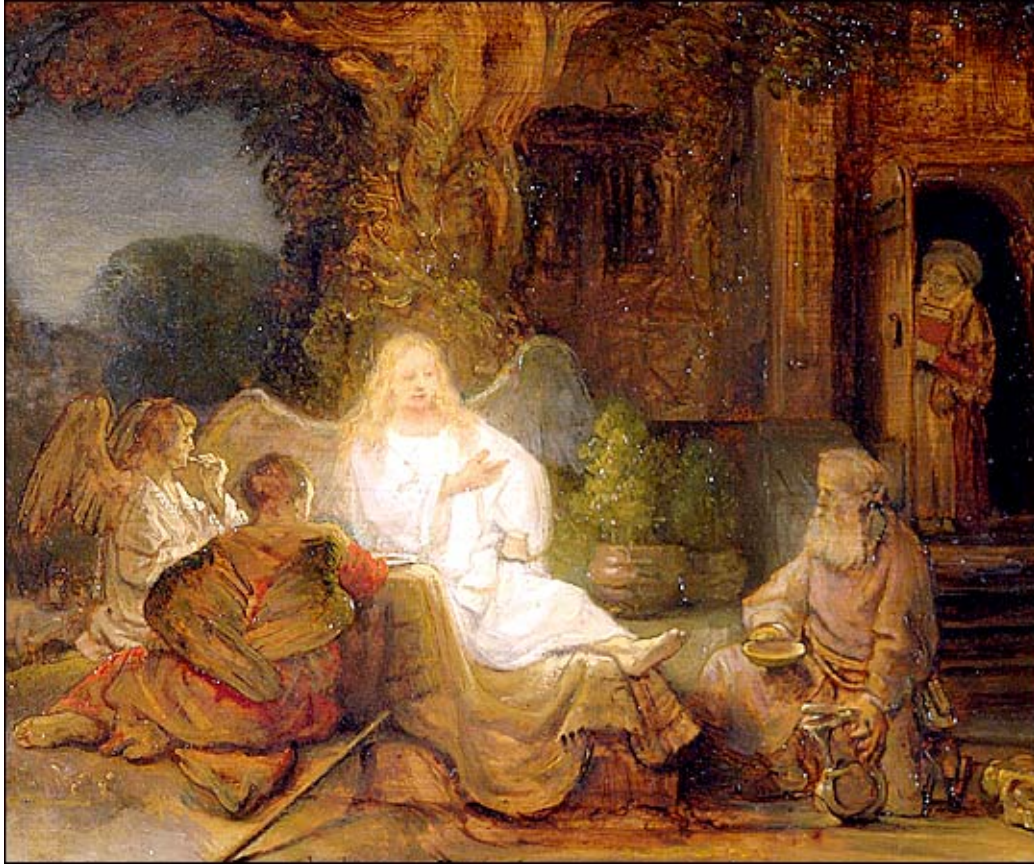
Question: Is anything too hard for יהוה? Is anything too hidden and separated and concealed from Him to prevent Him from doing His will? Should we ever doubt His promises?

Genesis 18:15 Then Sarah denied saying, I did not laugh because she was afraid. He said, Yes, you did laugh. **16** And the men rose up from there and went towards Sodom: and Abraham went with them along the way. **17** And וִיהוָה said, Will I hide from Abraham what I *am* doing? **18** Seeing that Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? C-MATS

Question: יהוה said, “Will I hide from Abraham what I *am* doing? יהוה wanted Abraham to have an opportunity to intercede on Sodom’s behalf. יהוה wanted Abraham to know that the opportunity for repentance is always open to sinners (Sforno); or He wanted Abraham to know that if there had been some righteous people in Sodom, even if the rest of the population was overwhelmingly wicked, the righteous would be spared (Alshich). *Chumash*

Genesis 18:19 For I know him, that he will command **אֶת** his children **וְאֶת** and his household after him and they will keep the way of יהוה, to do justice and judgment; that יהוה may bring upon Abraham **אֵת** that which He has spoken about him. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean, “For I know him”? For if one loves a person, he draws him near to himself and knows him and is familiar with him. *Chumash*



Abraham Serving the Three Angels, Jan Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn c. 1646

Question: Why does יהוה love Abraham? יהוה loved Abraham because of what he would teach (command) his children. One reveals his values by what he teaches his children. For one to preach morality but not repeat it over and over in one's own family reveals that the preaching is less than sincere. Whoever raises a righteous son is considered as though he does not die, because his righteousness lives on after him. *Chumash*

Question: How was the Israelite nation distinguished from other nations? They are compassionate, humble, and generous. We must practice the commandment of charity more than any other, because it is the characteristic of the true descendant of Abraham. *Chumash*

Spiritual Exercise: Are you practicing charity today? Are you giving to the poor? Are you helping the needy?



Genesis 18:20 And יהוה said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah *is* great and because their sin *is* very severe; 21 I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the reports which *have* come to Me; and if not, I will know. C-MATS

Question: Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah *is* great. Whose cry did יהוה hear from Sodom? יהוה heard the cry of the land from the innocent blood that had been shed upon it.

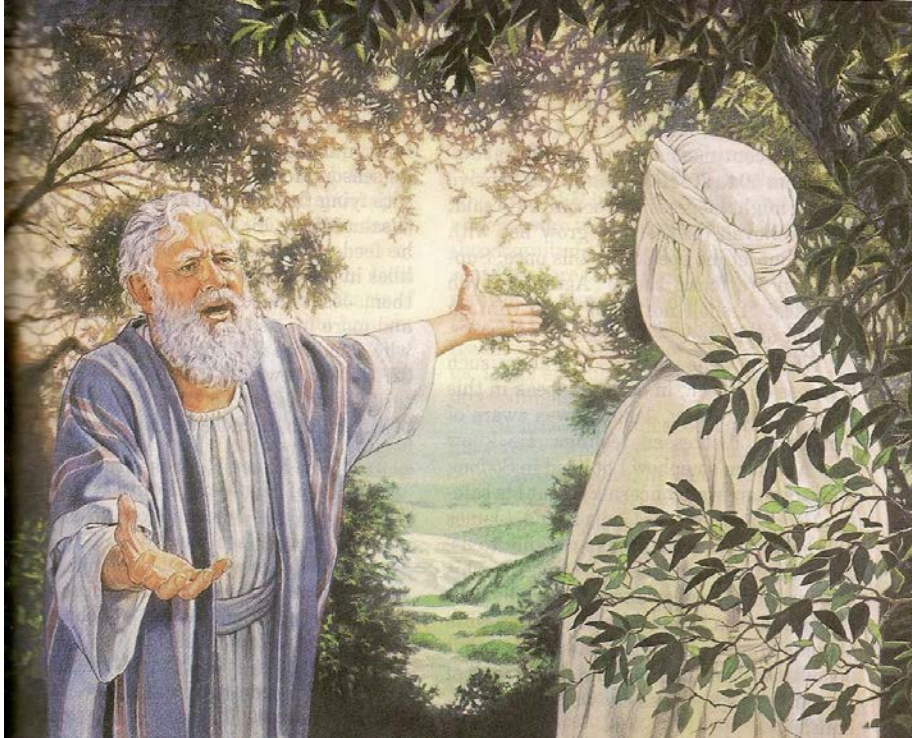


Question: What was the sin of Sodom? The cruelties of Sodom was selfishness, heartlessness, and sexual immorality (Genesis 19), but the root of their evil was greed. Sodom was a rich and fertile region, and it was a magnet for people seeking to make their fortune, as it was for Lot. But the Sodomites wanted to maintain their own prosperity and not be encumbered by a flood of poor immigrants. The wealthy and well-connected Lots of the world were welcome in Sodom, because they would give more to the economy than they would take. To discourage undesirable newcomers, however, the Sodomites institutionalized state cruelty, so that it became a crime to feed a starving person or offer alms to a beggar. Even the sexual perversion for which Sodom is notorious was employed to keep visitors away. Four times a year they would have festivals exchanging their wives and giving their virgin daughters to the men of the city to enjoy. The fate of Sodom was sealed because they did not help the poor and needy. The people of Sodom had fallen into such depravity that it was an act of mercy to remove them from the earth. *Chumash*

Genesis 18:22 And the men left there and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood still before יהוה. 23 And Abraham drew near *to Him* and said, Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city, will you destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing as this, to kill the righteous with the wicked: and *that* the righteous should be as the wicked that is far from you: won't the Judge of all the earth do what is right? 26 And יהוה said if I find in Sodom 50 righteous within the city, then I will spare all the places for their sakes. C-MATS

Question: What was Abraham interceding for? Abraham feared that present and future generations would lose faith in the fairness of יהוה's justice if they were to feel that יהוה had inflicted equal suffering on the righteous and the wicked. Abraham wanted יהוה to pour out mercy on the wicked for the sake of the righteous. Even the wicked inhabitants of Sodom engaged his sympathy, and he overflowed with sorrow over their impending doom. In response to his prayer, יהוה said that He would indeed exercise mercy (Ramban), but there was no one except for Lot who deserved to be saved. *Chumash*

Question: Who was considered righteous? The test of righteousness is that one is ready to act upon his convictions even in a hostile environment. Furthermore, the truly righteous person should be involved with his fellows, trying to influence them to improve. *Chumash*



Abraham intercedes for the righteous

Genesis 18:27 And Abraham answered and said, Certainly now I who am *but* dust and ashes have taken upon myself to speak to Adonai: **28** Suppose there were *only* five less than the forty-five righteous, will you destroy for lack of five אֶת־ all the cities? And He said, If I find forty-five there, I will not destroy *it*. **29** And Abraham spoke to Him again and said, Suppose there are forty found there. And He said, I will not do *it* for forties sake. **30** And Abraham said *to Him*, let Adonai not be angry and I will speak: Suppose there are thirty found there. And He said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there. **31** And Abraham said, I have taken upon myself to speak to Adonai again: Suppose there are twenty found there. And He said, I will not destroy *it* for twenties sake. **32** And Abraham said, Let Adonai not be angry and I will speak one more time: Suppose ten are found there. And He said, I will not destroy *it* for tens sake. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham not ask for less than ten to save the cities? Abraham said, “In the Generation of the Flood, there were eight: Noah and his sons, and their wives, but they did not save their generation. Why should I ask for less than ten righteous men?” *Chumash*

Question: Is it easy to see the good in others? It's easy to see what's good about some people. Their virtues just seem to shine. But sometimes it's not so easy, and it seems like we have to use a magnifying glass to find something good in a person. Our forefather, Abraham, found himself in such a situation when יהוה told him He wanted to destroy the evil city of Sodom. Although they were pretty bad, and Abraham could have easily kept quiet and went along - he didn't. He searched and searched to try to find some good quality even there, which might persuade יהוה to give them another chance. Like Abraham, when we are willing to seek out the hidden good qualities in others (and ourselves), we not only help to bring more good into the world, but we can help people to change for the better.

Question: How can someone benefit from searching for the good qualities within himself? A lot of times a person can get down on himself and focus on his weaknesses rather than his strengths. This is a time to make a special effort to try to find even one little good thing about himself, then another. Pretty soon he'll start to see his whole mood and outlook become much sunnier. This is a powerful tool to live a happier, more productive life.

Question: Can it be that some people just don't have any good qualities? Everyone has virtues. While it's true that in some people the good qualities may be hard to find, if you search enough eventually you'll discover something good within anyone. Each person is a creation of יהוה, and is made in יהוה's image. That alone gives each individual tremendous value. The more you look for virtues in others, the more you'll naturally like them.

Spiritual Exercise: Thank יהוה for the good qualities that you see within yourself. Ask יהוה to reveal to you more of your good qualities and also the good qualities of those around you.

Genesis 18:33 And יהוה went His way, as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place. C-MATS

Genesis 19:1 And there came two angels (*messengers*) to Sodom at evening; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed (*worshiped*) himself with his face toward the ground. C-MATS

Question: Why were two angels sent to observe the wickedness of Sodom? Doesn't יהוה know what goes on everywhere? The Torah says that judgment must be established by two or three witnesses. *Chumash*

Question: How do we know that Lot was still righteous? Lot showed that his years with Abraham had given him so much that, although Sodom had made a mark on him, he had remained righteous. Despite the mortal danger of being hospitable to visitors in the cruel environment of Sodom, Lot took the "men" into his home. He risked his safety, if not his life, to defend the angels. *Chumash*



Genesis 19:2 and Lot said, Please, my masters, come to your servant's house and stay all night and wash your feet and then rise up early and go on your way. And they said, No, we will stay in the street all night. C-MATS

Question: Why did the angels say "no" to Lot and "yes" to Abraham? It may be that they refused in order to test Lot, and give him the opportunity to prove that he was deserving of salvation, because he had still retained the moral teachings of Abraham. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:3 And Lot kept pressing them; and they came with him and entered his house; and he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread and they ate. C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot serve the angels unleavened bread? It was Passover. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:4 But before they went to sleep, the men of the city of Sodom surrounded the house, both old and young, all the people from every quarter. **5** And they called to Lot and said to him, Where are the men who came into your house tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them. **6** And Lot went outside the door to them and shut the door behind him. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean that, "we may know them"? It means homosexually or to be intimate with a man. "Sodomy" comes from the city of Sodom. *Chumash*

Question: Did anyone in the city of Sodom protest the evil that the men wanted to do to the angels? From one end of the city to the other, not one of them protested, because there was not even one righteous man among them. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:7 And he said, Please, brothers, do not *act* so wickedly. **8** I have two daughters who are virgins; please let me bring them out to you and you can do to them what is good in your eyes: only to these men do nothing; because they are guests in my house. **9** And they said, Stand back. And they said, This man came to live with us and already he *is* acting as a judge: now we will deal worse with you than with them. And they pressed hard upon Lot and tried to break the door. **10** But reached out the men **אֶתְּ** their hands and pulled **אֶתְּ** Lot into the house **וְאֶתְּ** and the door, shut. **11** **וְאֶתְּ** and the men that *were at* the door of the house they struck all with blindness, so that they couldn't find the door. C-MATS

Question: Who saves Lot? In Genesis 19:10 it is **אֶתְּ** that pulls Lot into the house and shuts the door. The fact, that Lot has a **אֶתְּ** in front of his name indicates he is a covenant child of **אֶתְּ יְהוָה**. C-MATS

Question: Did the men of Sodom repent after they were struck with blindness? Though stricken with blindness, they persisted in their evil plan still seeking the door and vainly trying to enter. *Chumash*

Question: Some equate the attitude of 'what's mine is mine - and what's yours is yours' with the wickedness of Sodom. How do you understand this idea? While on the surface, this attitude seems not charitable, but at least fair and practical, but in truth **יְהוָה** wants us all to be givers, and deliberately refusing to give of oneself and one's property is an extremely negative attitude.



The Angels strike down the men with blindness

Genesis 19:12 And the two men said to Lot, Do you have anyone else here besides *you*? Sons-in-law and your sons and your daughters and whomever you have in the city, bring *them* out of this place: **13** For will destroy We **את** *this* place, because is waxed (*known*) greatly *the* outcry against them *before* **את** *the* face of יהוה; and יהוה has sent us to destroy it. **14** And Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who married his daughters and said, Get up, get out of this place; for will destroy יהוה **את** *this* city. But Lot seemed to be joking *to* his sons-in-law. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean, “And Lot went out, and spoke to his sons in law”? Lot had two married daughters living in the city and he went to talk to their husbands. The daughters also had sons. *Chumash*

Question: How did Lot’s sons-in-law react to the news of coming destruction? They laughed and thought it was a joke. Mockery makes serious discussion impossible, because every attempt to prove one’s point is turned aside with a contemptuous joke. “One jest repulses a hundred rebukes.” *Chumash*

Genesis 19:15 And when the morning came, then the angels hurried Lot saying, Get up, take **את** *your* wife **את** *and* two *of* your daughters, that are here; or you will be consumed in the iniquity of the city. C-MATS

Question: Was Lot’s wife a covenant child? Lot’s wife is a covenant child of **את** and she is an example how covenant children can forfeit their lives if they disobey Elohim. All through the Tanakh the placement of the **את** (*mark*) of Yahusha in front of people’s names makes it clear who they belong to by covenant and make no mistake **את** children are representatives of **את** יהוה on earth. To harm them is to harm **את** יהוה and to bless them is to bless **את** יהוה Elohim (*plural*). C-MATS

Genesis 19:16 And while Lot lingered, the men grabbed his hand and אִשְׁתּוֹ *his wife's* hand and the hand of his two daughters; יְהוָה *was* being merciful to Lot: and they brought him out and set him outside the city. C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot linger in the city? Lot was trying to save his possessions. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:17 And it came to pass when they had brought them outside *of the city* that they said, Escape for your life; *do* not look behind you, don't stay in the plain *but* escape to the mountain, otherwise you *will* be consumed. C-MATS

Question: Why did the angel say, "escape for your life"? Save your life. Do not worry about your possessions. *Chumash*

Question: Where did the angels tell Lot to go? Flee to Abraham, who dwells on the mountain. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:18 And Lot said to them, Please no, my Adonai: **19** Certainly now your servant has found grace in your sight and you have magnified your mercy, which you have shown to me by saving אֶת־ *my* life; but I cannot escape to the mountain, otherwise *some evil will* overtake me and I *will* die. C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot fear to live next to Abraham? Lot said, "When I was among the people of Sodom, יְהוָה saw my deeds and the deeds of the people of the city, and I appeared righteous and worthy of being saved. But when I shall come alongside a righteous man, Abraham, I shall be considered a wicked man. And so did the woman of Zarephath say to Elijah (**I Kings 17:18** And she said to Elijah, What have I to do with you, O you man of Elohim? *Are* בָּאתָ *you* come to me to bring to remembrance אֶת־ *my* sin and to kill אֶת־ *my* son!): "Have you come to me to cause my sins to be remembered?" Before you came to me, יְהוָה would see my deeds and the deeds of my people, and I was a righteous woman among them, but since you have come to me, compared to your deeds, I am wicked. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:20 הֲאֵתָּה *This* little city *is* near: let me escape there; *is* it not a little one? And my soul will live. C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot want to go to Zoar? Zoar was recently settled. Therefore, its measure is not yet full. And how recently was it settled? The settlement of Zoar took place after the settlement of Sodom and its companions by one year. *Chumash*

Question: Why did Lot say the city was small? Lot said, "Doesn't it have few iniquities? Therefore, you can leave it alone. It is a small city with a small population. You do not have to care if you spare it and my soul can survive there." *Chumash*

Genesis 19:21 And he said to Lot, וַיִּשְׁמַעֲרִי *I* agree [*with*] you concerning this thing *that* I will not overthrow אֶת־ *this* city of which you have spoken. C-MATS

Question: What mercy did the angel give to Lot? Not only would Lot be saved, but יהוה would save the entire city for his sake. *Chumash*

Question: Why was Lot encouraged to flee for his life? Someone who is totally righteous -- an Abraham, for example -- may be saved by miracles even when everything around him is crashing down. Less righteous people may be granted an opportunity to save themselves from impending doom, but once the destruction begins, they will be caught up in the general carnage. Lot could be saved only before the upheaval began, but not from its midst. Furthermore, neither he nor the others in his entourage were entitled to witness the fate of the other Sodomites and still remain unscathed. Thus, when Lot's wife turned around to see the horrors that her fellows were suffering, she, too, died. *Chumash*

Question: What was the purpose of Lot's survival? Lot deserved to leave Sodom, whether in his own merit or Abraham's -- or because "two precious treasures" would descend from him: Ruth, the ancestress of King David, and Naamah the Ammonitess, who would marry King Solomon; these two righteous descendants of Lot would become the mothers of the Davidic dynasty and the King Messiah. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:22 Hurry escape there; for I cannot do anything until you arrive there. Therefore, the name of the city was called Zoar (*little*). **23** The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. C-MATS



Lot Flees with his daughters

Genesis 19:24 And יהוה rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire **מֵאֵת** from יהוה out of heaven. 25 And He overthrew **אֶת־** cities **וְאֶת** and all the plain **וְאֶת** and all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew on the ground. 26 But **אִשְׁתּוֹ** his wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt. C-MATS



Lot's wife became a pillar of salt

Question: Why did Lot's wife look back to Sodom? She longed to go back to Sodom and was not counted worthy of escaping destruction. *Chumash*



A geological formation overlooking the Dead Sea is called 'Lot's Wife'

Genesis 19:27 Abraham got up early in the morning to go there to the place where he stood **את** before יהוה. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham get up early to look towards Sodom? יהוה did not tell Abraham what the outcome would be, so he arose in the morning to see what had happened. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:28 And Abraham looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain and the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to pass, when destroyed Elohim **את** the cities of the plain, remembered Elohim **את** Abraham and sent **את** Lot out of the midst of the destruction, when He overthrew **את** the cities in which Lot lived. C-MATS



Abraham sees the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

Question: Who destroys the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? In Genesis 19:13-15 it is clear that both יהוה and **את** are in agreement that Sodom and Gomorrah will be destroyed because their sin has come up before both יהוה and **את** but Genesis 19:25 and 19:29 makes it clear that it is יהוה through **את** that actually destroys the cities. C-MATS

Question: What does the remembrance of Abraham have to do with Lot? יהוה remembered Abraham's affection for Lot and sent Lot out of the destruction. *Chumash*

2 Peter 2:4 For if Elohim spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to the abyss, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds; 9 יהוה knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before Adonai. C-MATS

Luke 17:26 **And as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. 27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; 29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. 30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. 31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. 35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 36 *Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.* 37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Master? And he said unto them, **Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together.** C-MATS**



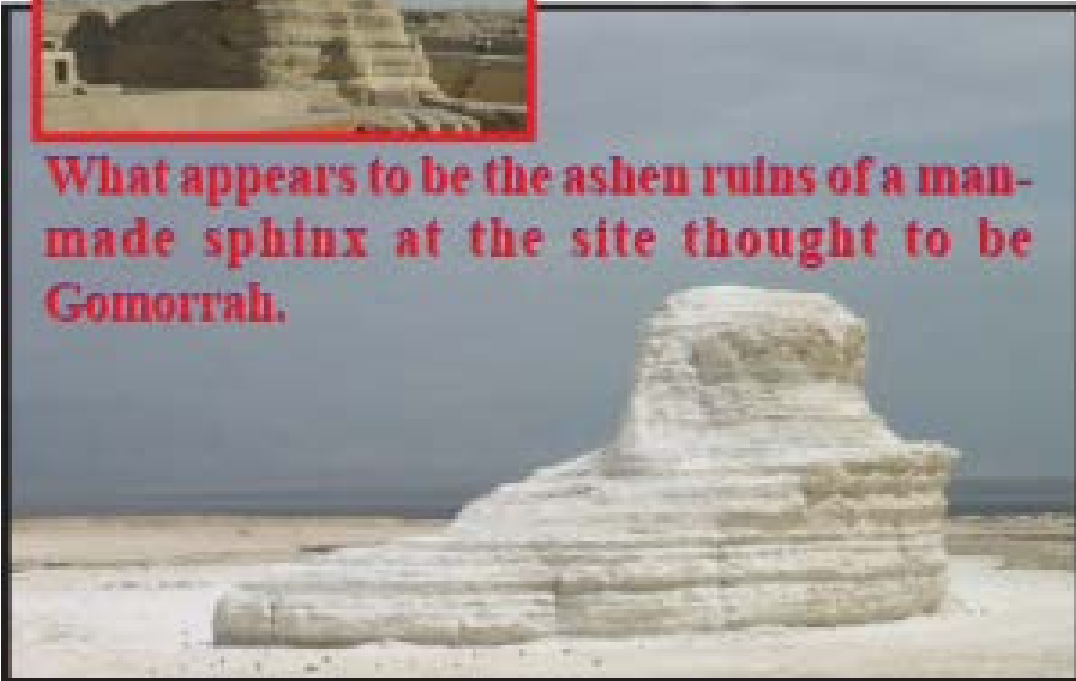
Unnatural shapes in nature. Is this the site of Gomorrah?

Question: Is there evidence that Sodom and Gomorrah ever existed? In the Dead Sea area archaeologists discovered a 23-inch thick wall around the city, along with numerous houses and a large temple. Outside the city were huge grave sites where thousands of skeletons were unearthed. This revealed that the city had been well populated during the early Bronze Age, about the time Abraham would have lived. Most intriguing was evidence that a massive fire had destroyed the city. It lay buried under a coating of ash several feet thick. A cemetery one kilometer outside the city contained charred remains of roofs, posts, and bricks turned red from heat. Dr. Bryant Wood, in describing these charred houses, stated that a fire began on the roofs of these buildings. Eventually the burning roof collapsed into the interior and spread inside the building. This was the case in every house they excavated. Such a massive fiery destruction would match the biblical account that the city was destroyed by fire that rained down from heaven.





What appears to be the ashen ruins of a man-made sphinx at the site thought to be Gomorrah.



Temples? at Gomorrah

THROUGHOUT SODOM AND GOMORRAH,
BRIMSTONE IS FOUND EMBEDDED IN THE GROUND



Genesis 19:30 And Lot left Zoar and lived in the mountain and his two daughters went with him; because he was afraid to live in Zoar: and he lived in a cave with his two daughters. C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot leave Zoar? It was near Sodom and he knew judgment was coming soon so he fled the destruction. *Chumash*

Genesis 19:31 And the firstborn *daughter* said to the younger, our father *is* old and *there is* no man on the earth to come in to us after the custom of all the earth: C-MATS

Question: Why did Lot's daughters want to preserve the seed of their father? Lot's daughters were modest, virgin, righteous women whose actions were nobly motivated. Thinking that the rest of the world had been destroyed in the upheaval of Sodom -- and that even Zoar had been spared only while they were there -- they felt that it was their responsibility to save the human race by bearing children, even though the only living male was their own father. The Torah does not label their actions as incestuous because they sincerely thought there was no other way to insure populating the world. Because their intentions were pure, they merited that among their descendants would be Ruth, ancestress of David, and Naamah, queen of Solomon and mother of Rehoboam, his successor and the next link in the Davidic chain (R' Bachya). *Chumash*

Genesis 19:32 Come, let us make drunk אֶת־ our father *with* wine and we will lie with him, that we may preserve *the* seed of our father. 33 And they made drunk אֶת־ their father *with* wine that night: and the firstborn went in and lay *with* אֶת־ her father; and Lot did not know when she laid down or when she got up. 34 And it came to pass on the next day, that the firstborn *daughter* said to the younger, I lay last night *with* אֶת־ my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go in and lie with him, that we may preserve *the* seed of our Father. 35 And they made drink also: in *the* night the אֶת־ father *with* wine: and the younger rose and lay with him; and he did not know when she laid down or when she got up. 36 So both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 And the firstborn gave birth *to* a son and called his name Moab (*son of my father*): he *is* the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 And the younger gave birth *to* a son and called his name Benammi (*son of my people*): he *is* the father of *the* Children of Ammon to this day. C-MATS



Lot and His Daughters

Question: What happened to Lot and his daughters? And after this Lot and his two daughters went away from there, and he dwelt on the other side of the Jordan with his two daughters and their sons, and the sons of Lot grew up, and they went and took themselves wives from the land of Canaan, and they begat children and they were fruitful and multiplied. Jasher 19

Genesis 20:1 And Abraham journeyed from there toward the south country and lived between Kodesh and Shur and lived in Gerar. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham move to another location? When he saw that the cities had been destroyed and that travelers had ceased to pass by, he migrated from there. He also wanted to distance himself from Lot, who had become notorious, because he had been intimate with his daughters. Abraham chose to live in a heavily populated area that could provide him the opportunity to spread his belief in יהוה. *Chumash*

Genesis 20:2 And Abraham said about Sarah אִשְׁתּוֹ *his wife*, She is my sister: Abimelech, king of Gerar, took אֶת Sarah into his house. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham ask Sarah to pretend to be his sister again? Abraham did not expect a repetition of the same experience because Abimelech was a righteous king and Philistia was a more law-abiding country than Egypt. *Chumash*

Question: If Abimelech was righteous, why did he take Sarah into his house? Abimelech planned to marry her. That her beauty was so great at the age of ninety that a king desired her may be because she had become youthful again so that she could become pregnant. Abimelech could have wished to marry into the blessed family of Abraham. *Chumash*



Sarah and king Abimelech

Genesis 20:3 But Elohim came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, *You are about to die, because the woman who you have taken is another man's wife.* **4** But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Adonai, will you kill a righteous nation? C-MATS

Question: How did יהוה stop Abimelech from touching Sarah? To prevent Abimelech from forcing Sarah to live with him, he was punished with impotence. Then Elohim came to Abimelech in a dream and said: "I did not let you touch Sarah or I would have to kill you". Abimelech said, "Even if I am righteous will You kill me? Do not destroy me having no reason. I asked all her servants, camel drivers, and donkey drivers. I asked them all, and they said: 'He is her brother.' I did not intend to sin. I am pure of sin, for I did not touch her." *Chumash*

Question: Do you think that Abimelech was righteous in יהוה's eyes? Good intentions do not purify a wrong deed. Its measure is whether it complies with יהוה's will. If it is wrong in יהוה's eyes, then good intentions do not give it merit. Lack of knowledge is itself sinful, for a person has the obligation to seek instruction. *Chumash*

Genesis 20:5 Didn't he say to me, she *is* my sister? And she even said, He *is* my brother: my heart has been pure and innocent are my hands, I have not done **את** *this*. 6 Elohim said to him in a dream, Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you did **את** *this* for I withheld also **אתך** *you* from sinning against Me: therefore, I did not let you touch her. 7 Now give back the man *his* **אשתו** *wife*; because he *is* a prophet and he will pray for you so you will live: and if you do not give her back, then you will die, **אתה** *you* and all who *belong to* you. C-MATS

Question: Was Abimelech concerned about giving Sarah back to Abraham? How would Abraham know that Abimelech had not touched Sarah? יהוה told Abimelech, "Abraham is a prophet and he knows that you did not touch her; therefore, he will pray for you." *Chumash*

Genesis 20:8 Therefore, Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told **את** all these things to them: and the men were exceedingly afraid. 9 Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, What have you done to us and how have **הטאתי** *I sinned* against you that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done things to me that ought not to be done. 10 Abimelech said to Abraham, Whatever could have caused you *to* have done **את** *a* thing such as this? 11 Abraham said, Because **אמרתי** *I said* that the **יראת** *fear of* Elohim was not in this place: and they will kill me for my wife's sake. 12 *She is* my sister; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 When Elohim caused **את** *me* to wander from my father's house, I said to her, Show me this kindness. Every place we go please say about me, he *is* my brother. 14 Abimelech took sheep, oxen, men servants and female servants and gave *them* to Abraham and gave him **את** Sarah **אשתו** *his wife*. C-MATS



Abimelech Rebukes Abraham

Question: Why did Abimelech give Abraham a gift? Abimelech knew that he had to appease both Abraham and Sarah, because he would not be healed unless Abraham prayed for him, and only Sarah could forgive him for the harm and humiliation he had caused her, so he gave them gifts, humbled himself, and assured them that they could feel secure in his land. *Chumash*

Genesis 20:15 Abimelech said, My land *is* before you: live wherever it pleases you to live. **16** And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given your brother a thousand *pieces of silver*: behold, he *is* to you a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* אַתָּה with you אַתָּה and with all other: thus she was reproved. C-MATS

Question: How did others know that Abimelech had not touched Sarah? Abimelech [said] in her honor in order to appease her, "Behold I have bestowed upon you this honor; I have given money to your brother, about whom you said, He is my brother. Your servants will cover their eyes, so that they will not degrade you, for had I returned you empty-handed, they could say, "After he violated her, he returned her." Now that I had to spend much money and to appease you, they will know that against my will I returned you, and through a miracle. *Chumash*

Genesis 20:17 So Abraham prayed to Elohim: and healed Elohim אַתָּה Abimelech אַתָּה and אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife and his female servants; and they gave birth to children. **18** Because יְהוָה had closed up all the wombs in the house of Abimelech on account of Sarah, Abraham's אִשְׁתּוֹ wife. C-MATS

Question: Why are these sections of the Torah linked next to each other? This teaches that "If someone prays for mercy on behalf of another when he himself needs that very same thing, he is answered first" (Bava Kamma 92a). For in the previous section it is said: Abraham prayed for Abimelech...and they were healed...and here it says and יְהוָה had already remembered Sarah -- implying that יְהוָה had filled Sarah's need before He healed Abimelech (Rashi). The key to conception is in יְהוָה's hand. He withheld conceiving a child from Abimelech and his servants and gave it to Sarah, as His wisdom dictated (R' Bachya). *Chumash*

Genesis 21:1 יְהוָה visited אַתָּה Sarah as he had said and וַיְהוָה did to Sarah as He had spoken. **2** Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time at which Elohim had spoken to אַתָּה him. C-MATS

Question: On what day did Sarah conceive? Rosh Hashanah "Head of the year". *Chumash*

Question: What does "a son in his old age" mean? This means that Isaac's facial features were like Abraham. Isaac was born after nine months, so that it should not be said that Isaac was conceived in Abimelech's household. *Chumash*

Genesis 21:3 And called Abraham אַתָּה the name of his son, Isaac, who was born to him by Sarah. **4** And circumcised Abraham אַתָּה Isaac, his son, when he was eight days old as Elohim had commanded אַתָּה him. **5** Abraham was 100 years old when was born to him אַתָּה Isaac his son. **6** Sarah said, Elohim has made me laugh, so all that hear about me will laugh with me. **7** She said, Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would have nursed children because I have bore him a son in his old age? C-MATS

Question: What does the name Isaac mean? Laughter.

Question: What showed the unbelievers that Sarah really did birth a child in her old age? Some of the people were saying, "Sarah did not give birth, but brought in a foundling from the street" until they saw Sarah nursing the child. *Chumash*

Genesis 21:8 The child grew and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast *the same day that he weaned אֶת־* Isaac. C-MATS

Question: Why was this called a "great feast"? Shem and Eber and all the great people of the land, and Abimelech king of the Philistines, and his servants, and Phichol, the captain of his host, came to eat and drink and rejoice at the feast which Abraham made upon the day of his son Isaac's being weaned. Also Terah, the father of Abraham, and Nahor his brother, came from Haran, they and all belonging to them, for they greatly rejoiced on hearing that a son had been born to Sarah. Terah and Nahor rejoiced with Abraham, and they remained with him many days in the land of the Philistines. Jasher 21

Genesis 21:9 And saw Sarah אֶת־ *the son (Ishmael) of Hagar the Egyptian who she had bore to Abraham, mocking Isaac. C-MATS*

Question: Why was Sarah concerned about Ishmael mocking Isaac? When Isaac was 5 years old, Ishmael came to Isaac and seated himself opposite to him, and he took the bow and drew it and put the arrow in it, and intended to slay Isaac. Sarah saw the act which Ishmael desired to do to her son Isaac, and it grieved her exceedingly on account of her son, and she sent for Abraham, and said to him, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son, for her son shall not be heir with my son, for thus did he seek to do unto him this day." Jasher 21

Question: Is there ever a time to use put-down humor to call others names? Everything in יהוה's world has its purpose, and this does too. For instance, the Torah teaches that it is a good thing to make fun of idolatry, to help people realize how pointless it is. But since this is something we rarely encounter, better we should focus on how to lift people up, and not put them down.

Question: Is "I'm only joking" ever a valid excuse to insult others? More pain probably gets dished out behind those three words than almost any others. An insult is an insult, and wrapping it within a joke doesn't make it hurt any less than wrapping a poison pill in a sugar coating.

Genesis 21:10 Therefore, she said to Abraham, Throw out אֶת־ *this bondwoman אֶת־* and her son, because the son of אֶת־ *this bondwoman will not be heir with my son, Isaac! 11 Abraham became very distressed about this matter of his son. C-MATS*

Question: Why did יהוה command Abraham to send away Ishmael? He was a menace to the spiritual health -- and perhaps the very life -- of Isaac. To signify Ishmael's gross nature, the Torah describes him as the son of Hagar, the Egyptian. Despite her many years in the home of Abraham and Sarah, Hagar remained an Egyptian princess, and Ishmael gravitated to her influence rather than Abraham's. That Abraham found it repugnant to send Ishmael away is clear from the narrative, but he was strong enough to do whatever he was commanded. *Chumash*

Genesis 21:12 Elohim said to Abraham, Don't let this distress you about the boy and **אִמְתְּךָ** *your maidservant*. All that Sarah said to you, listen to her voice, because in Isaac will your seed be named. C-MATS

Question: Why did **יהוה** say for Abraham to obey Sarah's voice? **יהוה** had revealed to Sarah what evils would befall Isaac if Ishmael would remain with them. Chumash

Genesis 21:13 And also *from* **אֵת** *the son of the bondwoman I will make a nation, because he is your seed also.* **14** Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread and a bottle of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder **וְאֵת** *and the child and sent her away:* and she left and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. C-MATS



Hagar and Ishmael are driven away

Question: Why didn't Abraham give Hagar silver and gold, but only water and bread? Abraham was angry that Ishmael had fallen into evil ways. Abraham did give them enough water for the trip, but they must have gotten lost in the desert due to the distress of Hagar and Ishmael being forced from their home. Chumash

Genesis 21:15 After the water was gone in the bottle, she put **אֵת** *the child under one of the shrubs.* **16** And she went about a bowshots distance from him and sat down and looked away from him, *because she said, Do not let me see the death of the child.* So she sat there and lifted up **אֵת** *her voice and wept.* C-MATS

Question: Why was Hagar's behavior disgraceful? Her behavior was disgraceful and indicative of her flawed character. Rather than comfort her child in his dying moments, she thought only of herself and the discomfort she would feel in the presence of his agony. Therefore, **יהוה** heard his cry, not hers. Her loud weeping was selfish and therefore valueless (R' Hirsch). Chumash

Genesis 21:17 And heard Elohim **את** the voice of the boy; and the Angel of Elohim called Hagar from heaven and said to her, What troubles you Hagar? Do not be afraid, because Elohim has heard the voice of the boy. C-MATS

Question: Why did Elohim hear the lad's voice and not Hagar's voice in the desert? The lad was from the seed of Abraham and was promised to become a great nation. Chumash



The Angel appears to Hagar

Genesis 21:18 Arise, pick up **את** the boy and hold him in *your* **את** hand; because I will make him a great nation. 19 And opened Elohim **את** her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled **את** the bottle *with* water and gave drink to **את** the boy. C-MATS

Question: Did יהוה perform a miracle for Hagar? The Torah does not say that a well was created miraculously; the verse implies that her eyes were opened and she saw a well that had been there all along. This teaches that יהוה always provides what we need, but we must be ready to open our eyes and see it (Midrash). Chumash

Genesis 21:20 And was Elohim *with* **את** the boy; and he grew and lived in the wilderness and became an archer. 21 And he lived in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother found him a wife from the land of Egypt. C-MATS

Question: Why did Hagar choose to live in Egypt? Hagar was still an Egyptian Princess. She went back to the place of her birth. Hagar took a wife for her son from Egypt, and her name was Meribah, and she bare four sons and two daughters, and Ishmael and his mother and his wife and children afterward went and returned to the wilderness and lived in tents. יהוה gave Ishmael flocks and herds and tents on account of Abraham his father, and the man increased in cattle. Jasher 21

Genesis 21:22 And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the chief captain of his host, spoke to Abraham saying, Elohim *is* with you in all that **אתה** you do. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abimelech say to Abraham, “Elohim is with you in all that you do”? Abimelech saw that Abraham had come out of the region of Sodom unscathed, and that he had fought with the kings and they fell into his hand, and that his wife was remembered with a child in his old age. Chumash



Abraham and Abimelech make a peace treaty

Genesis 21:23 Now swear to me here by Elohim *that* you will not deal falsely with me, or with my son, or with my grandson: *but* according to the kindness that I have treated you, you will do to me and to the land which you have lived *as a foreigner*. C-MATS

Question: Did the descendants of King Abimelech keep this peace agreement? The Philistines observed this oath until the days of Samson, when they began to attack Israel for the first time (Sotah 10a). Chumash

Genesis 21:24 And Abraham said, I will swear. **25** And reproved (*argued*) Abraham אֶת־ to Abimelech about a well of water, which Abimelech’s servants had violently taken away. **26** And Abimelech said, I do not know who has done *this* אֶת־ thing. Yet אַתָּה *you* did not tell me about it and this is the first I have heard *of it* today. **27** Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave *them* to Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. **28** And put Abraham אֶת־ seven ewe (*female*) lambs of the flock by themselves. **29** Abimelech said to Abraham, *what is the meaning of* these seven ewe lambs which you have separated from the others? **30** And he (*Abraham*) said, For *these* אֶת־ seven ewe lambs you are to accept from me as a witness that I have dug אֶת־ this אֶת־ well. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham give Abimelech the seven ewe lambs? This gift was a witness to everyone that Abraham did dig the well. Chumash

Genesis 21:31 Therefore, Abraham called that place Beer-sheba (*well of seven*), because there they swore to each other. **32** So they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech and Phichol, the chief captain of his host, got up and they returned to the land of the Philistines. **33** Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba and he called there on the name of יהוה, the everlasting Elohim. **34** Abraham lived in the Philistines land many days. C-MATS

Question: Why does it say “many days”? This means Abraham lived more days in the land of the Philistines than those in Hebron. In Hebron he spent 25 years, and here he spent 26 years.

Question: Why did Abraham **plant a grove in Beer-sheba**? Abraham planted a large grove in Beersheba, and he made to it four gates facing the four sides of the earth (north, south, east, west), and he planted a vineyard in it, so that if a traveler came to Abraham he entered any gate which was in his road, and remained there and ate and drank and satisfied himself and then departed. For the house of Abraham was always open to the sons of men that passed and passed by again, who came daily to eat and drink in the house of Abraham. And any man who had hunger and came to Abraham's house, Abraham would give him bread that he might eat and drink and be satisfied, and any one that came naked to his house he would clothe with garments as he might choose, and give him silver and gold and make known to him יהוה who had created him in the earth; this did Abraham all his life. Jasher 22

Genesis 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that Elohim did test את־ Abraham and said to him, Abraham: and Abraham said, Here I am. C-MATS

Question: Why did Elohim test את־ Abraham? A potter does not examine defective vessels, because he cannot give them a single blow without breaking them. What then does he examine? Only the sound vessels, for he will not break them even with many blows. יהוה does not test the wicked but only the righteous. Chumash

Question: Why does the Torah use the word “test”? The other trials were carried to completion. Abraham actually left his homeland, sent away Ishmael, and so on -- but this one remained nothing more than a test, because יהוה did not permit Abraham to slaughter Isaac (Abarbanel).

Question: Some have said 'Life is nothing but tests.' What do you think this means? The very reason for our existence is to serve יהוה no matter how difficult the circumstances. יהוה gave us life and put us in the world to grow spiritually. This growth comes when we freely choose to do, say and even think the right thing. Therefore, we are constantly placed in situations where we can make those choices.

Question: Did יהוה ask Abraham to give up what he loved most for Him? Will you be asked to give up what you value most? Abraham gave up his son that he loved for יהוה and Isaac was given back to him. You may have to give up what you value most for יהוה, and then it will be given back to you.

Question: What does testing produce? **My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James 1:2 C-MATS**

Question: What were Abraham's 10 Trials?

1. Abraham hid underground for 13 years from King Nimrod, who wanted to kill him.
2. Nimrod flung Abraham into a burning furnace.
3. Abraham was commanded to leave this family and homeland
4. Almost as soon as he arrived in Canaan, he was forced to leave to escape a famine.
5. Pharaoh's officials kidnapped Sarah.
6. The kings captured Lot, and Abraham was forced to go to war to rescue him
7. His marriage to Hagar after having despaired that Sarah would never give birth.
8. At an advanced age, he was commanded to circumcise himself and his son.
9. He was commanded to drive away Ishmael and Hagar.
10. He was commanded to sacrifice Isaac. *Chumash*

Genesis 22:2 And He (*Elohim*) said, Take now, **את your son, **את** your only son whom **אתה** you love **את** Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah (*chosen by Yah*); and offer Isaac there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you. C-MATS**

Question: Was this a test for Isaac also? Since Abraham was 137 and Isaac was 37, there was no way Abraham could force Isaac to go. Rather, he was to take him by persuasion to do the will of יהוה (*Zohar*). *Chumash*

Question: Where did Abraham take Isaac to be sacrificed? Jerusalem, on the place where His Temple would be built, and so in 2 Chronicles 3:1: **“Then Solomon began to build **את** House of יהוה at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah”**. *Chumash*

Question: Why does יהוה not tell Abraham which mountain to go to in the beginning? יהוה makes the righteous wonder (wait), and only afterwards discloses to them His intentions, and all this is in order to increase their reward. *Chumash*

Question: What did Abraham tell Sarah about his trip with Isaac? Abraham told Sarah, “My son Isaac is grown up and he has not for some time studied the service of יהוה, now tomorrow I will go and bring him to Shem, and Eber his son, and there he will learn the ways of יהוה. Sarah agreed but she greatly loved Isaac. Sarah wept bitterly the whole night on account of Isaac. In the morning Sarah selected a very fine and beautiful garment from those garments which she had in the house, which Abimelech had given to her. She dressed Isaac and put a turban upon his head, and she enclosed a precious stone in the top of the turban, and she gave them provision for the road. Sarah went out with them, and she accompanied them upon the road to see them off, and they said to her, “Return to the tent”. When Sarah heard the words of her son Isaac she wept bitterly, and Abraham her husband wept with her, and their son wept with them a great weeping; also those who went with them wept greatly. Sarah caught hold of her son Isaac, and she held him in her arms, and she embraced him and continued to weep with him, and Sarah said, “Who knows if after this day I shall ever see thee again?” *Jashar 23*

Genesis 22:3 Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled **את** his donkey and took **את** two of his young men **with him** **ואת** and Isaac his son and cut the wood for the burnt (sin) offering and rose up and went to the place about which Elohim had told him. C-MATS

Question: How quickly did Abraham obey יהוה's command? Abraham hastened to perform the commandment, because he rose up early in the morning. *Chumash*

Genesis 22:4 Then on the third day lifted up Abraham **את** his eyes and saw **את** the place afar off. C-MATS

Question: Why did יהוה delay from showing the mountain to Abraham immediately? יהוה tested his faith to believe in Him. *Chumash*

Genesis 22:5 Abraham said to his young men, Stay here with the donkey; and I and the boy will go over there and worship and come back to you again. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham say that they both would return? Abraham prophesied that they would both return. Abraham knew that יהוה would fulfill his promise through Isaac. *Chumash*



Isaac carries the wood for his sacrifice

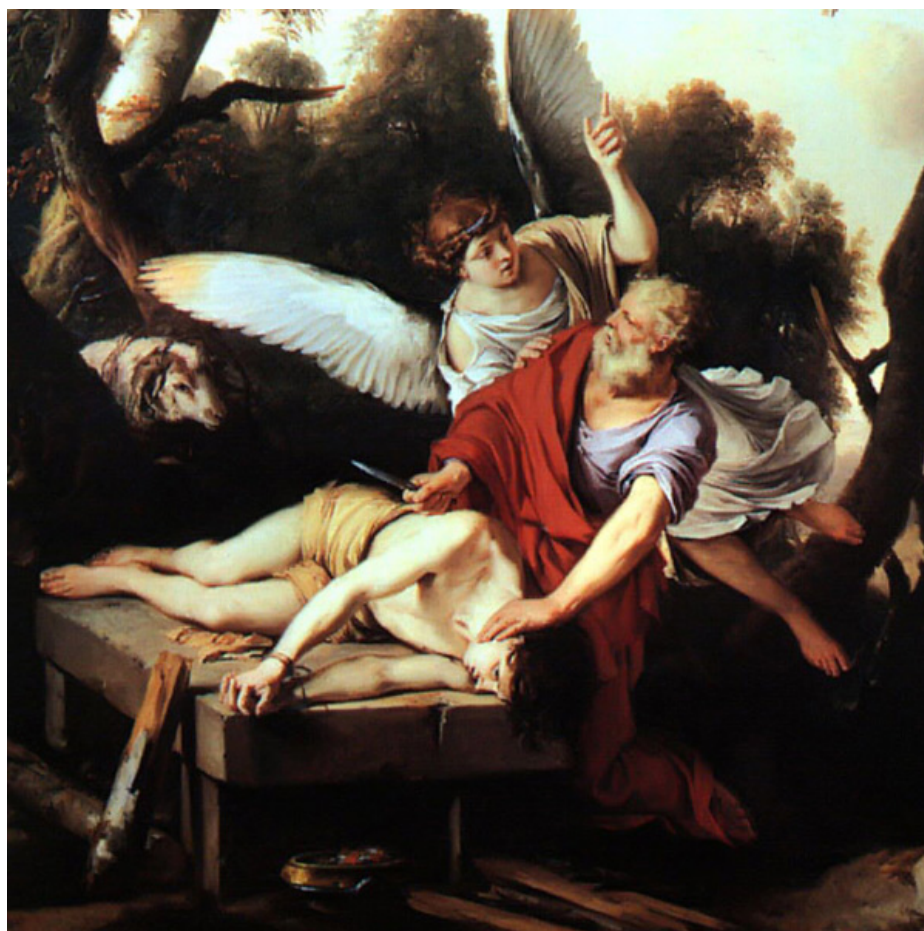
Genesis 22:6 And took Abraham **את** the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took in his hand **את** the fire **ואת** and a knife; and both of them went together. 7 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, My father: and Abraham said, Yes, my son. And Isaac said I see the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 Abraham said, My son, Elohim will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so both of them went together. (*Prophecy Fulfilled-Gen. 22:8 The Lamb of Elohim promised-John 1:2*). C-MATS

Question: What was Abraham prophesying when he said that “Elohim will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering”? Elohim provided his own son Yahusha as the lamb that was sacrificed and יהוה spared Isaac. John 1:29 The next day John saw Yahusha coming unto him, and said, Behold the Lamb of Elohim, which takes away the sin of the world. C-MATS

Question: What is the symbol of Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice? This was symbolic of Yahusha carrying the wooden stake for his sacrifice.

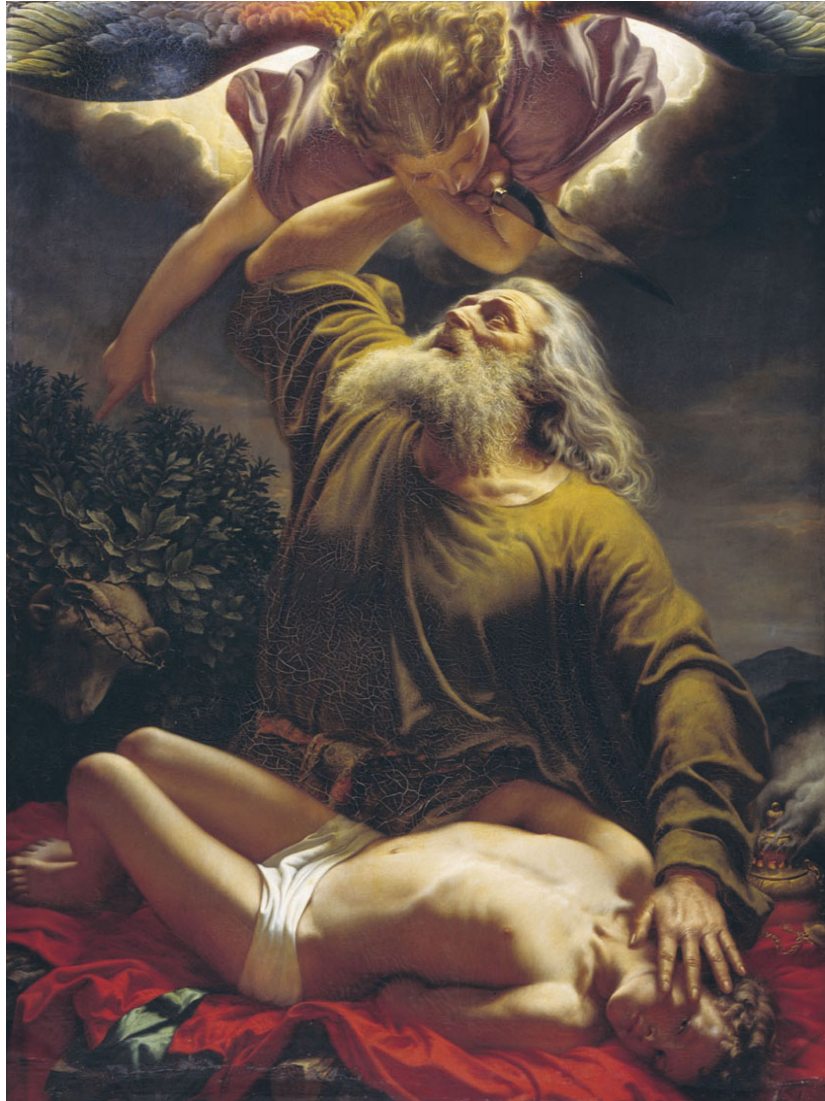
Question: When did Isaac know that he was to become the sacrifice? Until now Isaac did not know the true purpose of the journey, but as they walked toward the mountain with no animal in sight, he suspected the nature of the test, and he asked this probing question. Abraham answered delicately, "יהוה ייהיה will seek out for Himself the lamb, but if there is no lamb, then you, my son, will be the offering". Then Isaac understood (Rashi). The much younger Isaac could have resisted or fled easily, but he walked on together with Abraham. *Chumash*

Genesis 22:9 They came to the place, which Elohim had told him about; and built there Abraham **את** an altar and laid in order **את** the wood and bound **את** Isaac his son and laid **אתו** *him* on the altar upon the wood. C-MATS



Abraham Sacrificing Isaac

Question: Why did Abraham bound Isaac? Can one bind a man thirty-seven years old without his consent? But when Abraham came to slaughter his son Isaac, Isaac said to him: "Father, I am a young man and I am afraid that my body may tremble through fear of the knife and I will grieve you, whereby the slaughter may be rendered unfit and this will not count as a real sacrifice; therefore bind me very firmly". *Chumash*



The Sacrifice of Isaac

Genesis 22:10 And stretched out Abraham אֶת־ his hand and took אֶת־ the knife to kill אֶת־ his son. 11 And the Angel of יהוה called to him out of heavens and said, Abraham, Abraham: and Abraham said, Here I am. C-MATS

Question: Why did Elohim call Abraham's name twice, Abraham, Abraham? Both the Father and the Son called out his name. C-MATS

Genesis 22:12 And He (*the Angel*) said, Do not lay your hand upon the boy, or do anything to him: because now I know that you fear Elohim, seeing אֶת־ you have not withheld אֶת־ your son, אֶת־ your only son, from Me. C-MATS

Question: What did Elohim mean by “now I know that you fear Elohim”? From now on, I have a response to Satan and the nations who wonder what My Love towards you is. Now I have a reason (an opening of the mouth), for they see “that you fear Me.” *Chumash*



The Angel stops Abraham

Genesis 22:13 And lifted up Abraham אָרָא his eyes and looked and saw behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham took אָרָא the ram and offered him up for a burnt *offering* in the place of his son. C-MATS



Genesis 22:14 Abraham called the name of that place *Yahovah-jireh* (יהוה *will provide*): as it is said to this day, on the mountain יהוה is seen. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean, “on the mountain יהוה is seen”? יהוה will choose and see for Himself this place, to cause His Divine Presence to rest therein and for offering sacrifices here. This is the future site of the Temple in Jerusalem. *Chumash*

Genesis 22:15 The angel of יהוה called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, I have sworn by myself, says יהוה, since you have done *this את* selfsame matter and have not withheld *את* your son, *את* your only son: 17 That I will bless you and I will multiply *את* your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and will possess your seed *את* the gate (*cities*) of his enemies; 18 And in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Gen. 22:18 As Isaac's seed, will bless all nations-Gal. 3:16. C-MATS*

Question: What prophecy of the coming Messiah do we see in these verses? יהוה stopped Abraham from sacrificing his only beloved son and took this burden from Abraham and placed it on Him. יהוה offers his only Son, the Son whom he loves, on the cross, as a Lamb that only he can provide, to accomplish what only he can accomplish -- to take away the sins of the world.

John 3:16 For Elohim so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. C-MATS

Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. C-MATS

James 2:14 What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body; what does it profit? 17 Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, You have faith, and I have works: show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one Elohim; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 See you how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed Elohim, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of Elohim. 24 You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. C-MATS

Spiritual Exercise: Is your life filled with good deeds? Do you think of others instead of yourself? This week try to see how many good deeds you can do for others. Only by giving to others can you build up for yourself treasures in heaven.

Genesis 22:19 So Abraham returned to his young men and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba. 20 And it came to pass after these things that it was told to Abraham, Milcah has also born children to your brother Nahor. C-MATS

Question: Why did Abraham find out about his brother Nahor having children? When he returned from Mount Moriah, Abraham was thinking and saying, “Had my son been slaughtered, he would have died without children. I should have married him to a woman of the daughters of Aner, Eshkol, or Mamre. יהוה announced to him that Rebekah, his mate, had been born, and that is the meaning of “after these things”. Chumash

Discuss: Is יהוה capable of telling the father who the mate of his son should be? Must the father be listening to יהוה to hear this good news?

Genesis 22:21 **את** Huz his firstborn **את** and Buz his brother **את** and Kemuel, the father of Aram, **את** and Chesed **את** and Hazo **את** and Pildash **את** and Jidlaph **את** and Bethuel. **23** And Bethuel became the father of **את** Rebekah: these eight sons Milchah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother. **24** And Nahor’s concubine, whose name was Reumah and bore also her **את** Tebah **את** and Gaham **את** and Thahash **את** and Maachah. C-MATS

Question: Who was Isaac’s future wife? Rebekah, born to Behuel, son of Nahor, Abraham’s brother. Chumash



Do You Know??

1. יהוה appeared to Abraham after he was ____ so He could heal him.
2. ____ angels came to visit Abraham. (how many?)
3. **Is anything too ____ for יהוה to do?**
4. Abraham asked to spare Sodom if ____ righteous men were found there. (how many?)
5. ____ angels were sent to Sodom to destroy it. (how many?)
6. The angels struck the men of Sodom with ____ so Lot could be pulled inside his house.
7. Lot and his ____ daughters fled to Zoar. (how many?)
8. Lot's wife turned into a pillar of ____.
9. יהוה rained down ____ and ____ from heaven on Sodom.
10. יהוה warned King Abimelech in a ____ about Sarah.
11. Abraham was ____ years old when Isaac was born.
12. Isaac means ____.
13. When ____ mocked Isaac, he was sent away. (who?)
14. Ishmael and Hagar went to ____ to live. (where?)
15. Abraham made a peace treaty with King ____.
16. יהוה asked Abraham to sacrifice ____ on the altar.
17. Instead of sacrificing Isaac, the angel told Abraham to sacrifice a ____
18. Abraham took Isaac to Mt. ____ to be sacrificed.

Answers:

1. Circumcised
2. Two (Yahusha and two angels)
3. hard
4. ten
5. Two
6. blindness
7. two
8. salt
9. fire and brimstone (sulfur)
10. dream
11. 100
12. laughter
13. Ishmael
14. Egypt
15. Abimelech
16. Isaac
17. ram
18. Moriah (future site of the Temple)

Haftorah

2 Kings 4:1 Now there cried אַחַת *one* certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets to Elisha, saying, Your servant my husband is dead; וְאַתָּה *and you* know that your servant did fear אֶת־יְהוָה: and the creditor has come to take אֶת־ שְׁנֵי *two of* my sons to him to be bondmen. 2 And Elisha said to her, What will I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house? And she said, Your maidservant does not have anything in the house, except a pot of oil. 3 Then he said, Go, borrow vessels abroad מֵאֵת *from* all your neighbors, *even* empty vessels; borrow not a few. 4 וּבֹאֵת *and [when]* you come in, you will shut the door after you and your sons and will pour out into all those vessels and you will set aside that which is full. 5 So she went מֵאֵתוֹ *from him* and shut the door after her and her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured out. 6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, Bring me a vessel. And he said to her, *There are* no more vessels. And the oil stayed. 7 Then she came and told the man of Elohim. And he said, Go, sell אֶת־הַיָּהוּב *the oil* and pay אֶת־חַיְבֹתָיִךְ *your debt* וְאַתָּה *and you* and your sons can live on what is left. 8 And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed by Shunem, where there *was* a great woman; and she urged him to eat bread. And so it was, *that* as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat bread. 9 And she said to her husband, See now, I perceive that this *is* a holy man of Elohim, which passes by us continually. 10 We should make a little chamber *on* the wall; and set for him there a bed and a table and a stool and a menorah: and it will be, when he comes to us that he will turn in there. 11 And it fell on a day, that he came there and he turned into the chamber and lay there. 12 And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call אֶת־זֶה *this* Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, Say now to her, see, you have been careful for us *with* אֶת־כָּל־הַיְּהוּבָה *this* care; what *is* to be finished for you? Would you be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, "I live among my own people." 14 And he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, verily she has no child and her husband *is* old. 15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. 16 And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, אֶת־יְהוָה *you* shall embrace a son. And she said No, my master, you are a man of Elohim, do not lie to your maidservant. 17 And the woman conceived and gave birth *to* a son at that season that Elisha had said to her, According to the time of life. 18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19 And he said to his father, My head, my head. And he said to a boy, Carry him to his mother. 20 And when he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon and then died. 21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of Elohim and shut *the door* upon him and went out. 22 And she called to her husband and said, Send me, please, one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may go to the man of Elohim and come again. 23 And he said, Why will אֶת־יְהוָה *you* go to him today? *It is* neither New Moon, nor Sabbath. And she said, *It will be* well. 24 Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, "Drive and go forward; hurry, ride quickly until אֶמְרֶתִי *I say* to you *stop*." 25 So she went and came to the man of Elohim to Mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of Elohim saw אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה *her* afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, See *over there* is that Shunammite: 26 Run now, please, to meet her and say to her, *is it* well with you? *Is it* well with your husband? *Is it* well with the child? And she answered, *it is* well. 27 And when she came to the man of Elohim to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of Elohim said, Let her alone; for her soul *is* vexed within her: and יְהוָה *has hid it* from me and has not told me. 28 Then she said, Did I desire a son מֵאֵת *from* my master? Did אֶמְרֶתִי *I say* do not deceive אֶת־יְהוָה *me*? C-MATS

2 Kings 4:29 Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand and go your way: if you meet any man, salute him not and if any salute you, answer him not again and lay my staff upon the face of the child. 30 And the mother of the child said, As יהוה lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you. And he rose and followed her. 31 And Gehazi passed on before them and laid את־ the staff upon the face of the child but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Therefore, he went again לקראתו to meet him and told him saying, The child is not awaked. 32 When Elisha came into the house and saw the child was dead and lay upon his bed, 33 He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them both and prayed to יהוה. 34 And he went up and laid on the child and put his mouth upon his mouth and his eyes upon his eyes and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 Then he returned and walked in the house אחת one hither and אחת the one thither (to and fro) and went up and stretched himself upon him and the child sneezed seven times and opened the child את־ his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi and said, Call קראת this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, Take up your son. 37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground and took up את־ her son and went out. C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Galatians 4:21 Tell me, you that desire to be under the Torah, do you not hear the Torah? 22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gives birth to bondage, which is Agar. 25 For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written, Rejoice, you barren that bear not; break forth and cry, you that travail not: for the desolate has many more children than she which has an husband. 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what said the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. C-MATS

Romans 9:6 Not as though the word of Elohim has taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall your seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of Elohim: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. C-MATS

Hebrews 6:13 For when Elohim made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein Elohim, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for Elohim to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Yahusha, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. C-MATS

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. **14** For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. **15** And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from where they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. **16** But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore Elohim is not ashamed to be called their Elohim: for he has prepared for them a city. **17** By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, **18** Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall your seed be called: **19** Accounting that Elohim was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from where also he received him in a figure. C-MATS

Question: Did Abraham ever visit Ishmael? Abraham went to the wilderness, and he reached the tent of Ishmael about noon, and he asked for Ishmael, and he found the wife of Ishmael sitting in the tent with her children, and Ishmael and his mother were not with them. Abraham asked the wife of Ishmael, saying, "Where has Ishmael gone?" and she said, "He has gone to the field to hunt," and Abraham was still mounted upon the camel, for he would not get off to the ground as he had sworn to his wife Sarah that he would not get off from the camel. Abraham said to Ishmael's wife, "My daughter, give me a little water that I may drink, for I am fatigued from the journey." Ishmael's wife answered and said to Abraham, "We have neither water nor bread", and she continued sitting in the tent and did not notice Abraham, neither did she ask him who he was. But she was beating her children in the tent, and she was cursing them, and she also cursed her husband Ishmael and Abraham heard the words of Ishmael's wife to her children, and he was very angry and displeased. Abraham called to the woman to come out to him from the tent, and the woman came and stood opposite to Abraham, for Abraham was still mounted upon the camel. Abraham said to Ishmael's wife, "When your husband Ishmael returns home say these words to him, A very old man from the land of the Philistines came to see you, and thus was his appearance and figure; I did not ask him who he was, but he said, "When Ishmael returns tell him that this man said, 'When you come home put away this nail of the tent which you have placed here, and place another nail in its place.'" Abraham finished his instructions to the woman, and he went on the camel homeward.

After that Ishmael came from the chase he and his mother, and returned to the tent, and his wife told him what happened. Ishmael heard the words of his wife, and he knew that it was his father, and that his wife did not honor him. Ishmael understood his father's words that he had spoken to his wife, and Ishmael listened to the voice of his father, and Ishmael sent the woman away. Ishmael afterward went to the land of Canaan, and he took another wife and he brought her to his tent to the place where he then dwelt. At the end of three years Abraham said, "I will go again and see Ishmael my son, for I have not seen him for a long time". He rode upon his camel and went to the wilderness, and he reached the tent of Ishmael about noon. He asked about Ishmael, and his wife came out of the tent and she said, "He is not here my lord, for he has gone to hunt in the fields, and to feed the camels," and the woman said to Abraham, "Come in my lord into the tent, and eat a morsel of bread, you must be wearied on account of the journey." Abraham said to her, "I will not stop for I am in haste to continue my journey, but give me a little water to drink, because I am thirsty"; and the woman hurried and ran into the tent and she brought out water and bread to Abraham, which she placed before him and she urged him to eat, and he ate and drank and his heart was comforted and he blessed his son Ishmael.

After he finished his meal and he blessed יהוה, he said to Ishmael's wife, "When Ishmael comes home say these words to him, 'A very old man from the land of the Philistines came to see you, and you were not here; and I brought him out bread and water and he ate and drank and his heart was comforted. He spoke these words to me: 'When Ishmael returns home, say unto him, The nail of the tent which you have is very good, do not put it away from the tent.'" His wife told him what happened when he arrived home. Ishmael knew that it was his father, and that his wife had honored him, and יהוה blessed Ishmael. Ishmael then rose up and took his wife and his children and his cattle and all belonging to him, and he journeyed from there and he went to his father in the land of the Philistines. And Ishmael and his children dwelt with Abraham in that land, and Abraham dwelt in the land of the Philistines a long time. Jasher 21

Question: What should we do when we meet people who are different from us? When we meet people who are different than us, we may feel that they are not as good as us. But this is not the Torah way. In this week's portion, our forefather, Abraham, who was a wealthy, respected prince, went out of his way to open his home and show great respect to simple desert wanderers. We can learn from his example not to look down on anyone and to treat everyone with respect, even if they are not like us.

ON THE REBOUND

Alex walked out of the lunchroom munching down a granola bar instead of his usual donut. He wanted to make sure to get as much energy as possible for the basketball tryouts that afternoon. There was going to be a new coach this year and a lot of the guys on last year's team graduated, so he felt he really had a chance to make the team. He took his last bite, crumpled up the wrapper and tossed it toward the wastebasket at the end of the lunchroom, missing by a mile. Oh well, as long as I shoot hoops better than this later on, I'm okay, he laughed to himself and walked on. "Hey, pick it up," he heard a gruff voice call behind him. He turned around to see a middle-aged man in coveralls. Just one of the janitors, Alex thought, as he shrugged and kept walking. "What kind of a way is that to act? You made a mess, now you have to pick it up," the man insisted, this time more loudly. Now Alex was starting to get ticked off. Who was this brainless janitor to tell him what to do? "Sorry, man," he said. "That's your job, not mine. If you don't feel like doing it - too bad!" Alex dashed out to the schoolyard before the janitor could answer back, feeling cool for having put the guy in his place.

The rest of the school day went fast and Alex nearly flew to the gym after school to get to tryouts. He was one of the first guys there and when he walked into the gym, the team trainer was setting things up. "Hi. Here for tryouts?" he asked. "Coach is in the equipment room. Go see him to sign up and then come back out and sit in the bleachers until it's time to start. Good luck!" he smiled. Alex made sure to tuck in his shirt and puff out his chest as he walked in to make a good first impression on the new coach. He nervously knocked on the equipment room door. "Yeah, come in," called a voice which sounded familiar to Alex, though he didn't know why. He pushed open the door and stood eye-to-eye with the janitor he had put down in the lunchroom! But why was he wearing a whistle around his neck and a baseball cap on his head? Because, Alex realized to his horror, he really wasn't a janitor - he was the new coach!!! "You again," the man said sharply. "You came back to tell me more about my job?"

Alex, shaking, could hardly open his mouth. Finally he muttered, "I...I'm really sorry, coach. I d...didn't know who you were. I thought you were a j...janitor." "And if I had been- so what? Does that give you an excuse to open up a wise mouth to any adult - to any human being? If you're here to try out, forget it." "But, coach," Alex said, trying desperately to hold his ground. "I said I'm sorry. C...can't you at least wait and see how I play ball?" The man shook his head. "I don't have to. One of the most important things in being part of a team is to have respect for everyone - whether you feel they're better than you or you're better than them. You already showed me, by the way you didn't care, that someone you considered below you would have to clean up your mess - that's a lesson you have to learn. Come back next semester if you learn it and then we'll talk, but until then, take a walk." Walk, Alex did - with his head hanging so low that if it wasn't attached to his neck it would be rolling on the ground. Once outside he pulled out the granola bar he'd saved for after tryouts. No reason not to eat it now. He tossed the wrapper on the pavement. Then, thinking about the coach's words - bent down, picked it up and tossed it in the bin, and scored a bigger point than if he'd shot a game-winning basket.

Question: What life lesson do you think someone could learn from this story? It's easy to look down on people and judge them not worthy of respect, but the Torah way is to treat everyone respectfully.

Question: Do you think the coach should have just judged Alex on how well he played ball and not how he treated people? Why or why not? A person has many parts. While it's true that someone with a lot of athletic talent may have a certain advantage, the fact that Alex hadn't learned to have a basic respect for all people would make it hard for him to succeed on the team - or in life.

Question: Do you think one person can be more important than someone else? In one sense, a person can become important based on his wisdom, talent, wealth, etc. However, on a deeper level, each and every human being has been created by Elohim in His image and therefore is of equal, infinite importance, no matter who he may or may not be.

Question: Should one respect a person who does destructive or even terrible things? In such a case, we have to separate in our minds the person's actions and his true self. His actions can be totally unworthy of respect and can even justify hatred. However, at the same time we must never lose sight of each individual's Righteous essence and maintain a respect of that as a way of respecting Elohim.

Spiritual Exercise: Stand up for what you think is right this week even if you go against friends or the majority.

Resources: “Weekly Torah Portion” from www.aish.com

The Stone Edition of The Chumash

The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures **C-MATS** www.AlephTavScriptures.com

The Book of Jashar- Joshua 10:13 **So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.**